



# *IBM Network Station pays off for General Accident.*

When one of Britain's leading insurers, General Accident Fire and Life, upgraded its UK operation from a homegrown collection of insurance applications to a modern, integrated insurance package for its IBM System/390®, it had one small problem. The new application ran on color terminals, while General Accident's 3270 terminals supported only monochrome displays. As a result, the company had to choose among upgrading to color terminals, replacing its existing terminals with PCs, or moving to network computers.

"After much investigation, review and deliberation, we decided that the most cost-effective and productivity-enhancing solution for our 4,500 terminal desktops was the IBM Network Station™ network computer," says Max Currie, chief manager of information technology at General Accident UK. "It seems as though the IBM Network Station was designed specifically for us."

## **More capability, less cost**

General Accident thought it made little sense to spend several million dollars replacing monochrome terminals with color terminals. "We wouldn't have added anything," says Currie. "We wanted more capability, including access to PC-based applications and Internet technologies."

On the other hand, replacing the 3270s with PCs was more costly than the IBM Network Station, which costs 50 percent less than PCs but offers access to multiple servers, network applications and the Internet. Says Currie: "The Network Station can do everything a terminal can do and a whole lot more."

For instance, the IBM Network Station has built-in 3270 and 5250 emulation, and a built-in browser for Internet access. Notes Currie: "With the Network Station, our branch staff can use the mainframe applications that they need. We then have the capability to give them access to intranet-based applications, something we could never have offered if we had

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<b>Application</b>	Terminal replacement; access to S/390, PC applications, corporate intranet, and the Internet
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<b>Hardware</b>	IBM Network Station, IBM System/390
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<b>Software</b>	Integrated insurance package from HUON Corp., Lotus Domino, PC-based applications, IBM Network Station Manager
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stuck with 3270s. As an example, we have a mainframe-based document management system. Previously, we had no alternatives. Now that all our staff will have browser capability, we are going to look at redeveloping that system on a corporate intranet with increased functionality and a more inviting user interface.”

### Easy to install and manage

General Accident has always taken great care to select the most appropriate technologies to meet its growing and changing business needs. “The Network Station provides us with a variety of benefits, including easier installation and manageability, faster software updates, as well as improved security, support and data backup,” Currie says. “Along with the extra functionality, Network Stations offer simplicity at the client end, which is certain to make our IT operations run more efficiently.”

Performing installation and administration at the server using IBM Network Station Manager software is much easier than installing and managing individual PCs. In addition, the Network Station is far less susceptible to virus infections, hardware theft, and unauthorized software, which makes it inherently more secure. Another plus is that Network Station administrators can update software for all users at once, simply by updating the server.

### Staged implementation

General Accident is rolling out the IBM Network Station in several phases. At first, it will use the Network Station simply as a 3270 replacement to connect users to its mainframe applications.

In the second phase, closely following the initial deployment, it will begin to exploit the Network Station browser to give users access to a corporate intranet based on Lotus® Domino™ web server software.

In the third phase, General Accident plans to provide selected Network Station users with PC facilities through access to multi-user NT servers. At this point, General Accident will also begin to deploy Network Stations as PC replacements on a case-by-case basis as existing PCs come due for change through age, performance or Year 2000 compliance.

“The NC is simply a more productive solution for our administrative systems,” says Currie. “A PC environment would enhance functionality, but the roll-out of the Network Station enables us to lower the cost of computer ownership and maintenance, and still provide users with the applications they need. By taking advantage of the many benefits of this technology, we reduce expenses, serve our customers more efficiently, and extend our competitive edge in the industry.”

### Boost for employees

Beyond accessing line-of-business applications and information, General Accident will also be using the Network Station to assist in employee training.

“There is continuous change, both in our industry and in our company,” says Currie. “Employees and agents must keep up with new developments, especially new regulations and new product offerings. Using Internet technologies, we can bring our training to the desktop, which is easier, less costly, and more effective for employees, agents and our Human Resources staff.”

Currie notes that even in its early tests, the Network Station proved immensely popular. “We installed ten Network Stations at one branch, and the users absolutely loved its look, feel and performance – especially the easy-to-use keyboard and crisp displays,” he says. “In fact, they probably loved them too much because when the test was over, they wouldn’t let us have them back.”

### For more information

To find out more about how network computing with the IBM Network Station and 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, 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 [www.ibm.com/nc](http://www.ibm.com/nc).



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