



AXIAR

Manage Your
Business Critical Output

Overview

LBM Systems' software successfully enabled migration from VAX VMS print servers to Windows print servers without impacting network users. Hardware and IT support costs were drastically reduced.

Up front LBM software costs: \$40,000

Estimated internal implementation costs: \$22,000

Estimated annual savings: \$110,000

Return on investment: Under seven months

Air Products replaces global VAX VMS print servers with the LBM software solution

When Air Products needed to replace their aging VAX VMS print servers, they needed a product that could handle 8,000 users, 850 printers and 50,000 pages a day on two Windows print servers. LBM Systems provided the perfect solution.

Situation

Air Products and Chemicals, Inc. (NYSE:APD) is the world's only combined gases and chemicals company. Founded more than 60 years ago and headquartered in eastern Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley, the company has annual revenues of \$5.7 billion and operations in 30 countries. Air Products is a market leader in the global electronics and chemical processing industries, and a long-standing innovator in many industrial markets, including coatings, adhesives and polyurethanes.

The challenge facing Air Products was how to move their worldwide, host based, printing operation from their current VAX VMS platform to a modern, fully supported platform while retaining the ability to manage all printing from a single, central, location. Their VAX VMS systems were outdated and becoming increasingly expensive to support and maintain. With offices in over 250 locations and 18,000 employees worldwide, and over 8,000 users printing 50,000 pages a day, managing the host based printing needed to be as simple and cost effective as possible. The requirements, according to Eugene Prokop, of Air Products Network Printing Team, "It needed to run on Windows, handle forms control, be stable and allow the same number of queues worldwide." Also, as Prokop pointed out, "The VAX/VMS environment was a dead end and required a unique and disappearing set of skills."

Solution

Air Products chose LBM Systems' AXIAR software. LBM's AXIAR is supported on a variety of UNIX platforms, but for Air Products, the ability to use AXIAR on Microsoft Windows was a critical part of the requirements. As Eugene Prokop pointed out "Though we had some existing UNIX servers, and were comfortable with a UNIX environment, the company mandate was to not install additional UNIX servers, but to migrate existing and new applications to Microsoft Windows."

Air Products chose two Pentium II servers – one a 233MHz server with 256Mb of RAM, and the other a 550 MHz server, also with 256 Mb of RAM, both running Microsoft Windows NT4, SP6a. The initial deployment of 600 print queues on the



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233 MHz server took 3 months with most of that time being taken up with testing and configuration of print queues. With the quality control testing and print queue configuration already accomplished, deployment of the second server took less than one month.

Benefits

For Air Products, the move to AXIAR provided a number of benefits, including lowering their total cost of ownership. By eliminating their dependency on an antiquated pair of VAX VMS servers that were becoming increasingly expensive to maintain; they improved the stability and recovery time from the previous system; and they significantly reduced their support problems with the graphical administrative interface of AXIAR.

Reduced Costs

A big plus of the move to AXIAR was the reduction in costs from:

1. Better ease of use with AXIAR's graphical administrative interface
2. Centralized control over large numbers of network printing devices

The graphical interface of AXIAR made it possible for the help desk to get up to speed quickly. This allowed the vast majority of user problems to be resolved by the help desk, limiting the number of calls to the Network Printing Team.

Centralizing control over the network printing infrastructure enabled the Network Printing Team to add and remove printers on the network quickly and easily. New printing and output devices are added to the network through AXIAR, streamlining new product introductions to the environment.

Reduced Maintenance Costs, Improved Stability and Recovery

By retiring the aging VAX machines, Air Products was able to reduce their cost for hardware and software maintenance by over 70% when compared to the legacy systems, even after the acquisition cost of new hardware and software was included in the equation.

Even more important, on a daily basis, was the stability and recovery speed provided by the Windows platform. Rebooting the VAX servers took a long time – 30 to 45 minutes – highly important in an operation that needs to support users at 250 locations worldwide. As Prokop commented, "Now, we hardly ever need to reboot, but in cases where we still do, we just do it - the process is quick enough that the users hardly notice."

Excellent Efficiency

As Eugene Prokop said of the new system "We were, frankly, quite surprised at how well this solution handled our printing load. With over 50,000 pages being printed every day and over 400 print queues on each server, we expected the servers to struggle, but it wasn't so. We looked at the CPU usage, and were very satisfied by its performance."

"Overall, are very happy with our choice," said Prokop. "We like the ability to run AXIAR on a UNIX environment from Microsoft. We have the perfect combination – a graphical administration tool that offloads most of the support calls to our help desk, and the familiar UNIX command line environment that lets us remotely administer, even over a dialup line, saving us a lot of headache and lost sleep."

If you are interested in viewing additional information on LBM Systems, please visit the corporate Web page at www.LBMsys.com. Web links, telephone numbers and titles were correct at time of publication, but may since have changed.



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