

Reilly Responds to Business Growth With Flexible, Cost-Effective Network

Corente solution helps mortgage company manage IT costs and network complexity

Overview

■ Challenge

Reilly Mortgage Group required a new networking solution to increase the uptime of its financial services network, to gain better visibility into network performance and security for its applications, and to reduce the operational burden on the company's IT team.

■ Why On Demand

For companies, such as Reilly, with a growing footprint, it is crucial to connect to new remote locations quickly and deliver applications securely.

■ Solution

Reilly selected Corente to provide an outsourced secure IP network that it can quickly adapt to new application needs as its business grows.

■ Key Benefits

- Secure application delivery and network connectivity.
- Autonomic computing capability.
- Lower total cost of ownership (TCO).



With headquarters just outside of Washington, D.C., Reilly's network of offices extends nationwide, allowing it to close a deal in Maine as easily as in California.

Needed: an easy-to-run network

For many small to medium-size businesses, in fact for businesses of any size that are looking to operate and grow in an on demand world, the creation and management of a secure business network can be overwhelming.

Case in point, the Reilly Mortgage Group, a small, privately held company in McLean, Virginia, that provides acquisition, refinancing and new construction loans for multi-family dwellings. Well-known in the mortgage banking business for selling and servicing Freddie Mac, Fannie Mae and FHA loans, the company uses its network to ensure the effectiveness and productivity of its loan correspondents, who are located throughout the United States.

Mortgage banking at Reilly is a relationship business – correspondents deal directly with borrowers,

The network has become the lifeline of our operation. ... Today, I have a highly secure, reliable network that not only boots up by itself, but monitors and updates itself as well.

Jon Miller
Chief Information Officer
Reilly Mortgage Group

Corente's business networking solution provides a coherent framework that automates the deployment of enterprise applications across multiple networks

On Demand Benefits

On demand benefits provided by Corente

- **Deploy mission-critical applications to any location over any infrastructure**
 - Site-to-site secure IP networking
 - Strong end-to-end security with encryption and integrated digital certificates
 - Complete network and application monitoring, alerting and reporting
 - Fault identification and proactive notification
 - Traffic management with dynamic, policy-based routing
 - Network provisioning and policy enforcement
- **Accelerate time-to-revenue, while lowering total cost of ownership**
 - Installation in one hour or less per site
 - No need for on-site technical staff – automated service upgrades and autonomic computing capability
 - Available anywhere in the world
 - Protect existing investments

who need a champion to get their loans through the system. Both products and processes are extremely complex, and the time to secure a loan often takes months. Customer satisfaction is driven by product knowledge and efficiency in loan origination and servicing.

"If you want to borrow \$20 million," says Jon Miller, Reilly's CIO, "you want someone working for you that you really trust – who's given you all the alternatives and has made the right deal, the right way. Reilly does that better than anyone else."

Miller must be right. After 25 years, the company has become one of the nation's largest private commercial banks, closing more than \$3 billion of business in the past three years.

Shedding 400 pounds of frustration

Powering Reilly's operation are three IBM @server® iSeries™ running OS/400®; a fourth server is scheduled for installation shortly.

Miller and his small IT staff support these systems. Along with maintaining legacy applications, they also enable new technology to support an evolving set of processes related to the management and electronic delivery of information.

"The network has become the lifeline of our operation," Miller explains. "Software application delivery, connectivity and data security are critical to supporting our growth and success."

Miller smiles today. But he remembers the network in its early stages, when it was a business obstacle for Reilly.

"I made the decision initially to build and manage our own virtual private network, or VPN," he recalls. "However, it quickly became '400 pounds of frustration.'"

The CIO and his team had to figure out which technologies to use, how to set up the right security, along with making a host of other decisions. In addition, rapidly changing technology meant ongoing updates to keep up with software changes from vendors. In short, too much time was being spent on the "plumbing" – a non-strategic aspect of the company.

During this time, Miller heard about a networking solution being offered by a small, newly formed company on the East Coast. Intrigued, he investigated the product, but decided to stay the course. It took another year and another 400 pounds of frustration before he "did the math" and called Corente.

