



Plum Creek Timber Company

A new Microsoft-based solution promotes business growth

Industry

REIT

Services

- Platform decision-support analysis
- Technology implementation planning
- Directory Services upgrade
- Messaging architecture
- Windows platform upgrade
- Infrastructure security
- Desktop deployment and management
- System and network management
- Server consolidation
- Unified communications

Benefits

- Single image supported and updated
- Fully automated and upgradeable desktop deployment and installation procedure
- Granularly managed desktop
- Resilient Exchange e-mail infrastructure
- Server consolidation in branch offices
- Enhanced mobile access for Web-based e-mail
- Previous-file-restoration capabilities for end users
- Account management maintenance reductions
- Infrastructure maintenance simplified
- Infrastructure software consolidation
- Similar file services appearance for end users
- Automated patch management process
- Accurate software and hardware inventory data
- Software distribution
- Proactive monitoring of critical systems

Key Microsoft technologies

- Microsoft Office 2003
- Microsoft SharePoint
- Microsoft SMS 2003
- Microsoft MOM 2005
- Microsoft Live Communication Server
- Quest NDS
- Microsoft Exchange
- Microsoft OSD
- Microsoft ISA

Plum Creek Timber Company is the largest publicly traded private timberland owner in the United States. It is structured as a real estate investment trust (REIT), with approximately 7.8 million acres of timberlands located in 21 states. The company's primary business is to actively manage its timberlands to capture the most value from every acre owned. That means owning timberlands in the most robust markets, making prudent investments in the growth of its timberland assets, and harvesting trees at the best economically mature point in their lifecycle.

Plum Creek had years of investment in a pure Novell infrastructure to support its business. Entrenched within its environment, the Novell solution was spread across 50 locations with over 120 servers and more than 1,400 users. To support strategic goals for propelling the business forward, the company needed to create a secure, reliable, and integrated infrastructure. To achieve this, Plum Creek engaged the EMC® Microsoft Practice to design and migrate its entire environment to a new Microsoft-based solution.

Building a competitive advantage

A single set of technologies integrated across the application stack, with deep support for its business systems, is critical for Plum Creek. The company embarked on a strategic initiative to develop a new set of Integrated Land Systems (ILS) based on Microsoft technologies to consolidate and integrate its land-based information. ILS now enables Plum Creek's staff to intimately know what they own and employ what they know for competitive advantage. The Microsoft solution offers new levels of integration between various servers, applications, and the desktop environment in a very centralized and manageable way.

The fast deployment across the 50 locations was achievable through up-front planning. Prior to migrating users, the back-end server infrastructure was deployed and staged to easily bring the business users and remote offices online. The server-side data was automated through customized scripts and migration tools to ensure e-mail and shared files were brought over to the new environment quickly and securely.

For the first time, Plum Creek has a robust infrastructure to support both its business and operational needs. The company has also benefited from reduced administration requirements and proactive visibility into the health of its IT environment.

Information exchange and training builds confidence

Comprehensive operational and end-user training on the new Microsoft-based solution was critical since the solution required all servers and desktops to be completely refreshed. During the joint planning and design of the solution, the EMC Microsoft Practice focused on providing comprehensive lessons learned for knowledge sharing with the Plum Creek operations team to ensure they were prepared to take ownership of the solution once it was deployed.

All users attended hands-on training sessions for the new Microsoft-based solution prior to the actual migration to ensure they were familiar with the new desktop, office productivity, messaging, and portal applications being deployed.

Effective design, streamlined deployment, and rapid adoption

The desktop refresh was the largest effort of the migration. EMC created a fully managed desktop environment based on the Microsoft Solution Accelerator for Business Desktop Deployment where a single, standard image was created and locked down with GPOs via Active Directory. By leveraging SMS 2003 and the Operating System Deployment Feature Pack (OSD), the end users' workstation data was automatically backed up to a central location before the automated deployment of the new desktop configuration and necessary applications. The interface and consistency of the environment are what enabled the rapid adoption and instant value of the solution.

The integrated, familiar, and intuitive nature of the Microsoft technologies for the operators and end users at the desktop level also provides tremendous value. System reliability, security, scalability, and manageability are built into the solution's design from end to end. The solution is based on a complete set of redundant and high-performing hardware solutions to reduce the risk of hardware failures and bottlenecks.

On top of the hardware solution, the Microsoft technologies are secure through a layered approach at the edge with ISA, at the technology level through hardening the OS and the specific application configuration, and through a comprehensive patch management strategy that is automated through SMS 2003 and ITMU. The solution is also completely integrated and managed via SMS 2003 and MOM 2005 for proactive monitoring and management of servers, desktops, and applications. It leverages Microsoft's entire Information Worker set of technologies to enable a new level of communication and collaboration across the geographically separated enterprise. By integrating Office 2003, Live Communication Server, Exchange Messaging, and the SharePoint Portal into a Windows XP SP2 desktop, employees are now more productive and efficient.

The set of collaboration tools also extends into the new custom business application being built on Microsoft technologies to manage its business assets. This application will integrate into Plum Creek's geospatial system as the foundation for its central title system within the ILS initiative. The EMC Microsoft Practice and Plum Creek are further integrating the power of SharePoint for document management, collaboration, and information sharing with the geospatial solution through nearly 150,000 lines of custom .Net code.



EMC Corporation
Hopkinton
Massachusetts
01748-9103
1-508-435-1000
In North America 1-866-464-7381

EMC², EMC, and where information lives are registered trademarks of EMC Corporation. All other trademarks used herein are the property of their respective owners.

© Copyright 2006 EMC Corporation. All rights reserved. Published in the USA. 9/06

Customer Profile
H2375