

Data Center Strategy

The Client

A Boston based financial services firm with \$160B in assets under management.

Business Challenge

The client had experienced significant growth from 1996 through 2006 and established multiple office buildings in the financial district. The rapid business growth and associated deployment of IT equipment and services caused the client to exceed their data center environment capacity. As a result, they moved their IT equipment and services into several low-availability server rooms dispersed throughout various buildings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Challenge

- Disparate server rooms throughout several buildings
- Environmentally unstable spaces
- Fragile networking infrastructure

The Cavan Solution

- Assess existing IT environment & resources
- Design & expedite implementation of new metropolitan area network (MAN)
- Relocate core business servers and applications to stable power & cooling environment
- Develop Data Center strategy
- Project Manage migration process

Benefits & Results

- Secure, high-availability primary data center
- High availability DR facility
- Highly reliable and scalable MAN

The situation became critical in the fall of 2006 when a purportedly redundant fiber ring was severed, separating their server rooms from each other and the business. In addition, an air conditioner malfunction in one of the main server rooms contributed to a total failure of the cooling system in that facility.

The Cavan Solution

The Cavan Group's first objective was to provide immediate tactical assistance and direction to stabilize the current Data Center and networking environment. Our second goal was to develop a comprehensive Data Center strategy that would meet this global financial services firm's demands for a minimum of 7 to 10 years.

After having assessed the existing server room spaces and supporting infrastructure, we concluded that the client was highly exposed to further business and IT service outages. We assembled a task force of Cavan subject matter experts and client resources to tackle immediate threats. We expedited the implementation of a new fully-redundant, self-healing OC-12 metropolitan area network. Together with the MAN upgrade, we identified temporary space with the requisite power and cooling to support the core business applications.

Armed with an in-depth knowledge of the existing environment and the client's business goals, we were in a solid position to develop a framework for a Data Center strategy. The intent was to develop recommendations for a primary facility as well as a

Disaster Recovery solution that would provide the reliability and scalability required.

Our process started with a review and categorization of all business applications by level of importance. We reviewed the client's tolerance for business risk and deemed that anything less than a high-availability data center facility would not meet their business needs.

We developed a detailed financial analysis comparing a customer-built data center build and co-location services. Based on initial capital cost, real state considerations, and schedule, the client elected to proceed with the co-location option.

Our next task was to identify a location that would satisfy the SEC compliance requirements yet prove readily accessible for the client's IT support staff. We narrowed down the search to a handful of facilities in the greater Boston area and conducted a competitive bid and evaluation process. Ultimately we recommended to co-locate with a provider that demonstrates strong regional presence.

Our follow on services included a complete design and layout for the 1500 sf suite, managing the build out of IT infrastructure and managing the migration of all production systems and services to the new facility.

Results

Over the past three years, the client has successfully relocated their corporate headquarters, consolidate all their Boston office space and made several business acquisitions. They have a world-class networking and a data center environment that scales seamlessly with the business needs. They have not experienced any significant service outages or business impact events in the three years since the new infrastructure was deployed.

Once the client stabilized the IT environment and deployed a highly available, fault-tolerant infrastructure, the client's IT resources spent less time and effort on troubleshooting and problem resolution, and were able to benefit the business by focusing on strategy