

Intelligent Office Fuels Growth with Services from Productive Computer Solutions

Outsourcing IT Functions Allows Focus on Delivering Customer Value

By successfully redefining what the very concept of “office” means, Intelligent Office of Boulder, Colorado has embarked on a path of significant growth nationwide. Widely regarded as the original pioneer of the “virtual office” concept – a remote receptionist and temporary office space targeted at small businesses – Intelligent Office has matured that concept into an offering that includes not just facilities and communications, but the additional administrative services on a customized basis that small businesses need to efficiently serve their customers while making a great impression.

“When people hear ‘virtual office,’ they think of rented space for temporary use,” says Ralph Gregory, president of Intelligent Office. “And we do that – we provide high quality meeting and working space within premier business properties. But what differentiates us – and provides the majority of our business – are the extended communication and professional services that are critical to enabling a small business to function efficiently and provide their customers with excellent service and presence.”

These services include highly qualified receptionist and administrative assistant services, advanced voice and IP communications, logistics services, and scheduling and customer fulfillment capabilities – all on a flexible, on-demand basis that reduces costs to small businesses while it relieves them of the need to hire, train, and manage an extensive staff. “We offer small businesses a level of capability that just wasn’t available to them 10 years ago,” notes Gregory. As a result, Intelligent Office’s customers are able to focus on what they do best and increase revenue.

This full offering of high-value services for small businesses has fueled Intelligent Office’s growth. Intelligent Office has grown to 40 franchised locations in North America serving over 10,000 customers, and is now #2 in terms of location and #1 in terms of profitability. With 40% annual revenue growth over the last two years, Intelligent Office is clearly meeting a growing market demand.

How to Keep the Necessary Technology from Getting in the Way

This remarkable growth has brought challenges to Intelligent Office, including how to manage the necessary technology. Not surprisingly, the delivery of Intelligent Office’s services is highly dependent on a reliable, effective technology infrastructure. Every franchise location is dependent on its PCs and network to support day-to-day operations and the superior services that differentiate Intelligent Office from its competitors. As the number of franchise locations grew, managing all those systems became both distracting and costly. “We don’t make money by spending time on our technology, but by delivering services for our customers,” explains Gregory. “But at the same time, IT infrastructure has to be well-managed to be effective and reliable.” Gregory found that having his own dedicated IT staff didn’t work well: the level of capabilities that one or two IT staff can possess is limited,



particularly given the dynamic nature of IT. And the more locations they opened, the more difficult it became. “We can’t put an IT person in each of 40 offices,” notes Gregory. To meet these challenges, Intelligent Office made the decision to outsource their IT functions to long-time partner Productive Computer Solutions.

Meeting the Demands of Growth

While many technology providers can come fix things when they break, Productive Computer Solutions (PCS) utilizes advanced tools, including PCs based on Intel® vPro™ processor technology, to provide comprehensive services that can prevent problems, anticipate needs, and keep businesses up and running. PCS – an Intel Channel Premier Provider since 1997 – brings Intelligent Office complete management of their IT infrastructure, including servers, PCs, networks, software applications, email, IP telephony, and security. These services are delivered across Intelligent Office’s franchise network. “We have historically been a one-stop provider of IT services,” says Darrin LeBlanc, vice president at PCS. “But the changes brought by Intel vPro mean that we can take it to a whole new level.”

The advanced capabilities of Intel vPro processor technology give Intelligent Office the energy-efficient PC performance they need to run demanding business applications while at the same time enabling PCS to deliver better PC management with greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness. From Intelligent Office’s perspective, this brings a number of significant advantages.

Greater reliability and uptime minimizing business interruptions.

Using the advances of Intel vPro processor technology, PCS is able to monitor and manage Intelligent Office’s systems around the clock, 7 days a week, regardless of location.¹ PCS can *proactively* watch for many developing problems and intervene before they negatively impact the end user’s workflow (or the entire business). When problems do arise, they can often be fixed remotely, without the cost and delay of a field service call and without interrupting the end user. In addition, PCS can update software after hours, even if PCs are turned off for the night. This means Intelligent Office’s staff spends less time on PC problems and routine interruptions – and more time delivering value to customers.

