



Business model in a box

GAD Group simplifies its SMB offerings with ClearOS and HPE ProLiant Servers

Objective

Consolidate its multi-vendor technology portfolio to increase business focus, reduce complexity, and boost profits

Approach

Partner with HPE and ClearCenter to deliver a simplified SMB solution that enables business growth

IT Matters

- 6x faster deployments with integrated appliance-style HPE ProLiant MicroServer
- Pre-installed OS reduces installation complexity
- Enables flexibility through app marketplace, streamlined licensing model
- Reclaims IT staff time by significantly reducing vendor trainings and certifications

Business Matters

- Saves 50% over traditional IT solutions
- Enhances business focus, consolidating efforts on one technology ecosystem
- Enables standardization of server and network product lines to customers
- Eliminates costly remote server management software



A moment of clarity

Gregory Dover had an “aha” moment while thinking about his business model last year. The president of Chicago-based GAD Group Technology, Inc. was lamenting the amount of time, energy, and money he spent keeping his staff trained and certified on multiple vendor solutions.

“I decided I was going to consolidate,” Dover recalls. “I didn’t have a solution in mind yet, but I knew I needed to simplify. I told myself if the right opportunity emerged, I was going to do it.”

GAD Group delivers and manages technology for a wide variety of customers in the region. Most are small-to-medium sized businesses in the manufacturing, logistics, private education, and local government spaces.

Bringing the future into focus

“My customers count on me for solutions. They don’t really want to know about the components or vendors we choose—they trust our design and engineering, uptime, and response time,” Dover says.

“I’ve been in this business for 25 years, and I know something good when I see it. ClearOS on HPE ProLiant MicroServers is really good.”

— Gregory Dover, President, GAD Group Technology, Inc.

But the cost and complexity of staying on top of licensing and training for all the different products in the GAD Group IT environment was taking its toll. “It became very difficult always upgrading the staff for all the different vendor requirements, and I could see that cutting into my business margins,” relates Dover. “I made the decision that I wanted to solidify on one platform.”

In the months since Dover had that moment of clarity, he researched solutions that might fulfill his vision. “I tried many solutions but nothing met all of our requirements,” Dover says.

A clear vision for consolidation

Then, two months ago, ClearOS hit his radar. “HPE announced that it would begin selling ProLiant servers with ClearOS pre-installed. That caught my attention,” Dover recalls. GAD Group has been an HPE ProLiant server customer for more than 15 years, so the alliance was an intriguing proposition.

“My history with HPE goes back to the late 1980s on the HP 9000, which was a Unix-based machine,” Dover recalls. “So to have HPE announce a server running a Linux-based OS was extremely interesting.”

So Dover downloaded a ClearOS demo and installed it as a virtual machine on an existing server in the GAD Group office. “I experimented with it, and shopped around in the ClearOS Marketplace for apps that could possibly replace some of the solutions I was getting from other vendors,” Dover relates.

As he was in the testing phase, one of his customers had a server issue, and Dover thought the opportunity was a perfect time to give the HPE-ClearOS solution a shot. Dover installed ClearOS on an HPE ProLiant ML Series Server, and went into production at the customer site.

Platform for the future

The solution was a success, and it confirmed Dover's intuition that this could be GAD Group's platform of the future. "I've been in this business for 25 years, and I know something good when I see it," Dover explains. "ClearOS on HPE ProLiant MicroServers is really good."

It was the impetus GAD Group needed to consolidate its technology offerings. Moving forward, Dover would be deploying HPE ProLiant MicroServer Gen10 with ClearOS pre-installed. And the benefits would follow quickly.

6x faster deployments

When his team deploys a new server at a customer site today, the process is drastically simplified compared to the multivendor solutions they used to deploy. "Previously, it would involve going to the site, provisioning the raid controller, installing Microsoft® Windows® drivers, getting the volume up and running, and then being able to configure the server," recalls Dover.

Now, with the HPE ProLiant MicroServer and ClearOS, deployment is a one-step process. "Now we show up, plug in the WAN port, and just wait a few minutes while the network recognizes the MicroServer. We don't even need to connect a mouse or monitor—the

server just shows up on our network and we can configure it from the home office," Dover explains. "The entire process takes a half-hour, down from three hours of work for our previous solution."

Reclaiming staff resources

Once that server is deployed, the savings don't stop. "With our previous solution, we needed to install a management agent on each server in order to enable remote services—it was both time consuming and expensive," Dover recalls. "Now with our ClearOS portal, we don't have to install or pay for anything extra, and I can get all the remote stats and management tools I need."

Another way GAD Group is streamlining its business model is by focusing its efforts and energy on a single platform instead of many. "We're reclaiming staff focus and staff time with the HPE-ClearOS solution," Dover says.

Simplifying deployments

On a recent install, one of Dover's techs was able to deploy an HPE-ClearOS gateway in a single visit with no additional support from the home office. "He was able to get it running without any assistance from me, and no calls to the vendor," Dover says. "If this had been a Cisco deployment, we probably would have needed to open a ticket with them. It could have taken days."

Case study

GAD Group
Technology, Inc.

Industry

Managed Services |
IT Consulting |
IT Services

Customer at a glance**Hardware**

- HPE ProLiant MicroServer Gen10

Software

- ClearOS

For Dover, it means less disruption for his business. “I’ll continue to get my hands dirty when it’s needed, but I don’t really want to be on deck for level 2 and level 3 service. I want to run my business,” Dover says.

A business model in a box

It all means that the refined business model Dover dreamed about has become reality for GAD Group. In fact, the team has introduced two products based on its recent success:

GCH Server, and GCH Network. Both products are based on the HPE MicroServer with ClearOS installed.

For Dover, it’s a way to fulfill his business goals while delivering a simplified solution to his growing Chicago customer base. And it meets another important qualification. It fits perfectly with the company’s motto: “Start with the customer—find out what they want—and give it to them.”



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