Partners HP and ATG capture successful solutions for the correctional industry

Advanced Technologies Group, Inc.

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– Chairman & CEO Atul Gupta, Advanced Technologies Group, Inc.

Business need:
Advanced Technologies Group (ATG) is an Independent Software Vendor (ISV) specializing in the design and hosting of transaction and decision-making solutions. ATG needed to partner with a leading IT vendor to provide a remotely manageable platform to run its industry-leading custom software solutions in a wide variety of environments. The ISV sought a technology innovator with practical, reliable, and easily deployable servers, software, and services.

Solution overview:
After a thorough evaluation, ATG standardized on the reliable HP ProLiant server platform for its custom software solutions, including the ATG Offender Management Suite – a software suite designed for the security conscious, geographically dispersed correctional industry. This standardization has given ATG a flexible, yet solid foundation for its software and services, allowing the firm to focus on delivering best-in-class capabilities to its customers. The remote-management capability of HP ProLiant servers is only one of many features that gives ATG the power to help its customers adapt to change. These remote-management features factored strongly in ATG's decision to implement HP solutions and become an HP Authorized Business Development Partner.
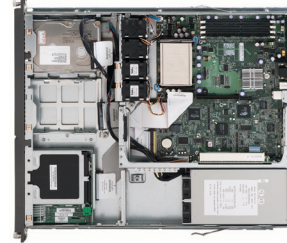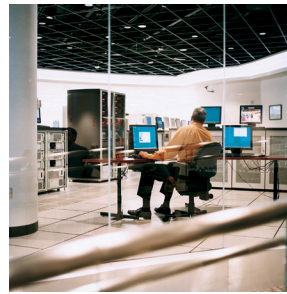
Achieving maximum uptime with HP
The correctional industry mandates no-nonsense and highly secure turnkey IT solutions. "All ATG's solutions have to do is never go down," emphasizes Deputy Director John Baldwin, Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC), a satisfied ATG customer. Couple this with the requirement for remote management from each of the IDOC's widely spread branch offices, and only one combination created a best-of-breed partnership – ATG software running on HP ProLiant servers.

"HP ProLiant server technology fulfills the ATG mantras, which state that all solutions designed by ATG must be 'secure, practical, reliable, scalable, and deployable' and 'simple to use, simple to administer, and simple to maintain,'" says ATG's Chairman and CEO Atul Gupta. "The ProLiant platform ensures that our customers get a strong return on their investment, along with proven technology for achieving business objectives. HP upholds the same vendor values that we do: quality, excellence, and superior customer service."

ATG inspires a loyal customer following with a strong support policy and a guaranteed return on investment (ROI) within 12 months. IDOC realized its ROI in the guaranteed time frame, and the performance and high availability of ProLiant servers – which are transparent to end users and IT staff – garnered the highest marks.

"During our six-year relationship using the ATG-HP solution, we've only had a total of eight minutes of downtime, which weren't even hardware related," recalls Baldwin. "The solution's high availability significantly increases our productivity, and remote, centralized management by ATG allows us to really leverage our own IT staff."

HP ProLiant servers break out of the pack

As an ISV and solutions provider, ATG must address the computing needs of small, medium, and enterprise companies with varying scalability requirements. The HP ProLiant family of servers allows ATG to let the solution and business needs drive the server choice. Gupta says that although the ProLiant ML370 server is the most commonly used workhorse, ATG solutions run on ProLiant server models ranging from the DL320 to the DL760, depending on the need for headroom and performance flexibility. HP's complete server portfolio allows customers to deploy the right server for the job and combine servers to meet specific application needs.

"Whereas other vendors often incorrectly claim server compatibility, HP is the ideal platform for us because HP ProLiant server models are highly interchangeable," Gupta confirms. "Provisioning and maintaining different models of ProLiant servers is very straightforward and comfortable. The engineering breadth and open standards of the ProLiant server line allow us to match the most cost-effective server with any size customer."

"The flexibility and consistency of common components, design features, and management capability across the different HP ProLiant models are virtually seamless," Gupta adds. "For example, with the HP Universal Hard Disk Drives, one drive fits all for both servers and storage systems, so we only need to have one spare part handy."

ATG helped implement a variety of ProLiant servers, all running the Microsoft Windows 2000 operating system, at the Iowa Department of Corrections to power its Offender Management Suite software. The turnkey solution includes a pair of centralized, clustered ProLiant DL760 database servers, a pair of ProLiant ML370 servers as Microsoft Active Directory servers, and ProLiant DL320 servers as processing and Web servers. Other ProLiant ML370 servers function as specialized database or terminal servers at strategic IDOC locations.

