

Pure IT

SOLUTIONS & SUCCESS THE INSIDE STORY

Company & Location
Industry
Case Study Respondent

AiM Land Services, LTD.
Land Consulting
Jordan Blouin, GIS Manager



AiM Land Services is a full-service land consulting firm that works with a wide range of major energy projects across Canada and the United States. On behalf of clients in oil & gas, utility, surface as well as mineral assets, AiM liaises, negotiates and manages the relationship on their behalf with landowners.

AiM operates in a competitive, high profile industry, managing projects, and working with clients all across North America. Doing so requires a robust and secure IT environment that connects project managers in the field with those at the main offices. AiM has trusted Pure IT since 2011 to help them manage and maintain their IT systems, making sure they have the resources, security, and access needed to excel in the field and meet their clients' needs.

Server Replacement And Management

Challenge

Servers are the backbone of an IT environment. The degree to which they are maintained can have a major effect on the user experience. When Jordan Blouin joined AiM as their GIS Manager, one of the first tasks he undertook was in evaluating the state of the server and overall infrastructure.

"No one really was managing our hardware and infrastructure, so when I got here, I stepped in and started taking inventory and keeping track of when things need to be replaced," says Jordan Blouin, GIS Manager, AiM Land Services. "I noticed how full the server was, and the age of it, so I brought it up to the owners. This is something that we need to look at for the future, it's something that we'll need to plan."

Solution

AiM had started working with Pure IT prior to bringing Jordan on, so once he wanted to get started on planning the upgrade of the server, he had an expert team available to work with him. Scaling up infrastructure is a complicated and error-prone process, so Jordan and Pure IT didn't want to rush it.

"Me and Paul sat down and started hashing out the needs and wants and bells and whistles, and they came up with a couple of different options for how we could move forward with our servers, and then it took about

six months to weigh the cost against the performance," says Jordan. "Me and Paul worked heavily with that, and then once we made the owners happy with what they wanted, and I was happy with what would bring our business forward and give us future growth, we started a plan on implementing it."

Result

With the owners on board and Jordan's IT-based needs met, Pure IT moved forward with the server upgrade. Thanks to their careful planning and early action taken to acquire the necessary hardware, the upgrade process went quickly and smoothly, resulting in little unnecessary downtime.

"Paul set up a project manager, they communicated the plan, we went over the phases and what to expect," says Jordan. "We made the decision to pre-emptively get a few things we needed, which sped up the process. As parts came in, we worked through the next steps and dealt with any roadblocks. It was completed in a timely manner and with very little downtime to the business, so it was a success for sure."



Scaled Up Cybersecurity

Challenge

Since Jordan joined AiM's operation, the company has quickly grown, which is a double-edged sword. Yes, success is great, as it means more clients and more profits. But with growth comes growing pains. As the company takes on new clients, they need more staff to be able to service them. With more staff, they need more resources, which includes IT and all the components required for an effective IT environment.

"When I came on there were around 35 employees, and now there are over a hundred. Our equipment needed to follow that growth," says Jordan.

If one part of that fragile system can't keep up with the growth, the company might have to turn new clients away or risk delivering a low-quality or unsecured service to them. Growing businesses like AiM can quickly outpace the capabilities of their cybersecurity solutions that are designed for a small or medium-sized business.

This is an even greater problem when you factor in the types of clients that AiM works with. Operating in the land management industry, AiM is involved in high profile projects that can often gain the attention of cybercriminals. There is a long history of **cyber terrorism in both the Canadian oil & gas industry and in other countries around the world.**

"We have some pretty high profile clients that are in the news all the time, and of course, with high profile projects comes the security risk in how people who are opposed or people who are malicious just see your name on a project and you become a target," says Jordan. "That was something we took into account and something we wanted to ensure for our sake and our clients' sake."

Solution

Pure IT worked with Jordan to select, install, and manage a new firewall that would better protect them at their current size and into the future.

"We looked at getting a larger firewall that would suit our needs and suit our growth, and give us that expansion, and give us the ability to do VPN and have all the security behind the firewall," says Jordan.

Result

AiM now has a level of cybersecurity that is in line with both the size of its business and the value of the data they deal with every day.

"It's definitely something that we take seriously, and we take into account and unfortunately, it's something that's a big threat in today's society, the virtual terrorism and the hacking where people try to get access to your files," says Jordan. "It's definitely something where we had to step up our game and Pure IT definitely helped us with that."



Remote Work During The COVID-19 Pandemic

Challenge

IT resources have never been as important as they are now during the COVID-19 pandemic. In order for organizations to stay connected and productive while working remotely, they need the right technologies and processes in place.

Unfortunately, due to how quickly the pandemic developed, many businesses were unable to prepare for the shift to a remote work setting. Doing so would have required careful planning, methodical execution of new processes, and expert implementation of new technologies.

"Before coronavirus was a thing, we had already planned the server upgrade and I had already been shopping around for higher-speed Internet, and it just happened to work out that the Friday that things really started to hit North America, that is when we were scheduled to upgrade our Internet," says Jordan.

Fortunately, AiM and Pure IT had already been in the process of making necessary upgrades to their IT environment as a matter of due diligence before the pandemic became a global concern. They were able to complete those changes before the pandemic affected their operations.

"I started to have talks with Pure IT about what were our limitations, what we could do, what we still needed, if we had to purchase a whole bunch of additional hardware and software to make this happen," says Jordan. "Thankfully, through our server upgrade and firewall upgrade projects that we did before, there weren't a lot of adjustments that had to be done other than teaching the workforce on getting connected from home. The hardware and processes were already in place."

Solution

Pure IT worked with Jordan to quickly and confidently manage the migrations as planned. Thanks to the experience and detailed processes, the upgrades went smoothly and caused little disruption to AiM's operations.

"The day we got our internet upgraded, Pure IT provided support, which was fantastic and allowed for minimal downtime," says Jordan. "We were testing the new environment before we started working from home, there were very few hiccups and it went very smoothly."

Result

Working together, Jordan and Pure IT made sure that AiM had the IT resources they needed, without even accounting for the pandemic. With those upgrades in place, it was just a matter of getting AiM's staff connected and comfortable with their new remote set-up.

"It was still a busy couple weeks for myself and Pure IT to, of course, get everyone connected and install the required stuff on people's computers so that they can connect to the office, but for the most part it went very smoothly," says Jordan. "It's all thanks to Pure IT's suggestions when we were building the server and firewall, and also our preplanning for such situations."

One of the most valuable resources available to AiM right now is Microsoft Teams. After migrating to Microsoft 365 about a year and a half ago, AiM's staff had been using Teams for basic messaging and little else. Now that they're operating remotely during the pandemic, they've seen the value in Teams' many other features.

"Obviously, the use of Microsoft Teams has gone up since working from home, and I've heard nothing but good things from employees," says Jordan. "We have meetings all the time, we're definitely using a much larger portion of what Teams is designed for, both in upper management and our entry-level employees and everyone in between have definitely seen the value."



Pure IT as an organization has been great to work with. I feel like Pure IT actually cares about our business.

- Jordan Blouin
AiM Land Services, LTD.