ASK Technologies, Inc.

ASK NEWS

In this edition of **ASK News**, we explore the various features available in a hosted Unified Communications system. We also review the benefits of server consolidation and uptime, utilizing VMware's latest product offering. Lastly, we review a client case study utilizing Fujitsu storage in a large school district environment.

Stephen Pirolli, ASK Technologies, Inc.

Inside this issue:

WELCOME NEW CLIENTS

THE VILLAGES OF Flowers Mill

SSJ Sisters of Saint Joseph
CHESTNUT HILL · PHILADELPHIA

RMR
REIT MANAGEMENT & RESEARCH LLC

TDG BROKERAGE

GS Golden Sales, Inc.

Hosted Unified Communications from Alteva
from the ASK Sales Staff

Phone systems today offer much more than simply making and receiving calls. Hosted Unified Communications systems are feature-rich and flexible; they offer redundancy in the event of a disaster. By partnering with Alteva, **ASK Technologies, Inc.** is now able to offer a Hosted Unified Communication solution to our customers that integrates voice with your data system, bundling the newest features in a managed solution. Our clients gain access to the same technology that is being implemented by the largest global organizations, yet packaged in a solution that is right-sized for their business and requires minimal staffing and up-front capital outlay.

Alteva is a premier provider of Hosted Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) that significantly enhances business productivity and efficiency. Alteva is a publicly traded company, based in Philadelphia, PA. They are committed to delivering meaningful value to their customers through a consistent, high quality and unified user experience across multiple devices, platforms and operating systems. These attributes have positioned Alteva as a leading hosted communications provider and the partner of choice for a growing number of business customers nationwide and internationally.

BALA CYNWYD, PA — 2014:

ASK TECHNOLOGIES, INC. is once again a proud recipient of the Philadelphia Business Journal prestigious award for "Top 25 System Integrators, Philadelphia and Metropolitan Area". This marks the 10th consecutive year that **ASK TECHNOLOGIES, INC.** has been recognized as an industry leader in our region.

ASK provides our clients the ability to transform current information technology into productivity. Whether utilizing technology to bridge the gap between employees, business workflow and computers, or using technology to supply access to data, regardless of connection, location and time, **ASK** offers the solutions you need to survive in a very competitive world.

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January 2014

TOP SYSTEM INTEGRATORS

2014

ASK Technologies
Top System Integrators
Philadelphia Business Journal
January 2014

Hosted Unified Communications from Alteva

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Alteva's solution integrates and optimizes best-in-class cloud-based technologies and business applications to deliver a comprehensive voice, video and collaboration service for the office and mobile workforce. As a result, Alteva was recently named as a recipient of the Unified Communications Excellence Award for 2013, presented by **INTERNET TELEPHONY** magazine.

A Hosted Unified Communications solution from Alteva integrates the isolated communications systems that businesses use each day, such as messaging applications, voice, video and conferencing which users access through fixed and mobile devices. By allowing for easier, more direct collaboration between co-workers and with suppliers and clients, it helps businesses of any size to

streamline communications, reduce costs and minimize delays. This allows them to assure faster interaction with anyone important to the organization, even if they are not physically in the same country, state or building.

Alteva will increase your organization's mobility, flexibility, and reliability, while reducing the Total Cost of Ownership of your telecommunications platforms. Hosted Unified Communications provides a flexible and highly scalable telecommunications solution, including:

- Robust Feature Set
- Management of the system in the cloud, eliminating the need for additional resources to support and manage the system
- Telecommunication continuity is almost always guaranteed, since the Call Control is in a data

center outside of the customer premise

- No ongoing maintenance fees
- Easily scalable up or down
- New features developed in the Cloud, so all new functionality is available through simple upgrades and passed down to the customers, which mitigates technology obsolesce

For over 100 years, Alteva has been evolving to best serve its customers. From their roots as a local telephone switchboard operator to its current role pioneering new telecommunications technology, Alteva leads the way in cloud-based communications. To learn more about Alteva's Hosted Unified Communications solution, please contact your local **ASK** sales rep at (610) 617-0300.

Alteva is a publicly traded company, based in Philadelphia, PA.

They are committed to delivering meaningful value to their customers through a consistent, high quality and unified user experience across multiple devices, platforms and operating systems.

CLIENT QUOTE

"Happy 20th!!!

You have always treated PLM very well, and supported not only our IT needs but all of our fund raising activities. A true partnership that is rare today.

Congrats again!!!!"

Joseph M. McGurrin, Jr., VP-Information Technology

Pennsylvania Lumbermens Mutual Insurance Co., Philadelphia, PA

ASK Case Study: Council Rock School District
from the ASK Sales Staff

The customer

Council Rock School District (CRSD) is located in Bucks County, in south eastern Pennsylvania. It spends over $12,000 per secondary student per year, and operates two high schools, three middle schools, ten elementary schools, and an alternative high school. The district covers 72 square miles, and comprises five Bucks County municipalities. It educates 12,000 students and has approximately 956 teachers and supervisors, as well as clerical, custodial, maintenance and cafeteria employees who support the instructional program.

