

Reducing Operating Costs



Protus IP Solutions is a high-growth application service provider offering voice, email and fax messaging services to businesses around the world. Their customers represent a variety of industry sectors and rely on Protus to enhance their voice, email and on-line fax communications. Since its inception in 1997, Protus has successfully grown its customer base to more than 40,000 customers worldwide and has established itself as a leader in the market.

A key factor to Protus' success has been their focus on people, and this includes consistently delivering a reliable level of service that is uncompromised, despite very high traffic volumes. The communications infrastructure that enables this high volume of traffic is the responsibility of Simon Nehme, co-founder and Chief Technology Officer for Protus. He explained: "To meet our customers' requirements, our system must be capable of efficiently handling over three million pages of fax and a million voice transmissions per day."

Customer: Protus IP Solutions is an application service provider offering internet-based messaging solutions including voice, email and internet fax services to business customers around the world

Challenge: How to continue delivering high levels of service while reducing total operating costs of telecom infrastructure

Solution: PIKA Digital T1-E1 Cards (PrimeNet MM) featuring high-density, high-efficiency integrated fax and voice technology

Benefits: Reductions in costs to expand, operate and manage telecom system

The Cost of Growing Business

Today, Protus' telecom facility is made up of 13 DS-3 physical interfaces, each with 28 T1 trunks, supporting 9,000 telephone lines. Prior to PIKA, seven servers were required to provide fax capacity for each new DS-3. The voice and fax delivery systems were not integrated for cost and efficiency reasons: each required their own dedicated platform. The cost to maintain and manage this infrastructure was significant; and growing. Increasing their service capacity would have meant adding even more costs in terms of real estate, administration, environmental controls and additional equipment.

"To remain competitive, scalability of our system is very important", said Nehme. "We are always evaluating better and more cost effective ways of increasing capacity and effectively managing our infrastructure." The continued growth of their business led Protus to look at alternatives to expanding their system.

Four Good Reasons for Porting to PIKA

For Nehme, there were multiple reasons why it made sense to standardize on PIKA Technologies and to establish PIKA as the new board supplier for Protus voice and internet fax services. Efficiency was the primary driver. The high-density architecture of the PIKA T1/E1 Digital Card (PrimeNet MM) allowed more fax ports per slot, and therefore an increased number of ports per server. This meant that instead of their previous implementation which required seven servers to equip one DS-3, they needed less than two servers for each DS-3, to maintain the same level of service.

Secondly, the PIKA implementation is integrated, so instead of running two separate platforms, one for voice and one for on-line fax services, Protus was able to put both media onto the same platform. Before, resource allocation was more difficult to manage but with PIKA, this issue was eliminated. With the 'flick of a switch' they can transform the system from sending fax to email messages to sending voice messages, enabling them to manage resources more effectively.

Cost was another major contributor leading to the PIKA transition. "The price tag on the PIKA hardware was substantially less than what we were used to paying from our former supplier. With the increased efficiency of the system, combined with the cost efficiencies, the changeover to PIKA was very compelling," said Nehme.

"At the time we were considering PIKA, we were aware of another vendor who had just added high density fax boards to their portfolio. The final, deciding factor for us was support. We were immediately impressed with how fast, flexible and cooperative the PIKA technical support team was to deal with," he explained. "We knew that this [high density] fax technology was relatively new, so we needed a partner who would be there to back up their solution every step of the way. Our development team worked very closely with their support team, so any issues that came up were resolved in an efficient manner."

Explained Cindy Xu, PIKA's Senior Field Application Engineer: "From the very start, we worked together with Protus as an extension of their development team. We were actively involved in all phases of the project, from architecture design and coding, to testing and deployment. The process worked well; in-depth knowledge, information sharing and trust were all very important. As a result, we were able to deploy the optimal solution for Protus."

Nehme added, "We were very pleased with the response times from PIKA. Instead of waiting for days as we did with our previous vendor, we could rely on PIKA to get back to us within hours."

	Original Implementation	PIKA Implementation
Fax channels/slot	24	96
Spans/slot	1	4
Cards/server	4	4-5
Spans/server	4	16-20
Fax channels/server	96	384-480

It's in the Numbers

By comparing the sheer numbers alone, the updated telecom infrastructure at Protus has provided significant business benefits. "The smaller size of the platform also translates into reductions in facility space requirements, as well as decreased management and training costs," said Nehme.

The bottom line is: a more efficient operation allows Protus to focus on what's most important to their business and that is being responsive to the changing communications needs of their customers.



About Protus IP Solutions

Protus IP Solutions – a high-growth application service provider – offers value-added voice, e-mail and fax to email messaging services to businesses around the world. Protus customers are involved in every industry sector, including finance, insurance, real estate, pharmaceuticals and retail. Whether they use Protus' services across the company or for key operational requirements, customers rely on Protus to simplify their voice, e-mail and fax communications. Protus helps its customers reach their customers more effectively, process documents more efficiently and access information with greater speed. Protus solutions are sold both directly and through a network of worldwide partners, including major service providers. On-line Internet fax services are sold under the brand names of Virtual Fax for business users and MyFax for internet fax services targeted to small office home office users. Additional information is available at www.protus.com or www.myfax.com.

About PIKA Technologies

PIKA Technologies designs and manufactures computer plug in voice cards and software that connect a computer system to both TDM- and IP-based networks to provide advanced voice services. For almost two decades PIKA Technologies has been serving companies around the world that require voice cards to design sophisticated phone services for recording systems, voice services applications, and PC-PBX systems. The company has built a reputation for delivering innovative products and exceptional technical support by working closely with its customers. Headquartered in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, the company has ranked in The Branham300, an authoritative ranking of successful Canadian high tech firms, for three consecutive years. Visit www.pikatechnologies.com or call +1-613-591-1555 for more information.



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