"HP ProLiant ML350 and ML370 servers are by far our most implemented systems," says ATG's President Tej Dhawan. "In the past four years, we installed about 200 of them. They are expandable, feature-rich, solidly reliable, and easily deployed. With an excellent price/performance ratio, ProLiant servers satisfy the growth needs of our value-conscious customers."

To support its storage needs, ATG relies on the HP Smart Array internal storage for Web servers and an HP StorageWorks Fibre Channel storage-area network (SAN) connected to clustered database servers with a StorageWorks 12-port Fibre Channel switch. The combination of clustered HP ProLiant servers and highly available StorageWorks SAN fabric eliminates single points of failure, while ensuring continuous uptime for mission-critical applications. "We need storage that is extremely reliable and capable of large scalability," says Gupta. "The HP storage offerings meet both these requirements, and then some."

Remote management cuts costs

ATG uses the combined punch of HP Insight Manager software and HP Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) technology to remotely monitor, maintain, and manage IDOC's business-critical servers from its corporate office. Using iLO software, ATG manages hundreds of servers remotely to provide a transparent, trouble-free solution to 90 percent of its customers – taking daily server maintenance off the plates of ATG customers.

> ## "We can count on HP to deliver products directly to our customers – reliably and as promised."
>
> - President Tej Dhawan, Advanced Technologies Group, Inc.

"Because HP Integrated Lights-Out makes remote management easy, we only need two administrators to manage more than 400 customer servers from our site," notes ATG's Infrastructure Director, Jon Groene. "The use of iLO saves us 60 percent in on-site management costs. HP has by far the most robust, intelligent, and truly pragmatic management tools on the market."

"In like manner, HP Insight Manager automatically informs us if any element of a customer's off-site server needs attention," Dhawan emphasizes. "If so, we can take care of it with the help of HP Services, thereby maximizing system uptime and performance. HP, as a partner, works with us to correct any part that Insight Manager flags quickly and before it results in downtime, which extends our staff resources and provides our customers with reliable preventive service."

There's no escaping success when you partner with HP

From a strictly professional and pragmatic viewpoint, Dhawan likes having HP as a partner. "We can count on HP to deliver configured solutions directly to our customers reliably as promised," he says.

"Perhaps the most important considerations of all," concludes Gupta, "are the unseen benefits that partnering with the 'golden triangle' of HP, Microsoft, and Intel bring to ATG and our customers alike. We have a relationship built on mutual trust with HP and Microsoft, which brings a huge advantage to our customers and us. It's something that you don't see, but in a rapidly changing market, it's as important to our quality solution as having air to breathe."

Company profile:

Advanced Technologies Group (www.a-t-g.com) is an Independent Software Vendor of approximately 50 employees specializing in the design and hosting of transaction and decision-making solutions, primarily for government and the corrections industry. For each of the past three years, Inc. Magazine has included ATG on its "Inc. 500" list, highlighting ATG as one of America's entrepreneurial growth leaders.

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Challenge

- Form a strategic partnership that will provide a remotely manageable and reliable server platform on which to run ATG's industry-leading custom software solutions

- Provide an easily deployable server platform with good price-performance on which to base a 12-month, guaranteed-ROI program for its customers

- Provide secure remote management and preventive maintenance as part of turnkey solutions to customers ranging in size from small to enterprise

Solution

Hardware

- A wide array of HP ProLiant servers – including models DL320, ML350, ML370, and DL760 – running the Microsoft Windows 2000 operating system

- HP Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) remote-management boards and software

- HP StorageWorks Fibre Channel Storage-area Network (SAN)

- HP StorageWorks Edge Switch 2/12

Software

- HP Insight Manager 7 (Version sp2)

- ATG Offender Management Suite software

- Microsoft Windows 2000 operating system

HP Services

- Customer implementation of ProLiant servers

- On-site replacement of parts as indicated by HP Insight Manager software

Results

- A successful HP Authorized Business Development Partnership, which provides ATG (an Independent Software Vendor) with:

  - A robust HP ProLiant server platform, which ATG can manage remotely and maintain with minimal staff – resulting in a 60 percent savings in personnel costs
  - On-site ProLiant server implementation and parts replacement by HP Services, which leverages ATG field and IT capabilities
  - A reliable and highly deployable hardware platform for ATG to run its vertical software solutions
  - Increased business and profitability through greater outreach

- This same partnership provides ATG customers with:

  - An integrated hardware/software solution
  - Significantly increased employee productivity
  - A turnkey solution remotely managed by ATG, which frees up customer IT staff to maintain other critical applications and systems
  - A highly available solution, which is proactively monitored by HP Insight Manager and maintained by HP Services

For more information on how working with HP can benefit you, contact your local HP representative, or visit us at www.hp.com.