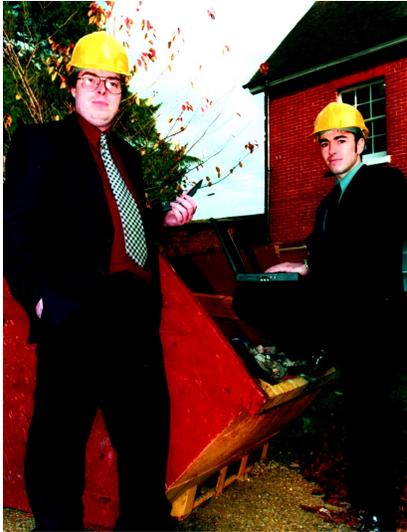


Reinforcing UK Construction.com with the available, scalable IBM @server xSeries



Overview

■ The Challenge

Provide a stable, scalable and highly available hardware platform for a heavily trafficked construction-industry portal

■ The Solution

IBM @server x240 running a Microsoft® environment (Microsoft Windows® 2000, Microsoft Exchange Server 2000, Microsoft SQL Server 2000)

■ The Benefit

A reliable hardware platform that delivers speed and scalability

A blueprint for success

With humble beginnings as a marketing Web site for a single contracting business, brothers Paul and Robin Clevett have built UK Construction.com into one of the United Kingdom's most popular construction-industry portals. Companies and workers throughout the country access this valuable tool to post and review job listings, read industry news, download software, access links to trade associations and more.

While Internet service providers (ISPs) were initially used to run the site, the brothers quickly realized the limitations of the ISP model. "We had run our site on three different ISPs, and none of them could keep it online," says Paul, whose technical expertise complements Robin's construction-industry knowledge. "We also wanted to integrate our backend systems with the site in addition to developing some new technology that couldn't run on an outside ISP." So the company's board of directors asked Paul

to seek out a relationship with a vendor who was genuinely interested in working with UK Construction.com and to purchase a reliable and scalable server from that vendor.

The nuts and bolts

After doing some research, Paul decided on IBM and a rack-mounted IBM @server xSeries 240. "From the beginning of the sales process, IBM put me in touch with people who were willing to learn about our business and our needs," says Paul. "I knew the xSeries could provide the power, scalability and reliability we needed to run our business. And I knew IBM would respond quickly in the event of a problem." UK Construction.com uses the x240, which runs the Microsoft Windows 2000 Server operating system and includes four 9.1GB hard drives with 256MB of RAM. A Netfinity® ServeRAID-3L Ultra 160 SCSI Controller, which provides critical redundancy in case of a problem, also runs on the system.

The entire Web site is database driven. All of the site content is managed by Microsoft SQL Server 2000, and any information that is entered onto the site is fed back into the database. The company's in-house systems are integrated with the SQL Server database for data analysis and other interactive functionality.

Microsoft Exchange Server 2000 is a key solution component, providing a messaging and collaboration infrastructure that seamlessly integrates with Windows 2000.* "Before we purchased Exchange, our e-mail was outsourced," says Paul. "Now we have an interconnected system with important calendar, mail and filing features all available from the same place. Administration is simple, and the performance on the IBM xSeries server has been excellent."

Nailing down results

Since migrating the Web site onto the xSeries server, UK Construction.com now has the flexibility and control the brothers always wanted. "The reliability and speed of the machine is much better than that of the host systems," explains Paul. "Integrating our internal systems with the Web site was seamless, and having 24x7 access to the system is great." Site operations have run much more smoothly on the x240. The site and server have been online since the migration, and when a problem does occur, Windows 2000 automatically sends e-mails to the appropriate people via Microsoft Exchange Server.

UK Construction.com is not only pleased with the performance of the x240, but also enthusiastic about the relationship with IBM. "The people at IBM went out of their way to make sure we were happy," says Robin. "We knew we weren't just getting a great server from IBM. We were also establishing a great relationship."

"The thing I love about the x240 is that it's so stable. The day we migrated the site onto the server, we switched it on, and it's been online ever since. At the moment, the processor hardly moves despite heavy traffic, so we've got plenty of room to grow."

—Paul Clevett, IT director,
UK Construction.com, Ltd.

For more information

Visit the following Web sites:

pc.ibm.com/us/eserver/xseries

ukconstruction.com



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