



# Business Partner Solutions bolsters reseller customer support with Domino.

For Business Partner Solutions (BPS), abstract definitions of customer satisfaction aren't good enough. This Premier IBM Business Partner routinely conducts surveys to calculate the Net Satisfaction Index, a measure of the value its customers place on its services. At 93 percent, the index is proof that the company's 900 plus customers – all discerning technology solutions providers who count on support from BPS to assist their end users – are a highly satisfied group.

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– Jack Morris, Vice President, Business Partner Solutions

A \$450 million company that has nearly doubled business every year for the past few years, BPS is a leading value-added distributor for a wide range of IBM hardware and software solutions in North America. Key to the company's growth is its consistently high standard of customer service. Says Vice President Jack Morris, “The higher up in the supply pyramid a business is, the greater its customers' expectations of service. With 80 to 90 percent of our customers communicating with us over the Internet, we recognize the value of an interactive, easy-to-use Web site that quickly directs customers to the information they need.”

Powered by Lotus Domino running on an IBM RS/6000 Web server, the BPS corporate Web site, [www.bpsolutions.net](http://www.bpsolutions.net),

<b>Application</b>	Web site for customer service, product information and order tracking
<b>Business Benefits</b>	300% faster Web publishing cycle; 20% to 30% increase in employee productivity; \$100,000 annual cost savings; improved customer service
<b>Software</b>	Lotus® Notes® Lotus Domino™
<b>Hardware</b>	IBM® RS/6000® IBM AS/400® IBM Netfinity®



Business Partner Solutions has deployed a new Web site, which is enabling not only its employees, but also its customers to use their time more productively.

provides comprehensive product information and value-added services such as training and technical troubleshooting. Customers can confer online with BPS specialists to determine optimal product configurations, track orders and communicate with other vendors to package complete solutions for their customers.

The Web site has simplified BPS's internal Web publishing processes and yielded significant savings. Morris explains, "With Domino, we've empowered our content managers to publish information to the Web site, rather than routing all of it through our Internet development group. This improves our productivity at least threefold and saves us a minimum of \$100,000 annually by not having to staff additional IT and Web resources to support our growth. Our Web development team is focused on creating a framework and tools to enable our users." Predefined templates guide users through the publishing process and help ensure the consistency of content on the Web site.

By extending its existing Lotus Notes-based workflow automation and messaging systems to the Web, BPS expects to record a 20 to 30 percent company-wide increase in productivity. "This will be a major time saver," Morris says. "For example, product specialists won't have to repeat their technical presentations or product announcements and promotions for every customer. They can simply post it to the Web through Domino and direct customers to it." This alone, Morris estimates, can save two to three hours daily per specialist.

### **Domino leverages existing systems**

Morris notes that the ease of integration and support of Lotus Domino for multiple platforms made it a compelling solution for BPS. The company's corporate intranet and Notes-based messaging systems are powered by Lotus Domino for AS/400, while its Web site is based on Domino residing on an RS/6000 server. "Domino is platform agnostic, in the

sense that it can be replicated to any platform we want," he explains. "It is capable of connecting to different back-end data sources. Because of this, we could leverage the investments we'd made in our messaging systems and corporate intranet and create an integrated, product-oriented Web site."

The Notes-based applications previously resided on seven Microsoft® Windows NT® servers, but were subsequently consolidated on one AS/400 Model 170 server. This consolidation, Morris explains, reduced the administrative load on BPS's IT personnel and enabled them to leverage their skills in IBM platforms.

Though BPS initially launched its Web site using Commerce Builder running on Windows NT, the need for greater reliability and performance soon prompted it to migrate to Lotus Domino running on the RS/6000. Morris explains, "It wasn't uncommon for the Windows NT server to freeze and interrupt service. With Domino and the RS/6000 we don't have performance problems." An IBM Netfinity server runs a mirror image of the Web site to provide redundancy. And, Morris does not anticipate any bottlenecks to growth in the foreseeable future. "We can scale up if we need to," he states. "There is no dearth of options. We can run Domino on the AS/400, or any UNIX®- or Windows NT-based platform without recompiling any code."

### **The first steps to e-commerce**

BPS recently launched e-commerce on its Web site. "Not all our customers will adopt electronic commerce right away, but we'll be prepared for the rush when it begins," quips Morris. Till then, BPS will exploit the Web site's potential to provide value-added services to its customers. "The Web site helps us promote and educate our partner base, generating more business for everyone in the picture. It showcases our expertise in a wide range of IBM hardware and software," explains Morris, adding, "IBM does a tremendous job of supporting its distribution channels and we pass on that value to our customers."

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Internet Division  
Route 100  
Somers, New York 10589

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