EPSI takes control with Lotus® Foundations™
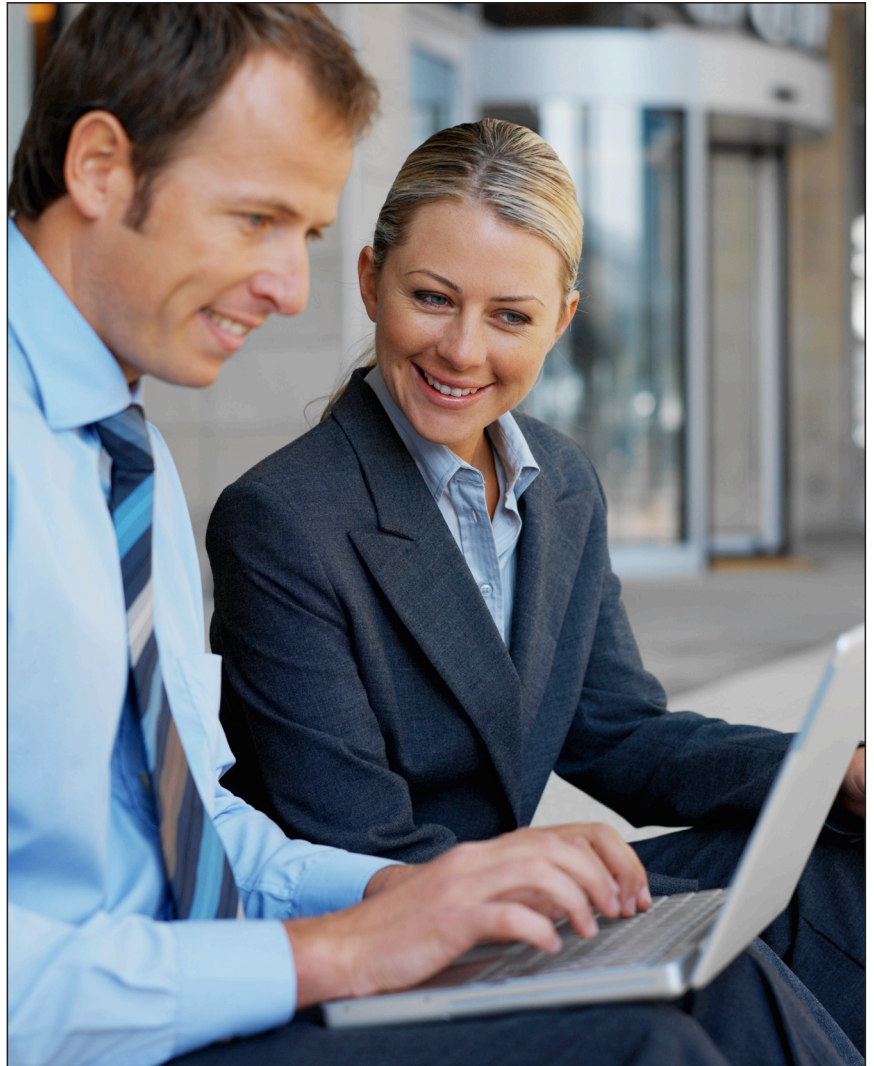
Overview

■ *The Challenge*
Enterprise Performance Systems International Pty Ltd (EPSI) outgrew its IT infrastructure which was hosted by a third party supplier. Email was not completely reliable, shared calendaring was not available and costs were escalating. The owners were frustrated by the lack of control they had over their IT environment. EPSI wanted to take back control and increase productivity and flexibility whilst containing or lowering IT costs.

■ *Solution*
IBM Business Partner* Binary Concepts recommended IBM's recently launched Lotus Foundations software running on a Linux System x® server. The system was fast to deploy and needed little to no ongoing maintenance. On top of this, EPSI found that Foundations would cost up to 75% less than its existing third party solution, and allow the business unprecedented flexibility.

■ *Benefits*
EPSI employees quickly gained reliable email, calendaring, document management and the ability to collaborate via shared databases. With automated security and self healing capabilities, EPSI found that its IT Infrastructure was truly 'plug and play' at a fraction of the cost.

About EPSI

EPSI is a privately held company based in Sydney, Australia. EPSI specializes in human performance technologies and services companies in the Global 5,000 and major multi-national corporations and Government entities throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Bringing Everyone Together

As a fast growing small business offering electronic performance support technologies and consulting services to large corporate and government departments in Asia Pacific, EPSI needed a reliable IT infrastructure to support team and client collaboration, as well as run a CRM application to track existing customers and prospects. With 10 staff spread across Asia Pacific including Brisbane, Sydney and Manilla, most working remotely from laptops and Blackberry handhelds, EPSI didn't want to invest in resources to maintain an in-house server and IT infrastructure.

