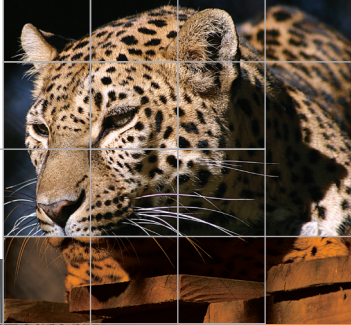




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CASE STUDY

Wildlife Sanctuary Improves Animal Care and Raises Public Awareness with IBM and Cisco Solutions

Executive Summary

Customer Name

Carolina Tiger Rescue

Industry

Nonprofit Wildlife Sanctuary

Business Challenge

- Team cannot easily share resources or collaborate with outside partners and groups.
- Staff and volunteers working outside of the administration building have no access to online information or electronic communications channels.

Network Solution

- New IBM high-performance computing (HPC) cluster
- Cisco LAN (wired and wireless) provides a converged foundation for data, voice, and video communications
- Cisco Unified Communications integrate file sharing, e-mail, calendars, and other resources

Business Results

- Staff and volunteer productivity is doubled
- Utility costs and overall maintenance costs lowered
- Collaboration with international wildlife groups and partners enhanced

Business Challenge

At the Carolina Tiger Rescue wildlife sanctuary, a small staff and many dedicated volunteers provide lifelong care and homes for rescued carnivores. Tigers, leopards, and other exotic animals such as caracals and servals are located on the 55-acre preserve. Carolina Tiger Rescue's mission also includes educating the public about the plight of these animals and working with other nonprofit organizations that seek to discourage the exotic pet trade and exploitive animal entertainment industries.

Carolina Tiger Rescue has operated as a 501(3)(c) public charity for more than 20 years, but the organization's technology platforms have not kept up with the times. The 15 desktop PCs were at least two generations behind, and only one building was wired for Ethernet to connect the systems to a single aging and unreliable server. By 2006, daily operations were severely restricted by the limited data storage capacity, poor print capabilities, and slow Internet access. The in-place network was limited in its reach and capacity, and anyone working outside of the administration building had no access to systems or the network. Looking at its aging hardware, IBM® and Cisco® recognized the opportunity to help this organization work more efficiently and raise awareness about its work and the animals that it seeks to protect.

Discussions with Carolina Tiger Rescue led to an understanding of the organization's operations and identification of the high-priority infrastructure-related needs. These needs included:

- *Enriched communications.* A new network with rich media and video capabilities was needed to connect the Carolina Tiger Rescue teams with outside partners, educators, government organizations, and the public. This network would enable more collaborative treatments for the animals, online communications with partners, and enhanced educational activities.
- *Remote access.* Staff and volunteers needed access to the systems and network from outer buildings and the remote parts of the preserve.
- *Increased productivity for both employees and volunteers.* The team was manually managing all incoming phone calls, and an after-hours answering machine was the only message system. The servers and storage could support only a minimal number of business applications, and the gift shop (an important facet of fundraising) was limited to the on-site store (no e-commerce solutions).



Network Solution

Based on an analysis of its needs and with help from IBM and Cisco, Carolina Tiger Rescue defined the requirements for a new infrastructure:

- A high-performance network that can support video content, an enhanced Website with more multimedia content, and an increase in collaborative communications and projects with partners and other nonprofit organizations within the wildlife sanctuary and education communities
- Increased storage and server capacity for file sharing, print serving, business applications, and e-commerce solutions for an online gift shop.
- A new phone system with voicemail, auto-call routing, and other time-saving and collaborative tools currently unavailable on site
- Wireless capabilities to enable the use of laptops and other portable devices in the field where many employees and volunteers spend the majority of their time

With an established partnership, IBM and Cisco gave Carolina Tiger Rescue a team that was committed to the development of a solution that would minimize training requirements and the ongoing cost of ownership. The goal was to deploy a new high-performance computing (HPC) infrastructure that could overcome the severe productivity limitations. System and network capacity would be expanded, and a new IP phone system deployed to facilitate numerous time-saving tools such as messaging and auto-call routing. Carolina Tiger Rescue also recognized many opportunities for improved communications with its supporters

and the public, and wanted to explore introducing video surveillance throughout the site to allow more efficient monitoring of animals in the quarantine center and throughout the preserve.

