

# STAYING ON THE FAST TRACK

**The I.T. Pros reduces operational costs by 20% and maintains 200% annual revenue growth with the help of Dell PartnerDirect**

Increasing operational expenses, lower margins and fierce competition are leading savvy managed services providers to look for new ways to boost revenues, and as the saying goes, do more with less. Through its membership in Dell PartnerDirect—a unique channel program designed to help partners reduce costs while increasing sales and profitability—San Diego-based managed services provider The I.T. Pros has managed to serve more customers better while keeping expenses low.

## MAINTAINING 200% ANNUAL REVENUE GROWTH

The I.T. Pros began its relationship with Dell before a formal Dell channel even existed, according to president and CEO Doug Ford. “I started talking to Dell back in the ‘90s when I was a one-man shop,” he says. “When we incorporated in 2001, I made a technology decision to standardize on Dell primarily because I liked the products, I liked the support, and when Dell ships, they ship complete, and the systems are ready to fly.”

The company’s relationship with Dell became even more valuable with Dell’s acquisition of Silverback Technologies Inc., a provider of remote monitoring solutions for managed service providers.

“The remote monitoring solution allowed us to get our managed service practice off the ground a lot faster,” says Ford. “Our technical staff of 13 people used to spend half their time troubleshooting our customers’ systems, which Dell Remote Monitoring has cut down to basically zero. I would definitely attribute our managed service growth to the relationship we have with Dell and their ability to get us to a place where we’re a much more mature managed service company in a short period of time.”

Despite the economic downturn, The I.T. Pros has been able to maintain its impressive rate of growth. “Thanks to Dell PartnerDirect, we are able to continue our tradition of 200 percent growth in annual gross revenues,” says Ford.

## A DUAL-CERTIFIED PARTNER

There are two levels of participation in PartnerDirect: Registered and Certified. Becoming a Registered Partner is as simple as filling out an online form. The I.T. Pros chose to become a Certified Partner, which requires completing a straightforward set of certification requirements in one or more of PartnerDirect’s Certified Practice Areas.

Although The I.T. Pros provides a range of services from cabling to server maintenance, the company also specializes in storage and virtualization solutions. “We’re one of a few Dell partners that are certified in two practice areas: Managed Services and Enterprise Architecture, because we sell a lot of Dell EqualLogic™ storage,” says Ford. “And of course, all of our solutions incorporate some type of Dell PowerEdge™ server. We particularly like the PowerEdge R900 server for virtualization projects.”



### CUSTOMER PROFILE

**COUNTRY:** San Diego, CA (USA)

**INDUSTRY:** Technology

**FOUNDED:** 2001

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 23

**WEB ADDRESS:**

[www.theitpros.com](http://www.theitpros.com)

### CHALLENGE

Faced with increased competition and a changing marketplace, managed services provider The I.T. Pros sought a channel partnership that could help it close more deals and increase profits.

### SOLUTION

With Dell™ PartnerDirect, The I.T. Pros has been able to maintain its fast growth while reducing operational expenditures.

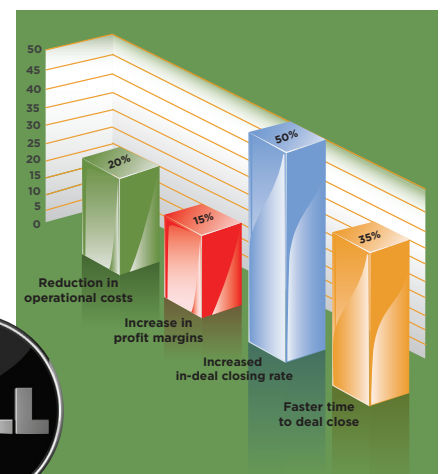
### BENEFITS

#### GET IT FASTER

- Troubleshooting time for 13 FTEs redeployed with Dell Remote Monitoring
- Increased profit margins by over 15% as a Dell Certified Partner
- 50% increase in deal closing rate due to loaner and demo equipment from Dell
- 35% faster average sale close time
- Easily registered deals using PartnerDirect’s Deal Registration Tool

#### GROW IT SMARTER

- 200% growth in annual gross revenues
- 20% reduction in operational costs
- Able to win more new business and increase repeat business



# “THANKS TO DELL PARTNERDIRECT, WE ARE ABLE TO CONTINUE OUR TRADITION OF 200 PERCENT GROWTH IN ANNUAL GROSS REVENUES.”

Doug Ford, president and CEO, The I.T. Pros

As a Dell Certified Partner, The I.T. Pros can take advantage of free staff training on new products, and has increased its profit margins by more than 15 percent. “We get an additional ten points of margin,” says Ford. “We also get access to loaner and demo equipment, which is huge for us and has allowed us to close 50 percent more deals.”

## A LEADING PARTNER PORTAL

To protect those margins, The I.T. Pros registers its deals early in the process via Dell’s PartnerDirect portal to avoid conflict with Dell direct sales teams. “The deal registration process is critical for us because we can evangelize Dell products without worrying about losing the deal to Dell direct,” says George Vahle, vice president, sales and marketing. “The system works.”

The company is also gaining value from its customized Dell Premier Page, which reflects pre-negotiated contract prices to take the guesswork out of sales quotes. “The Dell Premier Page is a big part of our quotation process—we’re able to turn around quotes faster, even after hours, and be self-sufficient,” says Vahle. “The Dell PartnerDirect portal definitely saves us time by giving us quick access to the information we need. I’ve used a lot of different vendors’ portals, and Dell’s is as advanced as anything I’ve experienced—which is especially impressive considering how new Dell is to the channel model.”

## WINNING MORE NEW BUSINESS

Dell’s on-boarding program for Managed Services partners helped The I.T. Pros create packaged solutions to attract new customers. “We really hadn’t productized our managed service offering,” says Ford. “We had developed specialized contracts for each customer based upon their specific needs,

and we knew we needed something more commoditized. Dell was instrumental in helping us develop a go-to-market strategy for our managed service product.”

The result has been more new business—and an increase in repeat business. “Dell PartnerDirect has helped us win new business, and it has helped us develop a stronger return on revenue model and to close sales 35 percent faster on average,” says Ford. “One of the challenges that any service provider has is to productize and teach its sales team how to sell its products. Dell has helped us package our offerings so we can train our sales team easier.”

## REDUCING OPERATIONAL COSTS BY 20%

The efficiency that Dell PartnerDirect provides has allowed The I.T. Pros to reduce operating costs and ensure that customer proposals are accurate. “Our turnaround time for our quote requests is very fast,” says Ford. “Dell works very hard for us to catch any errors in our proposals—for example, they let us know if we forgot to include a UPS or some other component before it becomes a hassle. We realize at least a 20 percent reduction in operational costs when purchasing through Dell.”

“Dell PartnerDirect just feels like a tighter-knit community that seems to care more about our success than some of our other hardware partners,” Ford concludes. “It’s nice to know that Dell actually listens to us and takes action on suggestions we bring to the table.”

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February 2009

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