



Microsoft Office System Customer Solution

Case study

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Tom Peterson

*Senior Vice President, Business Development
Game Face, Inc.*

Training Firm Sold on New Collaboration and Communication Solution for More Efficient Follow-Up

With 70 percent market share, Game Face, Inc. is one of the leading sales training organizations in the professional sports world. The company is looking to position itself for future growth with better communications and collaboration throughout its three sales offices. However, it was effectively blocked because of limited communication capabilities and a peer-to-peer network. Sharing and managing information was time-consuming and difficult. With the help of Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003 and Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003, the company completely revamped its network infrastructure, solved its communications and collaboration problems, and estimates that the overall impact may increase sales by U.S. \$650,000 over the next 12 months.



CUSTOMER PROFILE	BUSINESS SITUATION	SOLUTION	BENEFITS
<p>Game Face, Inc. is a Tualatin, Oregon sales training services company for over 200 professional sports teams in the U.S. and U.K. Its income is generated by executive training, executive placement, executive search, professional team ticket sales, and Game Face Academy. The company has 14 employees in three offices. Annual revenue U.S. \$1.2 million.</p>	<p>Game Face was experiencing two business problems that came from its limited P2P network: (1) poor office communication, collaboration, and follow-up, which dramatically affected all three of its offices, and (2) inefficient resume tracking associated with finding and following up on candidates for its pro sports sales training school, Game Face Academy.</p>	<p>The solution is based on Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003 and Microsoft® Windows® Small Business Server 2003. Game Face now has the power of a server-based network, secure remote access, a robust solution to its calendaring problems, file sharing, and the ability to follow up and manage internal and external relationships more effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enhanced productivity via shared calendars and contact and security regardless of location. ▪ More efficient follow-up leads to increased sales. ▪ Overall benefit estimated to be \$650,000 per year from sales, candidate follow-up and retention.



Situation

Game Face, Inc. provides training services to the front offices of 200 professional sports organizations throughout the United States and United Kingdom, specifically in the area of ticket sales processes. Game Face has developed a holistic approach to ensuring that front-office personnel are trained and prepared for the challenge of professional sports. It runs a professional training school (Game Face Academy) for prospective employees of these teams and then works to place the individuals at these organizations. The company's president and founder gives seminars and directs training for front-office staff. The company also provides recruitment and placement services to those pursuing a career in the front office.

Game Face is an eight-year-old company with annual sales of U.S. \$1.2 million and was recognized as the thirty-ninth fastest-growing Oregon small business for 2002 according to the Portland Business Journal. It currently has 14 employees in three locations: nine at headquarters in Tualatin, Oregon; one in the sales office in Atlanta, Georgia; and one in the international office in London, England.

The demand for Game Face's services is increasing steadily, but the current business model will ultimately restrict the anticipated growth. Specific areas of concern include scalability (developing additional products for a larger market), process organization, sales force effectiveness, and underutilization of technology.

Game Face was using a peer-to-peer network of desktop PCs and laptops, primarily for printing and Internet access. There was no central electronic data repository in the Game Face environment. The company was using Internet e-mail accounts with no ability to share calendars and contacts across the company. There

was a mix of the Microsoft® Windows® 2000 Professional, Windows XP Home Edition, and Windows XP Professional operating systems in the network environment.

The two main business problems that Game Face wanted to address with new technology were poor interoffice and intra-office communications, as well as inadequate management of resumes from prospects searching for a career in professional sports.

Limited Office Communication, Collaboration, Follow-up

Because of the geographical disparity between offices, the ability to share information electronically was almost nonexistent in Game Face's current environment. There was limited ability to electronically capture interactions with academy candidates and pro sports clients, making follow-up and closing of the sale difficult. Contact information and tracking was not stable or reliable because of the peer-to-peer network and document sharing was limited. Further, there was a lack of security in the peer-to-peer network and the POP3-based e-mail solution.

One of the activities of Game Face Academy students is to work on a call campaign for one of Game Face's pro sports clients. This involves several days of the class making thousands of sales calls to potential ticket buyers. Historically, there was no way to track these contacts electronically. Game Face was using index cards and boxes to store and catalog these calls and their results. Thus, following up with buyers was highly labor intensive and as a result doesn't happen as often as it should. Another example of a major collaboration problem concerns scheduling and calendaring.

"At least two people are traveling 50 percent of the time—one is the president whose schedule and calendar must be

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President
Game Face, Inc.

shared companywide,” says Tom Peterson, Senior Vice President of Business Development. “Historically, we managed this using a large wall calendar in his office, with people running in and referring to it constantly. And because we only had basic e-mail with our Atlanta and U.K. offices, scheduling conflicts were a constant problem.”

Rob Cornilles, President, identifies the overall problem the company faces: “Our macro business problem is one of scale, doing more of what we do more efficiently. Lack of technology—such as a server-based network, remote access, more effective communication tools, scheduling problems, file sharing, and follow-up tools—was a barrier to our growth.”

