



IT support for small businesses

Managed Network Configuration & Server Implementation

Client:

Date:

SAMPLE

This report is based on the recent audit visit and information provided by the user. It is not intended as a fully comprehensive report but aims to provide potential options to improve and enhance the current IT operation. It is offered free of charge and with no obligation to the user.

Overview

As in many organisations, the existing computer network at XXX XXX Ltd has grown organically to meet the changing needs of the business and its marketplace. The understandable 'bolting-on' of newer technology to deal with these changing IT needs has resulted in the present network becoming somewhat disjointed, slow and non-secure.

Summary

This report outlines the benefits of bringing the network into line with latest IT practices in order to provide substantial benefits to the business at affordable cost. It recommends the introduction of a central Small Business Server as the focal point for network activity. This facility will provide a secure and efficient base to meet the forward needs of this particular business. It will provide the option of remote management of the system to ensure a smooth and reliable IT operation as the business continues to grow.

Current system

As with many businesses, there is no server in the current network. The business is operating a 'peer to peer' set-up with a file server designated to store company documents and accounting information. This means that:

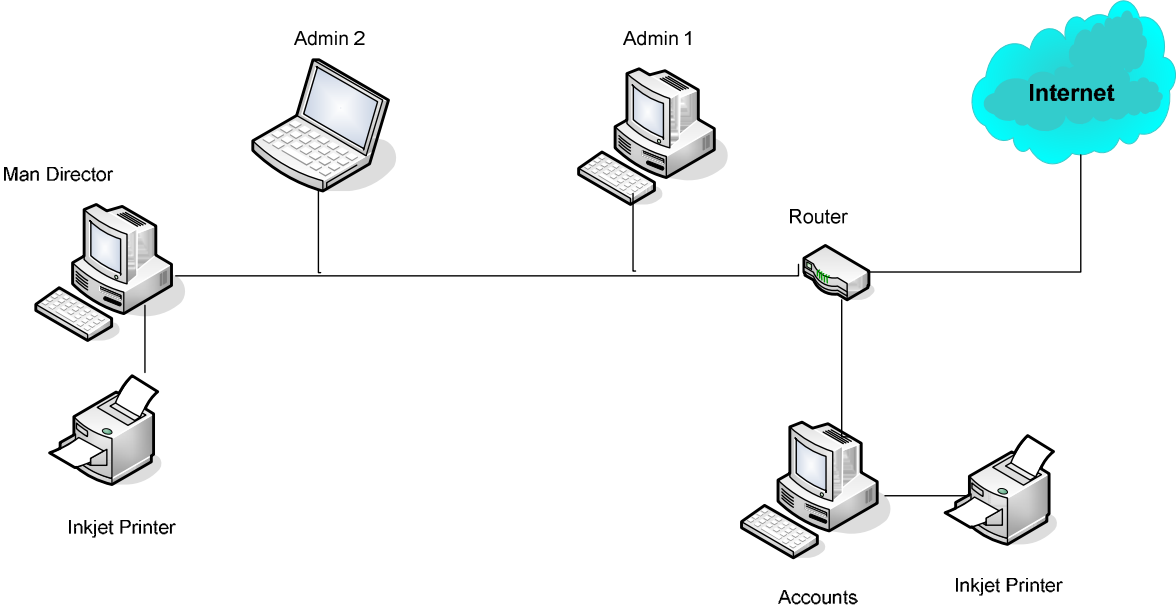
All workstations are running Windows 'XP Pro' and are meeting the needs of the current workload. There is a requirement that all workstations using the network must have a minimum of 512M/b of ram. The 3 PCs in the office are connected to Inkjet printers.

Some files and data are stored on user workstations and accessed across the network. This not only limits access to this data but also makes the essential task of data back-up more difficult. Indeed, there is currently no regular backup of this data.

The company email is collected direct from the ISP onto individual PCs – again, these are not being backed up at this time. This methodology is slow and has a number of risks and limitations – such as privacy and security.

There is no network firewall or workstation security – essential requirements for today's business.

