IBM

Florida ISP "e.spire"s to become industry giant in Internet services arena.

Cybergate, located in Deerfield Beach, FL, is a regional Internet service provider with about 40,000 dial-up subscribers in Florida, Georgia and Alabama. More than 150 employees handle the dial-up business as well as the Web site hosting for about 14,000 customers. "In the Web hosting industry, that actually makes us one of the largest in the world," says John Enright, director of technology for Cybergate: An e.spire Company. "We're definitely in the top ten largest Web hosting companies."

In January 1997, Cybergate merged with e.spire, which more than doubled the total number of modems in its network, increasing its capacity to serve dial-up customers by over 50 percent. Through e.spire, Cybergate now offers high-speed nationwide frame relay and asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) services to corporate customers.

To ensure superior levels of performance and availability, Cybergate is using IBM Web technology to implement a new tier of hosting services. Enhanced performance and reliability are provided by load balancing functions and distributed file services. Its core services will continue to be powered by a large group of RS/6000 Web servers. IBM Net.Commerce transaction server, an Internet "check-out counter," will provide Cybergate with the tools to commerce-enable existing Web sites, as well as new business customer sites, while minimizing customer service costs.

"IBM....allows us to focus on growing our business.... and our customers prefer and trust its solutions."

—John Enright, Director of Technology, Cybergate: An e.spire Company

Application	Web hosting and Internet services for e-business customers
Business Benefits	High-quality Internet service access and a totally integrated turnkey solution for business customers

Software	IBM® Net.Commerce
	IBM Payment Suite
	IBM Visual Age®
	   for C++
	IBM WebSphere™
	   Performance Pack
	IBM eNetwork™
	   Communications
	   Server
	IBM Internet
	   Connection Server
	IBM Transaction Server
	IBM AIX®
	IBM DB2®
	Lotus® Notes®

Hardware	IBM RS/6000® IBM Thinkpad® and PCs
Services	IBM AIX SupportLine IBM Hardware Support Services

e
™
e-business

Cybergate is capitalizing on the e-business boom using IBM Web technology.

"We believe that IBM's solutions for ISPs will allow us to differentiate our hosting services in today's highly competitive marketplace," says Tom Benham, Jr., executive vice president of Cybergate.

IBM has the solution

One of the things Cybergate was looking for was a single vendor solution, and IBM was able to provide it with Net.Commerce. The solution is a cluster of RS/6000 servers running Net.Commerce and also includes IBM eNetwork Communications Server, IBM Internet Connection Server and IBM Transaction Server — to provide an integrated Web server solution that can handle the demands of a growing company.

Cybergate has learned that the small-to-medium-size business and the individual customer demand the same features as a Fortune 500 business. The main difference between them is that the small business simply does not have the same budget. For some small businesses, the Web site is their entire business and the only way they have to interact with their customers. For that reason, they need to be up constantly. That 24x7 availability is one of the things Cybergate was looking for while trying to deliver high availability and load balancing software.

Growing by leaps and bounds

Cybergate has grown its software arsenal to deliver quality customer service. Its primary development tool is IBM Visual Age C++. For its news, mail and Web hosting, it has found the various components, including IBM Communications Server, IBM Internet Connection Server and IBM Transaction Server, to be just the ticket for reliable, scalable growth. And as Enright points out, AIX is the centerpiece of its system administration unit. Additionally, HACMP and IBM eNetwork Dispatcher, the load balancing component of IBM WebSphere Performance Pack, are used for redundancy and load balancing. These products ensure that if one mail server should happen to go down, other servers can continue operating in its place while the hardware problem is being resolved.

Competition and critical success factors

Cybergate selected IBM as its primary vendor because of its total solution — hardware, software and services designed to work together. Cybergate can focus on growing its business rather than spending time trying to piece together solutions from different vendors. It needed assurance that Web pages would be up and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Because IBM offers an integrated solution using the most stable hardware and software platforms, downtime is virtually eliminated.

One of the things that Cybergate liked about IBM was the two-way communication. It liked being involved in the development phase and having the opportunity to give feedback directly to some of the developers. "With IBM, we're able to provide input to steer the product in the direction that we want it to go," says Enright. Cybergate customers say it's like "night and day" since going with the IBM single vendor solution. Cybergate is even capitalizing on its use of IBM technology with a major marketing campaign and has enrolled in a brand new Business Partner channel program, so it can sell IBM hardware, software and services for Internet access and e-business to its customers.

"IBM, because of its size and history, is the only company that can offer a one-stop solution source. Hardware, software and support are available in a seamless package that allows us to focus on our business rather than on the complexity of creating a solution based on pieces from various vendors. IBM is a name that is well respected in the business world, and our customers prefer and trust its solutions," says Enright,

Continuing to invest in people and technology will make it possible for Cybergate to keep on delivering high performance and reliable service to its thousands of loyal customers. The Cybergate team is committed to customer satisfaction and is sticking to its original aim of delivering top quality services at competitive prices...and IBM is there, in full force, helping them do just that.

For more information, please contact your

IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

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