Today, Carolina Tiger Rescue enjoys a new infrastructure that includes a combination of solutions from IBM and Cisco. The IBM solutions include a new clustered server solution based on IBM System x™ servers, expanded storage, and new desktop and laptop systems. Cisco has provided the high-performance server interconnect technology and a redesigned high-speed LAN. With both wired and wireless capabilities, the new LAN connects users with the clustered server, storage, and other devices, and provides faster access to the Internet. The network supports Cisco Unified Communications applications including a new Cisco voice over IP (VoIP) solution with voicemail. The Cisco applications also enable the integration of e-mail, staff calendars, voicemail, and phone calls to provide better services such as remote e-mail access.

“The new IBM and Cisco infrastructure gives us far more than we envisioned,” says Pam Fulk, executive director of Carolina Tiger Rescue. “The phones and voicemail are amazing, and the simplicity of the new network is great. In the nonprofit world, there is low tolerance for anything that is too complicated, and we don’t have time for a lot of training—we are busy doing our jobs. With the IBM and Cisco solutions, there has been no resistance to the changes because the new solutions are very intuitive.”

Business Results

Having a single network that is capable of handling data, voice, and video has opened a new world of possibilities for Carolina Tiger Rescue. For example, Carolina Tiger Rescue plans to introduce a collaborative application for the animal care community to share information across sanctuaries, veterinarians, zoos, and animal research centers. The staff has also gained a platform for capturing, handling, and archiving video for a variety of educational and marketing purposes, and can explore social networking such as blogs and live chat rooms to revolutionize animal care and education.

With enhanced connectivity and Unified Communications, the Carolina Tiger Rescue staff can now spend more time on the group’s mission. “We’ve seen a 100-percent boost in productivity,” says Fulk. “Our staff can now focus on caring for the animals, while also contributing time to educational programs to prevent animal endangerment.” Many day-to-day tasks, such as answering the phones, are now automated. Other tasks, such as sending out a monthly newsletter, will be streamlined from several days to a few minutes of work because the new broadband Internet connections enable communications with outside distribution services that were previously impossible to use.

Wireless capabilities have been deployed in the buildings and will soon be extended out into the compound. This will bring new levels of flexibility to the employees and volunteers who must often be out in the remote parts of the sanctuary.



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The new network has the capacity and scalability to grow with the sanctuary as it develops, and to simplify connectivity with the choice of wired and wireless solutions.

The new infrastructure also gives Carolina Tiger Rescue many financial benefits. The new phone system eliminates an aging Private Branch Exchange (PBX) telephone system and allows the group to take advantage of cost-effective and time-saving VoIP capabilities. All of the new computing and networking equipment eliminates escalating maintenance costs for out-of-date technology and introduces solutions that are easier to maintain.

“The new technology foundation will even help us with recruitment,” says Fulk. “The network makes our work easier and creates many new and more creative ways to get things done. We plan to hire a development manager to help us introduce new programs, and our technology will attract better talent in this area. In addition, the network will let our existing staff carry out new programs, such as the introduction of more Web-based education. We are like kids in a candy shop with our new technology—we are just starting to learn new ways to do things, and we are really excited about the future.”

Next Steps

A second phase is planned to introduce a video surveillance solution to the network, which will enhance security and enable a variety of new capabilities such as remote veterinary care and live streaming video via the Carolina Tiger Rescue Website. The video-capable network also enables Carolina Tiger Rescue to develop more collaborative relationships with numerous animal research facilities around the world, and deliver more compelling fund-raising and educational content to Carolina Tiger Rescue donors and educators. Virtual tours will also be offered, to allow more people to see the animals in their new homes and keep up to date with events and research at the sanctuary.

For Further Information

To find out more about the Cisco solutions, go to: www.cisco.com.

For more information about the IBM solutions, visit: www.ibm.com.

For more information about the IBM and Cisco alliance, visit: www.ibm.com/cisco or www.cisco.com/go/ibm.

To learn more about Carolina Tiger Rescue, visit: www.carolinatigerrescue.org



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