The challenge

CRSD's existing storage solution was inadequate, and required a high degree of maintenance. This was a burden on the IT team of ten people. IT wanted a more efficient storage solution that would be robust, reliable, and expandable.

"We had 13 different SANs communicating over the network but they were not performing effectively. When one unit failed, it led to the loss of 23 servers and caused severe disruption," explains Matt Frederickson, IT Director, Council Rock School District. "In addition, we were faced with limited disk space. People tend to think of storage as cheap and limitless, but as technology becomes more integrated into the education process, there is an increasing demand for space. We simply no longer could cope with demand."

CRSD called on their IT solution provider, *ASK TECHNOLOGIES, INC.* to assist them with the challenge of finding an appropriate campus wide storage solution that would be both resilient and cost effective. "ASK has been a strategic partner providing CRSD with network integration, security and wireless services as well as supplying infrastructure equipment to the district for the past 10 years. It made sense to lean on their expertise with this project," said Frederickson.

"It was not about selling a product; we wanted to be sure our long term customer was receiving a superior solution and the best treatment possible," said Stephen Pirolli, *ASK TECHNOLOGIES, INC*. As a result, *ASK* turned to Fujitsu, a worldwide proven leader in storage architecture and management software. "Fujitsu is a trusted ASK partner who we rely on to help us achieve our customer-centric goal of providing a true end-to-end storage solution," said Anthony Talotta, *ASK TECHNOLOGIES, INC.*

"Fujitsu was the only vendor who was straight forward and proactive. The ASK and Fujitsu team explained that I was looking at the problem from the wrong angle, and my criteria would not address the issues we had," adds Frederickson. "Other vendors were rigid and prescriptive but Fujitsu came in and spent hours discussing my needs and how teachers and students access the system. The result was an elegant solution that would solve our storage issues, now and in the future."

CRSD then invited all of the vendors to resubmit proposals based on the Fujitsu blueprint.

Fujitsu was the most cost effective and flexible solution while providing the greatest available disk space, making the decision a fairly simple one.

"Fujitsu really understood our business and architected a robust solution based on our needs, so naturally we chose them as our storage partner," said Frederickson.

The solution

Over the course of the summer vacation, Frederickson and his team began to migrate the systems over to the new storage platform.

ASK Case Study: Council Rock School District
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The new solution consists of production storage provided by an ETERNUS DX440 S2 and offsite storage archiving supported by an ETERNUS DX90 S2. Together they now host 60 percent of CRSD's total storage requirements; a figure that is set to rise as the migration continues this summer.

"The new system worked from the word 'go' which in my 25 years' experience in IT is something I have never seen before," continues Frederickson. "We have already migrated 40TB to the ETERNUS platform and in the three years since migration began, it has been totally rock solid. We've had no issues at all and that gives me tremendous peace of mind."

The solution provides storage for a range of systems including business applications for HR, Finance and Business Intelligence, the student information system and an education system where students store their own files. Performing the migration of these virtualized applications has been a surprisingly painless process.

"Fujitsu came in and set up the SANs, arrays and servers and we then migrated the systems in-house. We simply allocate space on the Fujitsu SAN and then transition the virtual machines across," says Frederickson. "The web-based GUI is incredibly intuitive and makes managing the storage straight-forward."

The benefit

The new system is not only incredibly reliable; it also outperforms the previous platform by 40 percent. This has led to a dramatic fall in the time it takes to back up servers.

"It used to take us days to back up certain servers and that is now down to a matter of hours – for example, our Exchange server holds 23TB and would take us four days to create a backup; now we can do it in a day," comments Frederickson. "That frees up my team's time to focus on more strategic objectives."

Students and teachers alike can now access files and applications from any location, safe in the knowledge they will be available around the clock. This makes everyone more productive and removes the frustration caused by the previous platform's unreliability.

"The best thing about the ETERNUS solution is that it simply doesn't go down. We can rely on it to deliver what we need when we need it," says Frederickson. "And with the predictive failure detection functionality, if there is an issue, I get an email in my inbox well in advance. For example, if it detects a disk spinning too slowly, I get an alert and a Fujitsu engineer comes in the next day to fix it. That's outstanding service and ensures optimal stability and performance."

Conclusion

CRSD will continue to migrate its storage as budget and timing dictates, and hopes to have completed the final transfer this summer. In the meantime, Frederickson and his team are enjoying the stress-free operation of the new storage environment.

"We needed an adaptable and flexible solution within a limited budget and that is what Fujitsu supplied," concludes Frederickson.

"The company went to the trouble of asking the right questions in order to design a platform that would address my specific needs, and that collaborative approach made Fujitsu stand out from the pack."

"Fujitsu's proactive and flexible approach has led to a storage platform that has exceeded expectations in every conceivable way."

