

Quest STRATEGIC ADVISOR

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Quest | CASE STUDY

Making magic for the man who loved IT too much

Dan Silverstein is a mortgage banker, but he loves information technology. It started innocently enough: Dan wanted his company – Fair Oaks Mortgage – to benefit from IT. Dealing with complex and fast-changing technology, however, claimed an increasing portion of Dan's day. One day in 2001, he realized he loved technology too much.

"I spent more time doing IT stuff than business stuff," he says. "A friend told me that we were really technologically advanced and then asked, 'So when are you going to go back to work and get more business?'"

Making IT magical

That was Dan's wake up call. "We'd gotten so involved in the technology that it was like we were writing mortgages on the side. It was fun, but I realized I had to get rid of all this stuff and go back to work. That's when I contacted Quest and said to them, 'I want you to do everything necessary to make this magical!'"

Initially, Dan hired Quest to address IT issues at his main office. Later, when his firm and another merged and he became president and CEO of Sacramento-based Mortgage Process Center, the new company's IT

requirements exploded as it expanded from eight to 30 branches. Quest and use space on their systems," Dan notes. "We chose to go with Quest, and ultimately that decision has saved us about 60% of the new IT costs we were looking at. Handing it all off to the professionals at Quest was the easiest decision I've ever made."

What matters most

Now all of Mortgage Process Center's systems are run by Quest.

"We lease space on their computers," explains Dan. "They manage our email and our production hard drives. They do all our software updating – more than a dozen programs. They filter viruses, spam,



THE BOTTOM LINE
IT issues dominated at least half of Dan Silverstein's workday – until he called Quest and signed up for managed services that have saved his company 60% of what in-house IT upgrades would have cost.

requirements exploded as it expanded from eight to 30 branches. "We were going to have to buy something like \$200,000 in new hardware and hire two or three people to run it – or we could get more involved with

IN THIS ISSUE

Although it's critical for success, technology also can cause plenty of pain. Find out why it doesn't have to be that way.

- 2 Profile:** Quest's Network Operations Center
- 3 Did you know?** True and false about managed services
- 4 What's new ...** Small and midsize businesses need to support new initiatives

THE MAN WHO LOVED IT (Continued from p. 1)

Internet access. We use just about everything they offer. And access to Quest servers is web-based, so we can access them from anywhere — in the office, at home, on the road."

One Quest service stands out for Dan as the most important of them all.

"It's the relocation of our server — and all the critical data about customers and the business it contains — from our office to Quest's secure site," says Dan. "What used to keep

“Handing it all off to the professionals at Quest was the easiest decision I’ve ever made.”

— Dan Silverstein

me awake at night was the constant worry about whether our server would still be there in the morning. I don't worry about that anymore."

As Dan sees it, securing the server and the data it houses safely offsite is the best first step a business can take to protect itself.

Predictability of IT expenses matters too. "Keeping IT in-house," Dan Silverstein notes, "would have eaten 30% of our entire budget as we transitioned during our merger, when we grew from eight to 30 branches."

Dan also points to reliability as key. "I know of firms running IT systems in-house where there's downtime *every single day*," he says. "They always have to reboot. We've never had *any* downtime since we've been with Quest."

FROM TIM BURKE...

Introducing **Quest** STRATEGIC ADVISOR

Welcome to the first issue of *Quest Strategic Advisor*, our new bimonthly newsletter. Our goal is simple: to show you how you can get real relief from the pain that technology is causing your business.

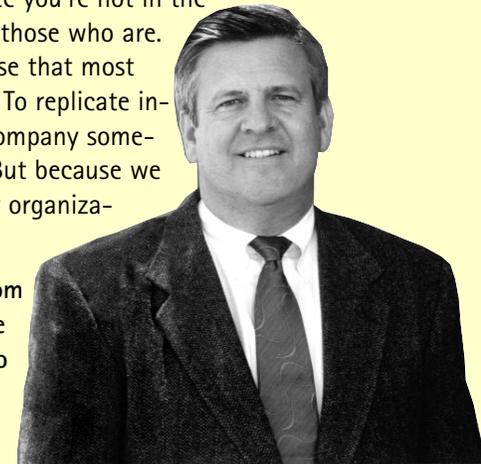
Using insights from case studies and other sources, we'll point the way to solutions and alternative ways of thinking that can deliver three key requirements for a thriving business:

- * Reduce the risks to which technology exposes your business,
- * Stabilize your operations, and
- * Keep your technology costs reasonable and predictable.

