IBM

IBM Network Station helps mortgage lender build business

Talk about fast growth! Jacksonville, Florida-based Bombardier Capital Mortgage began financing manufactured housing through dealers in May 1997. By October of the same year it was generating $30 million in loans per month. And within the next five years, the company expects its loan originations to reach $3 billion annually.

To process the thousands of loans coming its way each month — and to handle future growth — Bombardier is relying heavily on its IBM AS/400 Model 650-2240, a customized loan package, and a battery of new IBM Network Station network computers.

According to Ron Peace, vice president and general manager of Bombardier Capital Mortgage, the Network Station has become "the most pervasive terminal" in his business, occupying approximately two-thirds of the organization's 200 desktops. "We use the Network Station for just about everything except data entry and accounting," Peace says. "We need the right systems to accomplish our goals, and the Network Station is exactly what we need."

Versatile and productive
At the moment, one of the key things Bombardier Capital Mortgage needs is access to the ALE Systems loan origination and processing application on the company's AS/400. This application assists with everything from storing the initial loan application data to managing credit and collections.

Because the loan application is currently text-based, the Network Station's low cost and built-in 5250 terminal emulation capabilities are ideally suited for the role. And when the company converts the application's text-based screens to "point-and-click" graphical screens, Network Station users can simply use browsers instead of terminal emulation sessions to access the revamped application.

Application	Loan origination and processing; access to AS/400 applications and ES/9000 data
Hardware	IBM Network Station, IBM AS/400 Model 650, IBM ES/9000
Software	Custom-developed loan package, Navio NC Navigator browser

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"The Network Station's versatility was an important selling point for us," Peace says. Specifically, he cites the Network Station's ability to pack terminal capabilities and PC-style functionality into an inexpensive desktop client. This is important because Bombardier wants to provide certain Network Station users with Lotus Notes e-mail and Windows-based productivity applications through the company's NT server.

Peace also appreciates the Network Station's ability to access multiple servers, so that accounting users can connect with an IBM ES/9000 located at Bombardier's U.S. headquarters in Colchester, VT, for financial information and reporting.

More sensible than a PC

Bombardier Capital Mortgage — part of the $5 billion Canadian parent, Bombardier, which owns Lear Jet, Canadian Air and Bombardier snowmobiles, among other divisions — operates in 13 states with approximately 200 employees. During 1998, it expects to open a West Coast head-quarters and do business in all 50 U.S. states, with more than 600 employees.

As the company grows, Peace sees the use of Network Stations growing also. "We're not buying many PCs anymore," he says. "PCs are only necessary on a limited number of desktops, and that need will diminish over time. The Network Station will have a much bigger life for us soon."

Al Sorheim, director of planning at Bombardier Capital Mortgage, remembers when the IBM Network Station was first proposed. "We were working with a loan system that was a bunch of PC applications cobbled together on a server," he says. "Then ALE Systems showed us a better solution built on the AS/400 using thin client terminals and we were sold. The Network Station is 30 percent of the PC's price to buy, yet it gives people access to the same applications and capabilities as PCs."

There were significant long-term cost advantages, too. "The Network Station is virtually maintenance-free," Sorheim says. "You turn one on and it just runs. We've seen a huge saving from reduced user idle time for dealing with PC problems, and software savings, as well. Over five years, I expect Network Stations to save us between $6,000 and $8,000 per desktop compared to PCs."

Productivity also has improved. According to Peace: "Many people who used to stay here until six or eight at night to finish their work now go home at five o'clock and get more done." Sorheim concurs: "I'd say we've increased productivity 400 percent since the new system was installed."

Working smarter is vital as mortgage lending becomes an increasingly competitive business. Peace says: "The biggest advantage we have is our service, and the Network Station helps us deliver better service to our customers while reducing costs. What more could you ask?"

For more information

To find out more about how network computing with the IBM Network Station and the IBM family of servers can help you make the most of your business opportunities, call 1 800 IBM−7080, priority code 6N7BK005, in North America. Outside North America, call 416 383−5152, priority code 6N7BK005. Or contact your IBM Business Partner or local IBM representative.

If you have access to the Internet, you can find additional Network Station information via the World Wide Web at http://www.ibm.com/nc

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