

PASSPORT TO OPPORTUNITY

Ontario-based Protek Systems leverages VentureTech Network partnership to assist client with North American business expansion

Undertaking a major IT infrastructure rollout requires great precision and attention to detail, but when you factor in the merger of an international company across 17 locations within a specific timeline, it creates additional IT challenges. Protek Systems, a technology solutions

According to Joel Cronkwright, Protek's Technical Service Manager, VTN's North American footprint helped the company overcome three major challenges associated with the project: reliability, geographic reach and understanding international warranty laws.

Business Challenge: A leading Canadian warehousing logistics company was dramatically expanding its business through the acquisition of a similar company with 17 additional locations throughout North America. Their objective was to seamlessly connect the two companies' parallel IT infrastructures while minimizing downtime.

Approach: The client was looking to outsource the task of centralizing their wide area network (WAN) to effectively merge the two companies IT infrastructures, and manage their geographically dispersed branch offices. They were looking for a solutions provider that could not only provide reliable service to all 17 branches across North America, but could provide it within the timeframe that they have set. Based on their long-term relationship with their technology solutions provider of record, they awarded the project to Protek Systems of London, Ontario, Canada, a member of VentureTech Network (VTN).

Solution: Protek Systems designed a centralized wide area network (WAN) solution utilizing their vendor partners IBM and Cisco Systems. Protek Systems utilized VTN members south and north of the border to implement a two-day North American rollout across all of the client's locations. Protek managed the project and served as the single point of contact for the client and managed administration details of the rollout.

provider based in Southwestern Ontario, heavily leveraged the power of VentureTech Network (VTN) to merge their client's IT network with their newly acquired North American company.

Geography

With geographically diverse locations and a tight time frame— only a two-day window allotted for the joining of the two infrastructures — Protek needed to rely heavily on the support of its partners to fulfill the terms of its contract. Service providers had to be onsite at every location on the same day to complete the transition to the centralized WAN system. In addition to easing the time crunch, using local partners at each site also helped Protek smooth over any potential cultural differences associated with doing business in another region.

Warranty and Customs

Although the U.S. and Canada are neighbours, the two nations each have their own rules regarding the purchase and sale of merchandise.



In some cases, technology products or licenses bought in one country cannot be legally shipped to the other. Protek worked closely with VTN to ensure all product warranties were valid in the country in which they were deployed.

The Solution

Protek designed a centralized WAN solution based on Cisco Systems networking solutions. Protek used Cisco routers to provide the WAN infrastructure – Internet Virtual Private Network (VPNs) to access centralized business systems deployed over mission critical IBM servers. They also deployed standardized workstation platforms in all branch offices, including the IBM ThinkPad and IBM desktops to provide a consistent solution across the board. The seamless integration resulted in reduced maintenance fees associated with operating and supporting two IT infrastructures in a parallel mode.

Centralizing their client's business systems utilizing Cisco networking products provided control over all branch offices enabling the client to utilize their internet and external IT resources more effectively given the difficulties of supporting geographically dispersed branch offices. "We have implemented a network that has the bandwidth to grow with the organizational needs and integrates the IT management of the company's critical business information, supports internal associates and securely manages their clients records," says Bonnie Stewart, Business Manager, Protek Systems, Windsor, Ontario.

Finding the Right Partner

Prior to joining VTN, Protek had spent a great deal of time searching for solution providers who could assist them in multi-site deployments across North America, then often ended up losing control of the project because the

partners they used were unreliable. With VTN the issue simply didn't exist. All VTN members subscribe to a standard Service Level Agreement (SLA) that sets the same high standards of service from each member that they would deliver themselves to their own clients.

Business Across Borders

As a member of VTN, Protek has been able to work closely with VTN vendor partners, such as IBM and Cisco, to deliver the most current solutions at the right price. Members of VTN collectively work with the network's vendor partners to capitalize on business opportunities throughout North America.

About Protek Systems

Protek Systems began in 1983 with a staff of two and today has grown the business to a staff of over 50 associates serving clients across Canada and the United States. The company emphasizes long-term client relationships and their strategy is working, as many of their clients have grown along with Protek through the years. As a result of joining VTN, Protek has grown their business 98 per cent over the past five years.

About VentureTech Network (VTN)

Established in 1998, VentureTech Network (VTN) is the premier association of the top IT solutions provider in North America dedicated to delivering best-in-class solutions to small and mid size business (SMBs) by offering global expertise combined with local relationship and management. For more information, please go to www.venturetechnetwork.ca or call 1-877-VTN-0001.

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VentureTech Network™
