

Case Study

A Thin Client solution for Retail POS



NetTerminal[™]

The Company

This corporation is presently Canada's leading drugstore retail chain on the forefront of technology in the pharmaceutical retail industry since 1962. Pharmacy and over-the-counter medications are the mainstay of the company's' business. With 815 locations coast-to-coast and system sales of \$4.0 billion the company's mission is to maintain the status of the leading drugstore retailer throughout Canada.

The Environment

Each location had one Compaq server running the SCO UNIX operating system with an average of 8 Multi-Console terminals attached. Although some of the terminals were used for back-office accounting, the majority of them was used as part of their Modular POS solution which included an attached monitor, a keyboard, a pole display, a scanner, a register and a receipt printer.

The Problem

The IT project development team needed a reliable and efficiently networked system. "We were looking for a solution that used industry standard cabling and protocol", said their project manager. "We were using a proprietary solution which required installation of a unique host adapter card on the server and linking custom drivers to the kernel in order for the system to function."

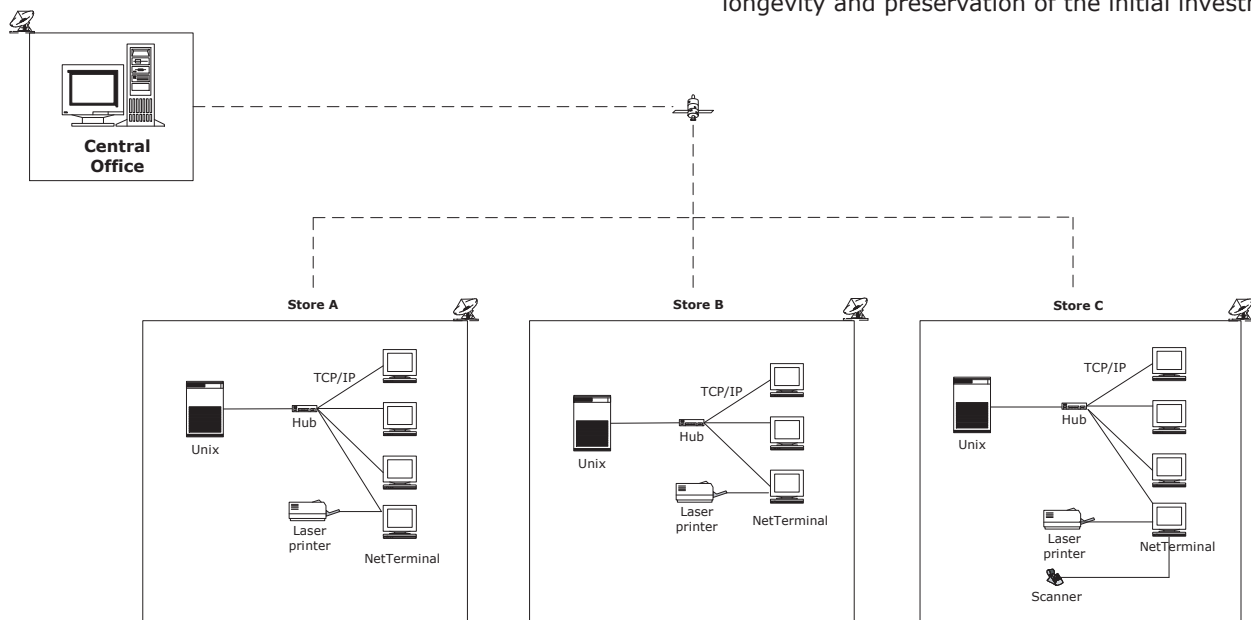
The Solution

"NetTerminal offered standard TCP/IP technology that required minimal software installation if any. At the same time we wanted a robust and stable product that could work without any downtime. Since most terminals will be remote, reliability is of utmost importance. Otherwise, supporting a large number of locations with multiple terminals could become a technological nightmare. Among all the products we evaluated, NetTerminal provided all the required features and proved to be extremely reliable."

Several features of the NetTerminal were highly appreciated by the IT project development team. Particularly useful was remote management integrated into the core of NetTerminal's operating system. Each NetTerminal is equipped with a Flash ROM that can be managed at a remote site using rcmd/rsh, or by simply using TELNET to connect to the NetTerminal.

"After installing thousands of NetTerminals at various remote locations, we realized that we needed to change the configuration of all NetTerminals because of new software requirements. Without remote management we would have had to either bring all the NetTerminals back in-house or send a technician to each location to change the configuration. "Being able to upgrade every single NetTerminal from our central office saved us a significant amount of cost and time and helped us maintain a high level of productivity."

Up to 12 full-screen colored TELNET sessions are available through standard Ethernet or SLIP connections. All configuration information is locally stored, eliminating the need for a complex boot server installation. Each model has a built-in Print Server as well as the same basic hardware specification. This provides flexible software upgrades over the network, thus ensuring device longevity and preservation of the initial investment.



The Manufacturer

Amir Technology Labs Inc, established in 1994, is headquartered in Sunnyvale, California. ATL is a technology development company dedicated to the design and marketing of Thin Clients, Network Computers, Internet Appliances and Specialized Graphics Products for the Windows NT and Unix integration markets. Many customers procure their NetTerminals through Boundless Technologies, an OEM partner of Amir Technology Labs, Inc.

Amir Technology Labs, Inc.

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