To get the most from technology you need to aggressively consider new options. The first is to insist on a strong business case for every new technology investment. The second is to remember that since you're not in the technology business you can benefit from those who are.

At Quest we have the expertise in-house that most middle-market companies generally don't. To replicate in-house what we provide would cost your company somewhere between \$200,000 and \$500,000. But because we share our technical capabilities with many organizations, your costs are much less.

Please email me at tim_burke@questsys.com to tell me what you think of our first issue of *Quest Strategic Advisor*. I look forward to hearing from you.



Quest services provided to Mortgage Process Center

7x24 monitoring of network and security platforms from Quest's Network Operations Center (NOC)

Incident handling including taking appropriate action within 15 minutes

Security, network, and server integrity including archiving of Mortgage Process Center (MPC) data

Installation support activation and/or modification of servers, routers (access lists), firewalls (conduits), and probes

Change management to ensure proper configuration changes are controlled and approved

Customer advocacy tracking and annotating appropriate escalations and notifications to MPC's service providers and vendors, troubleshooting circuit problems with telecom service providers

Post mortem reporting for all incidents above and beyond regular monthly reporting, delivered within two business days

Behind Quest's Managed Services: The Network Operations Center

Poor design and system capacity failures can account for 40% or more of operational downtime.

But unless you're in the information and network technology business, chances are you can't afford the array of expertise needed to remove unnecessary risk and optimize your networks, systems, and applications.

That's where Quest's Managed Services come in. Available as individual components or custom-combined to meet your particular business needs, Quest's Managed Services resolve the design, monitoring, and management issues that can threaten your operations.

On-site or remote, the NOC delivers

At the heart of all Quest Managed Services is, as Quest founder, president, and CEO Tim Burke says, "an infrastructure on which our clients can build." This is the anonymous and secure Network Operations Center (NOC) from which Quest experts conduct monitoring and management. The NOC delivers

- * Dedicated tools and staff 24/7,
- * Scalability with any network configuration/platform,
- * Flexibility to accommodate adds, changes, and updates to your server environment,
- * Minimum-to-zero startup costs.

"The NOC does two things," according to Burke. "It houses our clients' gear in a physically secure environment. It also enables us to monitor and manage systems located remotely at our clients' sites as well as those located in the NOC."

True and false about Managed Services

"Typical IT department reasons for not making the change to Quest's managed services are actually the reasons for making the change," says Dan Silverstein, president and CEO of Mortgage Process Center.

He points to several false objections:

Response to service needs is too slow

Untrue: "There's always someone on site monitoring the system's performance."

We lose total control of the hardware

Wrong: in fact, the hardware is always available if you want to look at it. "Now, Dan points out, "our hardware is stored in a highly secured area that's inaccessible to everyone except authorized personnel."

We cannot afford the downtime in the event of a power failure

Untrue: Quest's Network Operations Center (NOC) [see above], Dan says, "has all the power needed to keep you up and running: diesel generators with enough fuel supply for 30 days and a battery room that occupies some 10,000 square feet."

Quest services founded on the Network Operations Center

- * Application, Network, Server Monitoring and Management
- * Managed Security Services (Incident Protection Services)
- * 24 x 7 Security Network, Host and Desktop IDS/IPS, and Firewall Management, Monitoring and Reporting
- * 24x7 Server and Network Device Patch Management
- * Anti-virus Management Servers & Desktops
- * Internet Access Management/URL Filtering
- * Email SPAM, Anti-Virus and Content Filtering
- * Email Archiving
- * Enterprise HTTP Malicious (Spyware) Code Filtering
- * Automated Vulnerability Scanning
- * Application Monitoring
- * VoIP Monitoring and Management (Cisco Call Manager, Unity, and Quality of Service [QoS])
- * Circuit Monitoring
- * Telecommunication Contract and Billing Management
- * Help Desk
- * Equipment Maintenance and Support Contract/Billing Management
- * 24x7 Server Security Log Monitoring
- * Desktop, Mobile, and Wireless Security Services
- * Active Directory
- * Email Monitoring and Management
- * Citrix Monitoring and Management
- * Data Backup Management
- * Data Storage
- * Application Transaction Monitoring and Diagnostics
- * Server, Database, and Application Monitoring
- * End-to-end Performance Monitoring
- * Compliance Controls

Want to know more about Quest's Network Operations Center and the Managed Services it supports? Call 1-800-326-4220.

