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Charles Johnson

Applications Programming Manager,
BOXX Technologies

This is what happened when BOXX Technologies’ IT Pro left and TXSG stepped in.

Even before their IT person announced he was taking another job, BOXX Technologies recognized that it had a problem. They had one person in charge of networking, phones, anti-virus measures, desktop computers, website applications; essentially “everything under the sun,” as Charles Johnson, Applications Programming Manager, put it. Because there was so much for one person to handle, the company also utilized a variety of contractors who cycled in and out, weren’t always available, and weren’t necessarily familiar with the company. BOXX knew the situation presented a risk and was considering options for removing some of the load from its main IT expert. When that expert announced he’d taken another job, they had to act fast.

BOXX Technologies manufactures workstations and rendering systems for VFX, film and television, game development, architecture and engineering, product design, simulation, higher education, government and defense, science and medical and general business industries. The computers they design must work incredibly fast because of the complexity of the information they process. As a result, BOXX uses overclock systems that force their processors to work faster than they were designed to do and liquid cooling systems so they don’t burn the computers out. “We do some incredible things,” Johnson says. “All of our support is based here in the U.S. and it’s really rock solid. Customers have direct access to the engineers who designed and built the system so if something goes wrong, and we hope it doesn’t, we’re going to give best possible service.”

A company with that kind of technology and service was certainly going to have a challenge replacing the person who had handled all of its IT for years. “You just can’t hire someone who has all the domain knowledge of your company and all the programming experience and all the IT experience,” Johnson said. Then BOXX met with Texas Systems Group.

At first the company was concerned about outsourcing its IT. “One of the biggest concerns was going from someone on site who was intimately familiar with the building and the people, to someone off site, because that always causes some sort of delay,” Johnson said. “It’s different from having someone right there when you actually need them. One of the biggest selling points with Texas Systems Group is that they’re...here in Austin. You know who you’re going to be talking to and you can build that relationship.”

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TXSG worked with the outgoing IT expert and dug in, in detail, to collect all of the domain information it could about BOXX. “The biggest thing they did was to listen really well,” Johnson said. “They listened to people’s concerns about timing and how we get work turned around. But then they were also able to pretty quickly demonstrate really solid capabilities in identifying problems that people hadn’t even mentioned as issues.” For example, when one of the main switches went down, BOXX had a spare, but TXSG pointed out that this was an opportunity to upgrade to a more capable managed switch with a lot more functionality.

TXSG also identified security risks the company hadn’t seen before. BOXX had had many different contractors working on its firewall over the years but had never really devoted a concentrated effort to searching for areas of risk. TXSG did a thorough analysis and not only pointed out a number of security holes, but also established new rules, created a plan, and tested it, all after hours. They did a complete overhaul of BOXX’s network security without costing the company any work time.

TXSG’s managed services include: Virtual CIO, Service Desk, SysNet, CyberSecure, and Network Central services. “The biggest thing they do,” Johnson said, “is they provide really expert level support across a wide variety of our needs. Whatever problem we have, they’ve got someone – usually two or three people – who are experts in that specific thing. If we have a problem in phone system, it can be the hardest problem I’ve ever seen, they’ve got the team over there that brings the right people with the right skills to bear on a problem. They allow us to have that right breadth of knowledge for all of our needs without having to have ten people on our staff.”

“We had a file server die six months ago,” he said, “I was able to have myself and three people from their team working on it for six hours. That’s 24-person hours. You can’t do that with just one person, even with two ridiculously long days. But they had us back up and on the road to recovery within hours.”

“I’m a computer programmer, not a hardware guru,” Johnson said. “They’re able to really bring the right brains in who know exactly what to do when something happens.”

Texas Systems Group (TXSG) works with companies to reduce the cost of managing their Corporate Information Technology while at the same time drastically improving employee productivity, disaster recovery, and business continuity. Our results are driven by our proven processes, technology standards, dedicated Support Desk, Network Central, SysNet Engineers, CyberSecure, and Virtual CIO teams. We were listed in Inc. 5000 as one of the fastest growing companies in America.



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