



## SITUATION

Faced with an enterprise-wide IT challenge recently, WDSGlobal ([www.wdsglobal.com](http://www.wdsglobal.com)) decided to break some long-standing industry norms.

Typically, it would take five months or more to plan and implement a network upgrade for a company of this size. But WDSGlobal – a top services provider for the mobile-communications industry – set out to accomplish the task in just less than two months.

And normally, if there were international facilities that also required the upgrade, an experienced IT team would travel to each location to perform the work. But WDSGlobal wanted to manage the process from the U.S. instead.

If the company could accomplish these things, the resulting bottom-line benefits would be well worth the extra efforts. But, according to Jon Weigel, the WDSGlobal IT manager overseeing all of this work, there was a contingent of people inside the company who simply didn't believe these heady objectives were achievable.

Having been part of a large network upgrade at his past employer, Weigel knew the key would be finding an experienced outside consultant; an industry leader that had faced down these types of time constraints before. Based on the recommendation of a trusted vendor, Weigel chose [isoutsource.com](http://isoutsource.com).



## SOLUTION

When [isoutsource.com](http://isoutsource.com) arrived on the scene, WDSGlobal was in the final stages of a major relocation project in the US. More than 400 customer service agents, their offices and the entire communications and computing infrastructure they depend on, were all about to be relocated to a new building.

Of course, any time employees are relocated, it creates a natural opportunity to make infrastructure improvements. For WDSGlobal, that meant upgrading its regional IT network to a new OS and e-mail platform – a process that would take two to three months of planning under normal circumstances. In this case, with the move-in date fast approaching, [isoutsource.com](http://isoutsource.com) would have less than three weeks to accomplish the task.

"It was a very, very tight timeline," Weigel confessed.

"This is what our employees use to interact, communicate and do all their work," explained Weigel. "It's very important to our business, and we wanted to upgrade to the latest domain and e-mail versions."

WDSGlobal employs an IT services team of 18 to 20 people worldwide, but all are very busy on IT projects and supporting the business. Hence, the company came to rely heavily on the guidance and expertise of Paul Sterley and Tony Lesirge – the isoutsource.com consultants assigned to this project.

“The actual OS and email upgrade was not much different from a smaller upgrade – of which I’ve done dozens and dozens,” said Sterley. “So there wasn’t a lot of learning required. All I needed to learn was the scope; what exactly they wanted me to do.”

Fortunately, the WDSGlobal IT team had already purchased the required hardware before hiring isoutsource.com. That saved weeks of research and waiting for shipments.

After Sterley and Lesirge gathered the project requirements, Sterley was able to plug that information into a proprietary template and quickly produce a workable plan, shaving off even more time.

“I already had a template,” Sterley explained. “All I had to do was modify it for the scope and scale of this project.”

Preliminary planning and tasks that typically take weeks had been successfully accomplished in just a few days. And that meant Sterley was now free to move forward with some lab tests.

“Before taking on a large project like this, you want to have some idea of what’s going to happen,” said Sterley. “It’s one thing to read a manual, but it’s quite another to actually do it; to see which buttons you click, what those screens look like, and what kind of error messages you get when things don’t go like you want them to.”

He loaded the new software on to new WDSGlobal servers, connected workstations, created user accounts and began migrating information – a process that allowed him to simulate the upgrade on a small scale and assess any issues before the actual implementation took place.

After working through some issues that surfaced during the lab tests, Sterley had just 10 days to build up the servers and further refine his plan.

On Friday, the day for the actual implementation, Sterley and a team of WDSGlobal IT technicians swung into action as soon as the customer service representatives working the night shift logged off and went home.

Normally, technicians would have the entire weekend to implement a network upgrade. In this case, however, customer service representatives started arriving for work at the new building at 5 a.m. Saturday morning. That meant the migration had to be done live, with Sterley and the other technicians jumping from one group of workstations to another just before the next shift of customer service representatives logged on to answer calls and e-mails.

Sterley and his team worked 16 hours a day that weekend. But come Monday, the live migration was complete. The challenge of cramming three months of work into something less than three weeks was history.

WDSGlobal was quite pleased with the results – so pleased, in fact, that it hired isoutsource.com to upgrade the environment at all of its other facilities (international offices located in the United Kingdom, South Africa, Australia and Singapore).

After some initial discussions, everyone agreed that the upgrade for the headquarters office (in the U.K.) should be handled in-person. That facility had the most complex network. The other offices were smaller, however, which got the folks at WDSGlobal wondering if the network upgrades for those locations could be handled remotely.

“We wanted to do the U.S. migration first,” said Weigel. “That was kind of the test ground for us. Then it just became a question of, ‘can we do the same thing at our other offices remotely?’ I floated the idea past Paul [Sterley], and he came up with a plan.”

Upgrading those networks remotely would allow Weigel to better manage the process, and save the company a significant amount of money on travel, lodging and overtime costs.

For this stage of the project to be a success, the isoutsource.com team would need to rely heavily on the WDSGlobal IT technicians in each region to help them assess each network, plan its upgrade and troubleshoot any issues that arose during the process. It was a cooperative effort that ultimately proved very successful.

“Initially, I had some concerns about Paul’s ability to communicate long-distance with our international offices,” said Weigel. “Obviously, the time differences could make communicating by phone and e-mail challenging. But it was never an issue. I knew from talking with my employees that Paul was dialoging with people in those regions while the rest of us were sleeping. In some cases, that meant he was corresponding with them at 2:00 or 3:00 a.m. I was very impressed.”

Not able to assess the networks in person, Lesirge asked the IT team at each WDSGlobal office to send detailed information about their servers, layouts, workstations, any non-standard applications and other related matters. With that information in-hand, Sterley and Lesirge were then able to plot a course of action for each office and establish a timeline for the migration tasks required.

“We did this one facility at a time,” explained Sterley. “That helped break things down into manageable pieces.”

Using automated software tools deployed over wide-area networks, Sterley was able to perform all of the migration work from his office in Seattle. When he ran into issues with individual workstations, he’d call on the WDSGlobal IT resource in that region to help him investigate the issue.

Using this cooperative approach, they were able to migrate each regional office without any interruptions to business operations, and with a minimum of downtime for employees.

“We weren’t sure if we could pull this off,” Weigel now admits. “Until we got into this, we wondered, ‘can we really upgrade each region without flying someone everywhere?’ Some in the business were skeptical. But we did it.”



## RESULT

This is the kind of innovative problem solving that companies need to succeed today. But Weigel says it simply wouldn’t have been possible without the wise guidance, innovative ideas and technical assistance provided by isoutsource.com.

“I was very impressed with two things about isoutsource.com,” said Weigel. “First, their level of knowledge about the software systems we were dealing with. And secondly, their willingness to dig up answers and solutions.”

“In my role here, I don’t have the time to constantly push and prod to get people to think creatively when we’re trying to solve problems,” he added. “So it’s important to me that the consultants I deal with always look at things from a number of different angles. I never had to go to these guys and say, ‘I’m not satisfied with what I’m hearing; you need to dig deeper and think outside the box.’”

“This was a very successful project,” said Weigel. “There were virtually no disruptions – and especially not to any revenue-generating business units. We were very pleased with the work and continue to see the advantages of moving forward with the migration.”