"It was cost effective, gave us everything we needed ... and more, and installed without a hitch," he says. "Today, I have a highly secure, reliable network that not only boots up by itself, but monitors and updates itself as well."

Meeting the test

To Miller, the Corente solution is an example of an on demand environment at its best. When a high-volume loan correspondent suddenly had to work at home because his wife fell ill, a gateway to the network was fully operational at his home within two days. "Emergency orders ship the next day from Corente and typically install within hours," he notes.

Miller estimates that he saves about one day each week in direct labor, allowing his staff to spend more time on new systems and improved customer service. And then there are the "intangibles," as he calls them. "I don't have the time, people or the money to build and manage a network that has all the features Corente provides."

Miller concludes, "My job is to be the interface to those who understand the business, but don't understand the technology. If I say 'Solution A' will work, then management must trust me to deliver that solution within a specific framework and time frame. Corente has allowed me to keep that trust."

Out of the lab, into the marketplace

Providing companies, such as Reilly, with an easier way of interconnecting the enterprise, partners, suppliers and customers was the reason a group of ex-Bell Lab engineers got together in 1999 to develop a solution. The result: a complete service offering that allows companies to deploy mission-critical applications rapidly, seamlessly and securely over the Internet to any location with any network infrastructure.

With 24x7 end-to-end security, real-time monitoring, management and support, Corente's networking solution is flexible, affordable and exceptionally easy to install. "Companies that compete in today's dynamic business environment need a network that can quickly change to accommodate new projects and partners, while maintaining the highest levels of security and performance," explains Peter Welburn, director of sales and business development.

Agreeing with that premise are over 250 companies in 54 countries that are now Corente customers. Also in agreement are the editors of *Network Magazine*, who recognized Corente's solution with one of their "2003 Product of the Year" awards.

Corente has found that most customers experience post-installation cost savings of 20 to 40 percent over their existing company-run networks.

Key Components

IBM

Software

- IBM Autonomic Computing Toolkit
- Tivoli®

Hardware

- IBM @server xSeries®

Corente

Open Source Architecture

- Linux
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Building on its award-winning secure networking technology, Corente is creating a rich new set of application performance monitoring and management capabilities to deliver a compelling solution for application networking and management.

The company's corporate offices are located in Far Hills, NJ with engineering and operations offices in East Brunswick, NJ.

Teaming with IBM

"We are totally aligned with IBM's vision of an on demand world," says Welburn. "In fact, we designed our offering using a 'software as a service' delivery model." He explains that each node in the network has a Linux-based server, which acts as a VPN gateway client. Specific network and firewall features, including updates, needed by the customer are downloaded from a central monitoring facility operated by Corente. The customer then pays a recurring monthly fee.

But the connection between Corente and IBM extends well beyond a similarity of ideas.

Corente is an IBM Business Partner and an active participant in the IBM Innovate Now initiative, which provides qualified ISVs a vast array of business development, technical and marketing assistance to help them succeed. For example,

- Working with developers at the IBM Innovation Center for Business Partners in San Mateo, California, Corente integrated self-configuring, self-healing, self-optimizing and self-protecting autonomous computing technologies into its software.
- Corente's Linux-based software was fully tested and certified on IBM's xSeries platform at the IBM Linux for Service Provider Laboratory in Oregon.
- With IBM's support and expertise, Corente was able to interface its offering with Tivoli software, providing customers with full monitoring capability – Tivoli for LANs and Corente for the WAN.

In addition, through the IBM BladeCenter™ Alliance Program, Corente is looking at ways to drive down the total cost of ownership even further, while achieving new levels of scalability, flexibility and performance through BladeCenter architecture.

"Corente's participation in these programs has allowed us to integrate our application delivery platform with IBM products and technology in record time," says Corente CEO James L. Zucco, Jr. "Moreover, we've been able to provide a more robust, on demand business and services offering to our customers."

Continues Welburn, "We've been tremendously impressed with IBM's product innovation and technical capabilities, which is why we've made the IBM @server xSeries Models 305 and 335 our standard platform for deployment."

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James L. Zucco, Jr.
CEO
Corente

For more information

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