Current network layout



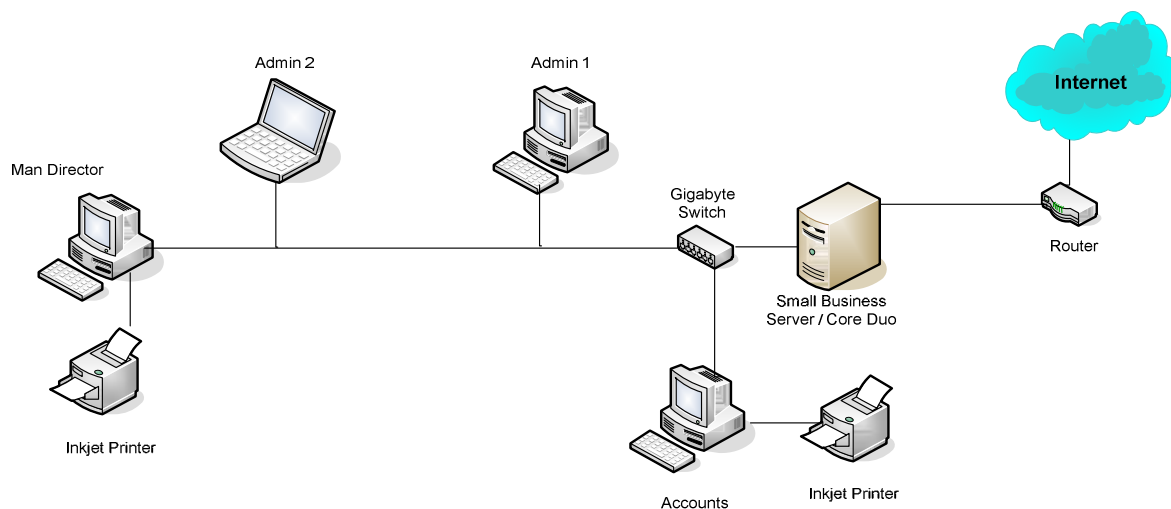
Suggested System

The suggested system would involve replacing the existing network with a Client/SBS server structure, where a central server controls all of the network services. The introduction of a Small Business Server at the heart of the network would afford numerous benefits to the end users and to the business as a whole:

- **Anti-Virus:** A centrally managed network Anti-Virus package automatically updates all computers on the network. This will be easier to administrate and cost effective in relation to annual subscriptions
- **Firewall:** A network firewall prevents hackers from accessing private information via the Internet
- **Fax feature:** A network-wide fax feature to collect faxes into the business and distribute to the respective department via email.
- **Security:** All users will be provided with a user name and password that allows them to log in securely - users can be added and removed from the system easily. The system will also usefully log individual user activity.
- **Updates:** The server updates the individual PCs automatically without interfering with workflow.
- **Protection against data loss:** All users will store their data on the server, allowing for the use of a common backup system.
- **File server:** Each user will have a private folder located on the server which the user can access confidentially from any computer on the network
- **Email:** The server will manage all incoming and outgoing email. Users will be able to access their email from any computer on the network and management will be able to access email via the Internet when out of office. All users can send and internal email, speeding up lines of communication.
- **Managed Internet access:** By having all Internet access flowing through the server it is possible to limit the content available to users. This would allow the company to better control the browsing habits of users.
- **Remote administration and support:** Many user and server management tasks can be performed remotely, with significant potential savings in support costs money and much faster fault resolution.
- **Remote access:** Senior staff can securely access the network from home over the Internet.

The suggested system provides a robust industry standard database platform for existing or future database development.

Suggested System Network diagram



Installation of the System

The system install would be implemented in stages as this allows the workload to be managed and minimises disruption to the business. It is, however, a straightforward process.

Step 1. Prepare the network infrastructure

- Liaise with senior staff to ensure a smooth transition
- Ensure suitability of the current ISP for internet and email
- Install CAT-5 cables where necessary
- Arrange for a server enclosure
- Ensure access to email administration to integrate exchange with the domain
- Migrate critical data from old server to SBS Server

Step 2. Fully Test the new server

- Specify the new server and network licences
- Configure Microsoft Windows Server 2003 Premium
- Create network users
- Configure Microsoft Exchange email
- Setup network shares and move company data
- Install and configure Network Anti-virus, backup software and hardware
- Create disaster recovery plan

Step 3. Configure workstations

- Refresh and add the existing workstations to the new network
- Re-configure/re-install software to work with new system
- Configure usernames/passwords
- Setup email

Step 4. Training

A series of short training sessions are recommended to ensure the users are familiar with the new system and are making the most of its features.

Other Options

Given the very clear requirements of this particular business, there are no suggested alternative approaches. Any short-term enhancements are unlikely to provide the business with the flexibility and security that it requires.

Cost Indication

We will be happy to provide a detailed cost breakdown should the report's suggestions be of interest.

Important note

In our experience there is no single solution to IT networking issues. We will always endeavour to provide an objective report, including proposed solutions, designed to address the needs of your specific business.

49a Crouch St, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3EN
01206 576043 | info@tcs2000.co.uk
01026 570003 | www.tcs2000.co.uk