Inefficient Resume Tracking

Game Face receives approximately 2,000 resumes per month from potential students for its academy and those seeking placement in sports careers. Most of these resumes are generated from Monster.com and HotJobs. Storing and cataloging these resumes is a cumbersome task. Each is visually screened against key qualification criteria, resulting in 100 to 200 potential candidates per month. These resumes are put into public folders from which Game Face Academy recruiters pull for contact. Hundreds of resumes that miss the first cut but could be future academy prospects are not followed up because of volume and retrieval issues.

Solution

Using the expertise of IT consultant InfoGroup Northwest, a solution was created that provides Game Face with instant collaboration using Microsoft messaging, group calendaring, file sharing, and scheduling as centralized resources accessible to all users in the organization. The software used by InfoGroup

Northwest was Microsoft Office Professional Edition 2003, Windows XP Professional, and Windows Small Business Server 2003.

The first area of focus was the desktop operating system and the conversion to a server-based network. Windows XP Professional provided a common, secure, and reliable OS environment. Windows Small Business Server 2003 provided additional security for the network, a simple way to set up remote access for mobile managers and satellite offices through a VPN connection, and a full range of shared capabilities such as contacts, calendars, and scheduling.

The server based network solved a variety of problems inherent with a peer-to-peer network. For example: sluggish file and print capabilities as a desktop computer must also function as the P2P network server. The inability to share calendars and coordinate scheduling. The lack of file sharing with team members located in other offices. The slowing of the network as more users are added, and the difficulty insuring overall network security.

The second area of focus was to provide enhanced communications and collaboration capabilities through Office Professional Edition 2003. Outlook 2003 delivered powerful email, calendaring, scheduling and instant messaging tools. In combination with Windows SharePoint Services 2003, included in Windows Small Business Server 2003, the company was able to share contacts, calendars, and establish a shared library of templates and graphics. Also, Game Face created team workspaces and document workspaces where various versions of client proposals could be shared and managed.

Historically, resumes would either be tossed away or kept in a large public folder. Office Excel 2003 helped solve the problem of managing the large volume of

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Corey Kearsley
Office/IT Manager
Game Face, Inc.

resumes coming into the company each month.. Now, the company enters key information from the resumes in an Excel 2003 spreadsheet so the information can be easily sorted and retrieved for more effective follow up.

Benefits

Game Face is beginning to see an immediate return on investment from enhanced productivity due to better communications and collaboration.

Enhanced Productivity and Security Regardless of Location

Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003, which includes Exchange Server 2003, provides the ability to share files, emails and contacts. Providing a central location for client lists and contacts using Windows Small Business Server 2003 reduces the time required to store and access client data. Increased access also means better collaboration, especially between roaming users and the internal sales force.

“Moving from peer-to-peer to a server-based network is like going from high school ball to the NBA,” says Corey Kearsley, IT/Office Manager at Game Face. “It’s both exhilarating and challenging.” A Windows SharePoint Services site provides for sharing, managing, and version control of key documents and proposals. The shared calendar is invaluable and a huge benefit for coordinating activities between the Tualatin headquarters and the Atlanta and U.K. offices. Also on the site are common files that are needed across the company to ensure consistency—for example, fax and letterhead templates, images, vacation calendars, and proposals.

Having secure communications in or outside the office is very important. With Remote Web Workplace, an out-of-box

access solution in Windows Small Business Server 2003, all company employees, can have 24 hour secure access to email, files, calendars, shared sites, and all other network resources via any Internet enabled computer.

More Efficient Follow-up and Increased Sales

Game Face is able to more effectively manage follow-up with academy candidates to avoid historic drop out rates, usually two candidates per session. Retaining two additional candidates can mean up to \$50,000 more per year in training revenue.

Being able to systematically follow up resumes for both Game Face Academy enrolled students and future candidates is expected to increase by 50% the number of students during the next 12 months, an additional \$500,000 in projected revenue.

More efficient follow-up is also expected to play a role in helping Game Face to anticipate seasonal up-ticks in business. By using the powerful e-mail, calendar, tasks, and instant messaging capabilities in Outlook 2003, the company believes it can be more proactive with existing pro sports clients. The result is better planning and calendaring of pro sports team training commitments to maximize total training days available. This increase in efficiency is expected to generate another \$100,000 in additional revenue.

“Much of our revenue is based on the effectiveness of our follow-up,” says Peterson. “We follow up 2,000 resumes per month, we follow-up 200 of our professional sports team clients, and we follow-up with our academy candidates. In a sense, we’re one huge follow-up machine. Now, we can do that better than ever before. It could effectively add another \$650,000 to our bottom line in the next 12 months.”

Microsoft Office is the business world's chosen environment for information work that provides the software, servers, and services that help you succeed by transforming information into impact.

For more information about Microsoft Office System, go to:
<http://www.microsoft.com/office/>

Windows Small Business Server 2003 enables your small business to be more productive with fewer resources. Now you can:

- Automatically protect your business information in 15 essential ways
- Get 20% more done every day by making it easier for your employees to find, share, communicate and remotely access information
- Reach more customers and serve them better, 24x7
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For more information about Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2003, go to: <http://www.microsoft.com/sbs/>

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Date Published: October 2003