Instead EPSI had their mail, calendaring and business applications hosted by a third party, who had the resources to manage it on their behalf. Although effective in the early days of the company, EPSI's needs outgrew the hosted environment quickly. The requirements for CRM, HR Management and Team Rooms for projects were not easily deployed. On top of this, paying monthly fees for space and bandwidth was becoming increasingly expensive. Nigel Wilson, Co-Founder of EPSI,

recognised something needed to change and reached out to Graham Dodge from IBM Business Partner* Binary Concepts for advice. Nigel commented, "I knew that Lotus Notes could give us a system that would not only handle email and team calendaring, which we keenly needed, but could also give us an environment that allowed fast creation of team rooms, recruitment and asset management databases. Overall, I needed to find a solution that was both affordable and manageable for a business of our size."
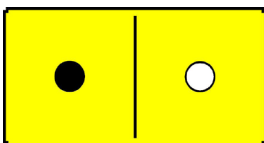
As a long term IBM Business Partner*, Binary Concepts was aware of IBM's recent introduction of Lotus Foundations® .Binary Concepts immediately recognised that Foundations could be the ideal solution to EPSI's IT problems – it could give EPSI an enterprise grade collaboration and application infrastructure, without the management responsibilities and the associated cost. Furthermore, the self-managing, self-healing and self-configuring nature of Foundations meant that Binary Concepts could implement EPSI's Foundations server in a short space of time.

A change for the better

Binary Concepts recommended Lotus Foundations as the answer to EPSI's challenge. Implementing Foundations would allow EPSI's employees to use any e-mail client that they preferred (Lotus Notes®, Microsoft Outlook, Blackberry and/or browser based) and give EPSI the additional flexibility it needed to improve productivity in the business. Nigel (EPSI) commented, "Graham [Binary Concepts] explained that Foundations would give us instant email and calendaring, document management and the ability to run and customise third party applications like the shareware CRM package we use. I quickly realised I could get significant business benefits by hosting Foundations in-house, and at the same time I would be significantly lowering my costs. It was a win-win situation."

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"I also had all the benefits of an on-site server without consuming in-house IT skills. Graham [Binary Concepts] is able to access and manage the Foundations server remotely from his office should there ever be an issue.

EPSI sourced an IBM Linux System x server from IBM and Binary Concepts installed Foundations in just a few hours. Graham said "It's as close to plug and play as you can get. In the IT game that's unusual – to have an enterprise strength server up and running in half a day – it just doesn't usually happen. In addition to this it really does require little to zero maintenance – you plug it in and you just leave it in the corner and let it do its thing."

Reaping the benefits

The business benefits of moving to Foundations have exceeded EPSI's wildest expectations "On a monthly basis we're saving 75% in outgoings but at the same time we've actually increased functionality and productivity." says Nigel.

EPSI now has a lot more space and bandwidth as a result of running Foundations on a server in-house. "Now we can have team databases up and running in ten minutes, where we store documents and share them securely between the people working on the project no matter where they happen to be based," Nigel concluded.

"Immediately, email delivery became more reliable and the team can now collaborate more easily from remote locations. The team has benefitted from improved efficiencies and has unprecedented control over its IT environment." said Nigel. "One of the reasons that Foundations appealed is its inherent ability to back up data automatically. Key databases live on the server and laptops at the same time and so staff have this wonderful offline ability to be productive. For example if I'm on an airplane, even though I'm offline I can still enter data into our CRM system. I didn't want to lose that capability by switching to another environment." Nigel concluded.

Graham also said "By moving EPSI to Foundations I now have a single space to support EPSI's business with. I can get access to his infrastructure via a secure login and act as a remote administrator – I couldn't do this when his IT was run through a third party. Foundations really gives Nigel a higher level of security because now he only has to deal with one supplier. Mind you, since I set it up he hasn't called me once – the whole thing just runs itself. Because Foundations largely looks after itself Nigel can focus on EPSI's customers and growing his business rather than maintaining his IT system."

Nigel concluded, "We haven't looked back since we installed Foundations. It's delivered unprecedented business benefits, with negligible costs and maintenance involved. There are no security worries because of the autonomic self-healing features and we know we can make plans based on commercial needs without having to worry about whether we have an IT infrastructure to support our ambitions."

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For more information

Please call **132 426** in Australia or
0800 801 800 in New Zealand.