

SHOPPING

without dropping

Internet credit card processor PaySystems leverages Dell Professional Services to implement a scalable, redundant Dell infrastructure that meets the goal of high availability

PaySystems, one of the largest providers of credit card payment processing for Internet merchants, processes more than US\$1 billion per year and serves more than 10,000 customers in 79 countries. The company has grown rapidly since it was founded in 1998. In the last year alone, PaySystems increased staffing from 25 to 150 employees—and in the past six months, it has experienced immense revenue growth. To ensure near-continuous uptime for its online-merchant customers, PaySystems implemented a cost-effective, scalable Intel® architecture-based Dell™ infrastructure with assistance from Dell Professional Services. Dell service level agreements (SLAs), guaranteed configurations, and dependable responsiveness have helped the new infrastructure meet a company goal of high availability.

Downtime proves expensive for Internet credit card processor

In the three years since PaySystems Corporation first opened for business, the company has quickly grown to become the Internet's largest provider of credit card payment processing for merchants that sell goods and services online. In the last half year, PaySystems revenues have increased by 30 percent each month—an immense success but also a great challenge for IT, which must meet the company's requirement for high availability while continually scaling to match the rapid pace of expansion.

Uptime is essential to PaySystems. The company processes merchant transactions around the clock. Operations are 24/7, and IT staff is always on duty. When

systems are down, PaySystems loses money—and so can the merchants for whom PaySystems processes transactions.

PaySystems shops around for a responsive hardware vendor

PaySystems made the implementation of IT standards a priority, viewing it as a major step toward achieving company objectives of high uptime and on-demand scalability. An Intel-based architecture offered PaySystems the flexibility to grow without increasing total cost of ownership. Standardization on a single hardware vendor for equipment and professional services would enable the use of identically configured, redundant servers for high availability. Servers could be conveniently and quickly replaced when taken offline for maintenance or repairs—and the company could easily add new servers when growth necessitated IT expansion.

In the past, PaySystems staff had purchased equipment from a variety of hardware vendors. PaySystems reviewed proposals from all of the major hardware vendors when making a selection for a standard hardware platform. Dell SLAs—combined with the company's openness and responsiveness—set Dell apart from the competition.

“We were reviewing technology options, but we were also looking for a relationship,” says Philip Fayer, president and CEO of PaySystems. “We wanted a company that would respond quickly to our needs. Dell took the time to learn about our team, our management, and our company. They prepared information for us and were quick to supply whatever additional

PAYSYSTEMS CORPORATION

- » **CHALLENGE** Leverage a single hardware vendor to create a scalable, cost-effective infrastructure that will enable high uptime
- » **SOLUTION** Deploy an infrastructure comprising Dell™ PowerEdge™ 1650 and 2650 servers, a Dell |EMC CX600 storage array, as well as Dell desktops and notebooks
- » **BENEFIT** Continuous availability and reduction of IT complexity based on standardized hardware, replicated server configurations, and Dell service level agreements (SLAs); infrastructure that scales incrementally to help meet unpredictable growth requirements; increased redundancy without higher total cost of ownership (TCO)

Customer Spotlight



information we requested—usually within 24 hours. Other vendors simply weren't as forthcoming. Dell takes the customer-vendor relationship seriously.”

PaySystems' use of Dell Professional Services pays off

With assistance from Dell Professional Services, PaySystems deployed an exclusively Dell-based hardware environment, including Dell notebooks, desktops, and servers. For its large-capacity, high-performance storage requirements, the company uses a Dell | EMC CX600 storage array, which scales to help meet unpredictable storage growth requirements. Dell Professional Services helped PaySystems to properly size the initial deployment.

“I'm a UNIX guy,” Fayer says. “So I gave Dell Professional Services the configuration that I would recommend if I were in a UNIX® environment. They sized it for me on the Intel-based platform, and gave me the equivalent. For me, it was an education. Dell taught me new things, and I'm happy about that.”

Dell also recommended ways to scale the infrastructure incrementally.

PaySystems purchases only the computing power that it currently needs, and adds more as the business grows. Standards-based Dell servers not only enable flexible infrastructure growth, but also help keep the total cost of operations lower—and data availability higher—than the previous servers at PaySystems.

“Dell has shown us how Intel-based servers outperform the RISC-chip machines,” Fayer says. “For the cost of one RISC-based machine, I can buy several Dell servers. One machine is a single point of failure. For the same cost, why not have many machines providing some redundancy? It's not rocket science.”

Dell gets the credit for helping maintain high availability

Today, PaySystems operates with little to no downtime. Fayer says that PaySystems has not experienced a single Dell hardware failure.

When servers go offline for maintenance or upgrades, PaySystems can deploy Dell replacements quickly. To reduce complexity, PaySystems uses the

same configuration for every Dell server, so IT staff does not waste hours trying to resolve conflicting configurations.

“Some vendors can guarantee you a certain configuration of hardware, but the next time you order the same model, they give you a different video card or RAID controller,” Fayer says. “That RAID controller can be the difference between having a machine back on the floor in four hours or having that machine not work for two or three days. I can't afford two or three days. Dell provides a correct replica of our server configuration every time.”

Fayer credits Dell hardware reliability with keeping PaySystems up and running—and emphasizes the importance of selecting a vendor as responsive as Dell.

“You can't run a business without partners that listen to your issues and help you resolve them,” Fayer says. “Dell is willing to take the time to forge a relationship—that's the differentiator. The Dell relationship has helped PaySystems grow, and Dell continually expands the relationship to match our company's growth.” **D**

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