

Technology Vendors Work Together to Give A-dec Full Scale Technology Solutions

Highlights

Customer: A-dec

www.a-dec.com/domestic.asp

Challenge:

Continuous innovation leads to growth. Growth leads to increased IT requirements. Increased IT requirements can lead to higher costs, more management needs, and complexity. A-dec is a growing company with a very lean IT staff. The need to provide real-time information across the enterprise in a cost-efficient manner prompted them to look for ways to streamline, consolidate, and simplify.

Solution:

In a series of migrations starting in 2002, A-dec has moved core Baan applications from Sequent Numa technology running Dynix to IBM® pSeries® servers based on POWER3™ and now to IBM System p™ servers based on POWER5™, both running AIX®.



Why it matters

A reliable IT infrastructure with low overhead but high performance gives A-dec the ability to focus on what makes it a great manufacturing company. Teaming with IBM Premier Business Partner Sirius Computer Solutions and ERP outsourcing experts OneNeck IT Services, A-dec implemented the latest System p and AIX environment, configured for high availability and disaster recovery, for its Baan application environment. A-dec employees receive higher levels of performance, reliability, and availability without increasing costs or IT personnel resources.



A-dec makes the dentist's chair a little less scary

With an extensive global network of authorized dealers and customers in more than 100 countries, A-dec is one of the largest dental equipment manufacturers in the world and the leader in North America. A-dec designs, builds, and markets much of what you see in the dental operator, including chairs, stools, delivery systems, dental lights, cabinetry, and a full line of

accessories. A-dec's primary focus is to create equipment innovations that help doctors perform healthier, more efficient dentistry--a mission the company has adhered to since it began over 40 years ago. The privately held company has succeeded because of its commitment to innovation and focus on people - employees, customers, vendors, and partners.

Key Benefits:

- Increased performance
- Decreased costs
- Reduced floor space (data center) requirements
- Increased scheduled availability of systems due to batch performance improvements
- Increased flexibility to accommodate manufacturing production schedules
- Improved management due to functionality of AIX

Key Components

Hardware

IBM System p570, AIX 5L V5.2

IBM System p550, AIX 5L V5.2

Connections to EMC® storage devices

Software

Baan ERP applications

Oracle® Database 9.208

Business Partners

Sirius Computer Solutions

OneNeck IT Services

"Although most companies claim to be 'people' focused, we live by that philosophy" says Ralph Osburn, Technology Manager at A-dec. "We want A-dec employees to be working on innovation in our product line, excellent customer service, and high employee productivity. In areas outside of those core competencies, we try to form partnerships that complement our skills and help us stay focused."

Finding the right partner to outsource IT operations

A-dec is a family-owned, private company. Outsourcing is not top priority - especially in manufacturing. A-dec products are highly configurable and made to order - so controlling the quality is something they take pride in. Hosting computer equipment, on the other hand, does not contribute to A-dec's core competencies. "Finding a partner to host

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*- Ralph Osburn, Technology Manager
A-dec*

our production systems was the right thing to do," said Osburn. "We want to have the best technology, hosted by experts who know how to manage and operate our environment."

In 2000, A-dec found the right company for them. Specializing in a comprehensive flexible suite of ERP hosting solutions designed specifically to help mid-market companies improve ERP system performance, OneNeck IT Services has proven to be an invaluable partner to Osburn and his IT team. "We own our own equipment, and I have it on a lease so I can easily keep it refreshed and up to date," said Osburn. "But OneNeck manages the day to day operations of our production Baan environment as well as several other application server environments and storage. OneNeck has a talented staff of IT professionals and a knowledgeable Customer Management



Team who knows A-dec's environment and requirements."

OneNeck helps A-dec leverage their enterprise applications to deliver measurable business benefits - and most importantly allows Osburn and team to focus on strategic IT initiatives. The Baan production environment is hosted at OneNeck's Arizona facility. "We have a lot of experience in several leading ERP solutions, including Baan," said Mike Janssen, OneNeck Technical Customer Manager working with A-dec for the last seven years. "We have technical experts to help with Baan configuration and implementation, administration of A-dec's Oracle database environments, day to day operations including backup and recovery, and integration with SAN and tape technologies."

