

## American Diabetes Association's IT Director calls Juniper Networks' Proxy "the single best investment in technology the ADA has ever made"

Founded in 1940, the American Diabetes Association (ADA) is committed to improving the lives of people who have diabetes, to helping prevent the disease, and to supporting the search for a cure.

To achieve these goals the ADA conducts hundreds of screenings, workshops, information presentations and fundraising events every year from offices in all fifty United States.

In 1999 these scattered offices - 172 of them at the time - presented ADA National Director of Technology Rick Smith with a particularly complex Y2K challenge. Well before the onset of the millennium, the non-profit ADA made a strategic decision not to provide IT talent to its local or regional offices; all IT services were centralized in the Fairfax, Virginia headquarters. Now Smith had more than a thousand users across the country with computers that needed to be checked and upgraded before New Year's Eve, 2000.

"We briefly considered dispatching our own engineers, but we didn't have enough personnel to finish the job in time," says Smith. "Then we tried to subcontract local engineers, but of course at the time they were in great demand and charging more than we wanted to pay."

### **Proxy wins on price, does the job**

So Smith started shopping for remote control software – software that would let him and his engineers use their own computers connect to, view, and run users' computers over ADA's network, and make the necessary changes from headquarters.

"First we looked at PC Anywhere, which was just too expensive, \$150 per head at the time," he says. "Frankly I don't see how a for-profit business can afford that, let alone a non-profit like us."

Then he found Proxy. "At something like seven dollars per user and thirty-five dollars per technician, it made a lot more sense," says Smith.

Smith created a CD that auto-installed the Proxy host, or client software, and sent it to every office. "Once everyone installed Proxy, we told them to leave their computers on when they left work, and at night we took over their machines and got them ready," he says. "With four or five people working nights we made all the necessary changes in every office in just a few weeks. When 2000 rolled around we had zero adverse impact - not one application or piece of hardware failed."

*"The bottom line is we have a huge, dispersed architecture here at the ADA, and thanks to Proxy we support the whole thing from one location with nine engineers. The ROI on this product is incalculable. Proxy is the single best technology investment the ADA has ever made."*

**Rick Smith**  
National Director of Technology  
ADA

**Remote help desk heightens productivity, morale**

Thrilled with this initial experience, Smith and his team decided to use Proxy to handle all of the ADA's support calls from their central technical office in Fairfax, Virginia. To say he's happy with the solution tests the limits of the word "understatement."

"We're down to 136 offices now, but they're no less scattered - we're in Portland Maine, San Francisco, Honolulu, Miami, everywhere in the country," says Smith. "We get about 100 calls a day, from people in five different time zones, who need to get proposals out the door but can't log on to the network or can't print or can't get their applications to work. Without Proxy, about half would require lengthy phone calls in which the user has to describe the screen, what keys he or she is pressing, and so on. The other half would require dispatching technical talent to the site. Either way we're talking hours or even days before the problem would be solved.

"But with Proxy," he continues, "we troubleshoot these same problems in minutes. And a few minutes later people have forgotten they ever had a problem, which really reflects well on us. Our users are not technical people; they're highly skilled, deeply motivated fundraisers and organizers and 'people people.' When they have a problem it's "Bad News Bears" - they don't suffer in silence. With Proxy we fix the problem, let them get right back to doing what they do best, and everyone's happy."

Smith and his team also use Proxy to troubleshoot the ADA's NT servers without leaving their desks. "If they had a host that worked on my NetWare (4.11, 5.0 and 5.1) servers I'd buy that, too," he says.

**Nothing else comes close**

While there are other remote control solutions available - including free ones included with Windows - Smith contends Proxy has no real competition. "PCAnywhere is too expensive and VNC is too slow" he says, "With Windows XP Remote Desktop either the master or the host controls the desktop, but not both. So there has never been any reason to switch. We've been adding and renewing Proxy licenses for four years, and we'll be deploying it together with our new Windows XP deployments in about a month."

Asked if service and support also figure into the value, Smith says he wouldn't know. "The best thing about Proxy is that in four years I've never had to call the company for support," he says. "The program just works."

**Incalculable ROI**

Smith estimates that by letting ADA solve problems remotely, Proxy has saved the organization millions, at least, since it was first purchased.

"Just do the math," he says. "Fifty dispatches avoided per day, at a conservative average travel cost of \$500 per dispatch, is \$15,000 per day. Multiply that times 200 work days per year, times four years we've had the product, and you get what, \$12 million? That's not counting what we saved on the Y2K process, what we make by helping our offices get their proposals and fundraising events together on time, what we save in technical staff salaries, and what we save on the price of the product versus alternatives".



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