THE BENEFIT

- *In the three years since the migration began, CRSD has not had a single instance of failure*
- *An increase in performance of 40 percent has slashed the time it takes to back up servers from days to hours*
- *Predictive failure detection identifies issues before they occur, enabling optimal reliability*
- *Improved availability makes students and teachers more productive*

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

- *Fujitsu Storage ETERNUS DX440 S2*
- *Fujitsu Storage ETERNUS DX90 S2*

What is VMware vSphere?
From ASK Sales Staff

VMware vSphere is the industry's leading and most reliable virtualization platform. vSphere simplifies IT by separating applications and operating systems (OSs) from the underlying hardware. Your existing applications see dedicated resources, but your servers can be managed as a pool of resources. The result is that your business runs on a simplified yet resilient IT environment.

What Are vSphere Essentials Kit and Essentials Plus Kit?

vSphere Essentials Kit and Essentials Plus Kit are designed for small businesses that are getting started with virtualization. Both provide virtualization and centralized management for up to three server hosts. vSphere Essentials Kit provides server consolidation to help you get the most out of your hardware and reduce hardware costs.

vSphere Essentials Plus Kit provides business continuity with a smaller IT footprint, which reduces overall hardware costs. Small businesses can ensure business continuity without shared storage hardware by using features such as vSphere High Availability (automatic restart of applications when server failures are detected) and vSphere vMotion® (elimination of planned downtime during server maintenance).

The result is an always-available IT environment that is more cost-effective, resilient and responsive to changing business needs. As small businesses grow and their needs increase, they can easily upgrade to vSphere with Operations Management Acceleration Kits for more-advanced capabilities.

How Are vSphere Essentials Kit and Essentials Plus Kit Used?

Maximize application availability and protect information assets – Achieve always-available IT with live migration for virtual machines and high availability for applications in virtual machine clusters. Protect your data with the reliability of vSphere and integrated backup, recovery and failover features.

Consolidate and optimize IT investments – Achieve consolidation ratios of 10:1 or higher and improve hardware utilization from 5–15 percent to 80 percent or more without sacrificing application performance.

Simplify management and enhance productivity – Provision new applications in minutes instead of days or weeks, monitor virtual-machine performance and automate patch and update management.

Streamline software development – Safely test complex multitier configurations in a secure, isolated sandbox environment while enabling test and development teams to share server, network and storage infrastructure.

For more information on VMware vSphere, please call your **ASK** rep today at (610) 617-0300.

KEY BENEFITS

• **Provide business continuity and always-available IT**

• **Reduce IT footprint and simplify management**

• **Save on IT hardware costs**

• **Improve service levels and application quality**

• **Strengthen security and data protection**
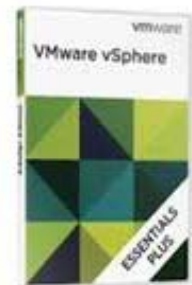
CLIENT QUOTE

"Twenty years is quite an accomplishment. You have put my mind at ease knowing that you are there to solve my most difficult hardware problems. Thank you for your help and many more successful years to you."

Warren Beisler, President
Beisler, Weidmann Co. Inc., Belleville, NJ

BEISLER, WEIDMANN CO.
INCORPORATED
PAPER

ASK TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

Creating new standards in multi-service network integration.

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*For operational excellence at predictable costs, turn to **ASK.***

Study shows 99% of mobile malware in 2013 targeted Android devices
From our Tech Staff

Stay safe, Android users: According to Cisco's annual security report, 99 percent of all malware in 2013 targeted Android devices. In addition to this, Android users also had the highest encounter rate (71 percent) with all forms of web-delivered malware.

Don't let this scare you out of using your phone or tablet: The real-life problem isn't quite as dramatic as the numbers make it sound. The report notes that mobile malware that targets specific devices only accounted for 1.2 percent of malware encounters (the rest primarily involved phishing, like jacking and forcible redirects on the web). And according to Cisco, the most commonly encountered form of malware was Andr/Qdplugin-A, which was often disguised alongside legitimate apps and sold through unofficial marketplaces. So as long as you stick to Google Play you're far safer from a security perspective.

And of course, the fact that iOS devices were mostly exempt from malware last year is a fact worth noting.

ASK Case Study: Council Rock School District
Continued from pg. 4

About ASK

ASK Technologies, Inc. is a national provider of IT hardware, software and professional services with proven experience and expertise in various technology areas, stretching across multiple vertical markets. With a specialization in multi-service network integration, ***ASK*** creates innovative and cost effective solutions to solve our clients' mission critical business needs.

About Fujitsu

Fujitsu is the leading Japanese information and communication technology (ICT) company offering a full range of technology products, solutions and services. Approximately 170,000 Fujitsu people support customers in more than 100 countries. We use our experience and the power of ICT to shape the future of society with our customers.

For more information on the Fujitsu storage line, please contact your local ***ASK*** sales rep at (610) 617-0300.