Determining the right technology platform and technology provider

The initial migration from Sequent Numa technology to IBM pSeries with AIX for A-dec's Baan applications took place after IBM bought Sequent. "The IBM pSeries servers had an impressive price / performance leadership position," said Osburn. "Sirius is a local IBM Business Partner, and they have been educating us about IBM server lines, providing sizing and configuration services for Baan applications, and giving us technical education and support. They have provided A-dec with reasonable, cost-effective solutions without trying to sell us something we didn't need."

Sirius worked with A-dec and OneNeck to add local IBM support to the established partnership. "We're not a huge company, but I feel like we are treated like one. Sirius brings in technical expertise when we need it and adds tremendous value to the IBM products."

Realizing the benefits of partners and products

A-dec's Baan environment is utilized by the majority of employees in the company. With almost 1000 employees, A-dec has 650 named Baan users, with 210 concurrent at any point in time. Keeping the environment running smoothly with good performance is key to Osburn and team.

"With each upgrade, first to the pSeries on POWER3, then to the System p with POWER5 this year, yielded about 300% increase in performance. And the price was significantly less than our initial investments in Numa."

The first migration, in 2002, prompted a change in both hardware and software. From Numa to POWER™ and from Dynix to AIX. "The translation to AIX actually went extremely well," said Osburn. "We did some scripting and application integration work, but other than that we didn't have a problem moving to AIX."

The benefits of the first move were great. A-dec experienced a 300% increase in performance, saw batch job time requirements decrease by up to 75%, and went from three racks down to one. They also realized benefits from AIX. "AIX is the Cadillac of the UNIX operating systems," said Mel Gullickson, Sr. UNIX Administrator at OneNeck. "It's one of the easiest to manage and it's very rich in tools. That makes our job hosting A-dec's Baan production systems easier and less costly to them."

In 2006, A-dec moved to an environment based on IBM POWER5 servers, a System p 570 in the OneNeck facility, and a System p 550 in A-dec's Newberg headquarters, used as a failover and test system. They realized an additional 300% increase in performance, gave users real-time performance results even in Baan batch-driven events, and improved availability by removing the need to run nightly processes since they can run all day long with no adverse affect on performance. All accomplished with a lean IT staff, resulting in more for less.



"The test environment on our local System p is a real benefit," said Osburn. "We run multiple Baan environments in partitions, eliminating the need for multiple servers. It give us great flexibility and price/performance, less headaches."

The value of IBM, Sirius, and OneNeck

The partnership that IBM, Sirius and OneNeck share in helping A-dec reach its IT goals is a key strategic tactic for Osburn. "IBM makes good products, Sirius knows how to size, configure and source those products, and OneNeck knows how to manage those products to support our Baan and Oracle applications. I don't deal with the day to day issues, I focus on using these environments to allow our company to innovate. Metrics, business intelligence, data mining, disaster recovery, improved support for my users - that's where my team can focus because we have the support in place with our partners."

A-dec's success in dental equipment manufacturing

Every Friday at A-dec is tour day. Dentists from across the country visit A-dec's 25-acre campus in Newberg, Oregon to see state-of-the-art facilities, a meticulously clean, comfortable working environment, and a friendly, family-type atmosphere. A-dec's commitment to quality, continuous process improvement, focus on innovation, and commitment to people have put it in the leadership position it enjoys today.

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Growth leads to increased IT requirements...

Increased IT requirements lead to increased partnerships for A-dec, and it pays off.



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- Mel Gullickson, Sr. UNIX Administrator
OneNeck IT Services

For more information

Please contact your Sirius Account Executive or visit our Web site at:
www.siriuscom.com

About the companies

A-dec, Inc.
Providing solutions for the betterment of dentistry
www.a-dec.com

OneNeck IT Services
ERP outsourcing solutions for the mid-market
www.oneneck.com



www.siriuscom.com
1.800.460.1237

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