Servicing problems from a remote spot is too complex

Wrong: Quest employs over 60 engineers that are available to solve all problems immediately. "The backup servers are tested and monitored in order to avoid any downtime should a server fail," Dan notes.

We're risking the security of our data

Not so: neither the programs managed by your IT department nor accessibility to corporate data get compromised by having your hardware remotely managed.

Coming in the next issue of *Quest Strategic Advisor*:

Case study of SureWest Communications

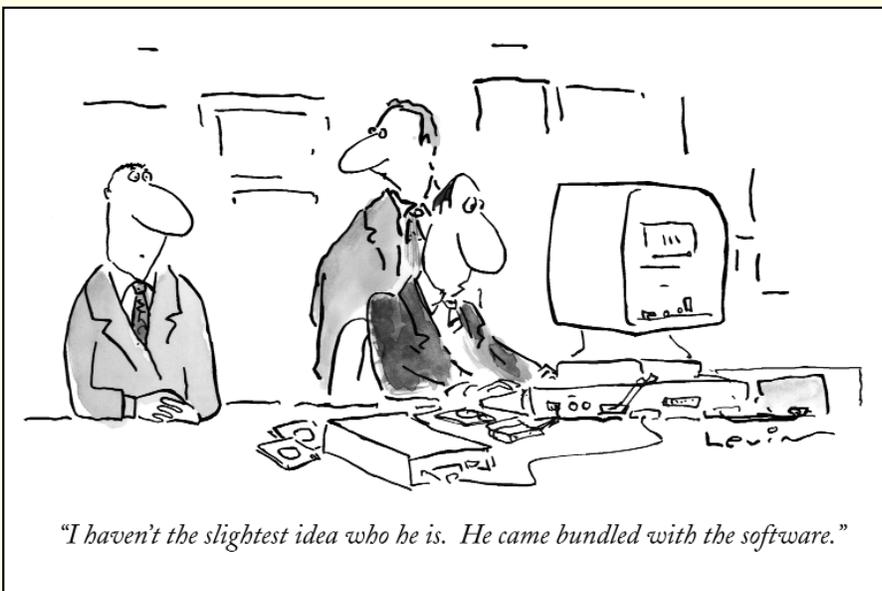
What's New...

→ **According to a Gartner 2006 prediction** (*Small and Midsize Businesses Are Faced With Important IT Investment Decisions*, Nov. 9, 2005), small and midsize businesses (SMBs) will need to support several new initiatives, including mobile computing, desktop security, regulatory compliance, and improvements in business processes.

"To support these new initiatives and maintain the required service levels of their established infrastructures," notes the Gartner document, "SMBs must consider using more managed services to complement their scarce resources." (ZDNet market research analyst Chris Jablonski's blog has a bit more on this (at <http://blogs.zdnet.com/Research/index.php?p=275>); or you can buy the five-page report from Gartner at <http://www.gartner.com/DisplayDocument?id=486690>.)

→ **A tip from Tim Burke:** check out *InfoWorld's* special report on *15 IT Performance Problems and Remedies*. It's a useful checklist to use on those tough performance bottlenecks (at <http://www.infoworld.com/reports/48SRspeedtips.html>). And if you want the gory details, download the PDF.

→ **Another tip from Tim:** consider investing in a book called *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make Competition Irrelevant*, by W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne. Using a singular metaphor – 'blue oceans' (untapped market spaces) versus 'red oceans' (markets crowded with competitors) – the authors argue for a new kind of strategic thinking. Their ideas – make your competition irrelevant, create new demand rather than exploit existing demand, pursue a strategy that incorporates *both* low cost and differentiation – are supported with examples and analytic tools.



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ON THE CALENDAR

Upcoming Quest Events

All events are by invitation only. For current information, including date and location, call 1-800-326-4220, visit www.questsys.com, or email events@questsys.com.

Quest Executive Technology Briefing Disaster Recovery Planning: Replication

Learn about Quest's Disaster Recovery preparedness and Replication solutions needed to get your company back online, your data secure, and your users connected.

Quest/Cisco Systems Technology Briefing Cisco NOW: Wireless, Security & Compliance

Hosted by Quest, Cisco Systems experts will present compelling information regarding Cisco's strategy, vision, and solutions for Wireless and Security.

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