Proactive security that protects business and critical business data.

In an environment where threats from viruses and malicious software are ever-increasing, Intel vPro processor technology enables PCS to proactively protect Intelligent Office. PCS can constantly monitor the PCs to ensure that critical security software is in place and up-to-date, without bothering the end user. If a PC does become infected with a virus, PCS can automatically isolate that PC from the rest of the network while it works to remotely fix it, thus preventing the virus from spreading to other PCs. "Security problems can be bad, as in the disruption of business," notes LeBlanc, "or worse, as in the loss of critical customer data. Intel vPro processor technology gives us unprecedented abilities to prevent security issues from happening."

The performance to deliver new and improved business capabilities.

"Technology evolves at a rapid pace," says Gregory, "and meeting our clients' needs requires that we stay on top of that curve." Whether it's web-based fax, voice over IP, or new collaboration tools, Intelligent Office relies on its Intel vPro processor technology-based PCs to deliver these demanding applications seamlessly. Its Intel® Core™2 Duo processor delivers up to 40% greater performance than previous-generation processors while also delivering excellent energy efficiency.²

Lower total cost and better technology. Intelligent Office learned first hand that managing their technology infrastructure required more than a "good IT guy" on staff. "In the past, I've been in a room with my hardware guy, my software guy, my wiring guy, my phone guy – and watching them all point the finger at each other while billing the time to me," Gregory explains. Outsourcing his IT management to PCS takes the complication off of Gregory's plate and lets him focus on serving customers. PCS brings a much broader set of skills and resources to the job (resulting in better outcomes) and utilizes economies of scale (resulting in lower overall costs to Intelligent Office).

Better visibility into PC and network usage. Because PCS has the ability to comprehensively monitor Intelligent Office's entire network, they can bring valuable inputs to the company and franchisees about current and expected IT needs. Intelligent

Office gains much greater visibility into what services are being used, how they are used, and where upgrades are most needed. In addition, Intelligent Office can now see the true drivers of their IT cost. As a result, IT budgeting can be more accurate and strategic planning can be more effective.

Intelligent Office has found outsourcing their IT management so effective, they're requiring new franchisees to adopt the PCS solution for the first year. "At the end of the year, if the franchisee feels proficient, they're free to take over management of their IT," says Gregory. "But very few do. After a year, they realize that their IT is critical, complicated, and not what they want to focus on."

Better IT Capabilities – At Lower Cost – Let You Focus on Business

In the final analysis, Productive Computer Solutions is simply doing for Intelligent Office what Intelligent Office does for its customers: providing superior capabilities seamlessly and at lower cost than they could do themselves. "We serve the toughest demographic around: small business people spending their own money," observes Intelligent Office's Gregory. "In that environment, we have to be capable, flexible, dynamic, and offer new methods and solutions. PCS' managed services allow our franchisees to run a very sophisticated computer-based business without an IT person on staff." In a world where small businesses are increasingly dependent on capable technology, the abilities of PCS and Intel vPro processor technology-based PCs can be the key to increased business focus and effectiveness.

For more information about how Productive Computer Solutions can help you focus on your business rather than your IT, see www.boulderpcs.com or call 303-440-6963

For more information about the benefits of Intel vPro processor technology for small businesses, see <http://msp.intel.com>.

For more information on Intelligent Office, see www.intelligentoffice.com

Solution provided by:



¹Intel® Active Management Technology requires the computer system to have an Intel® AMT-enabled chipset, network hardware and software, as well as connection with a power source and a corporate network connection. With regard to notebooks, Intel AMT may not be available or certain capabilities may be limited over a host OS-based VPN or when connecting wirelessly, on battery power, sleeping, hibernating or powered off. For more information, see <http://www.intel.com/technology/manage/iamt>.

²Performance based on SPECint*_rate_base2000 (2 copies) and energy efficiency based on Thermal Design Power (TDP), comparing Intel® Core™2 Duo processor E6700 to Intel® Pentium® D processor 960. Actual performance may vary. See www.intel.com/performance for more information.

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