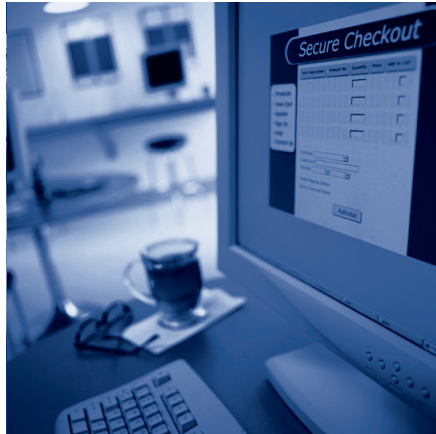




## ePartners Saves \$200,000 a Year by Standardizing on VMware Workstation

### VMware Workstation Increases Selling Days for ePartners's Consultants



#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

#### INDUSTRY: E-COMMERCE

#### RESULTS

- Saved \$200,000 annually in consultant hours
- Reduced the time it takes for consultants to install and update business application environments with pre-configured images
- Increased average deal size by improving consultants' ability to demonstrate incremental application modules
- Increased ability to demo multiple full range solutions
- Increased ability to share best practices
- Faster ramp-up time on new software versions

*"As a result of using virtual machines, our average deal size has gone up because we can quickly customize demonstrations based on the prospect's needs."*

Ben Vollmer,  
Director, Solution Consulting

### ePartners Solutions Consultants Were Spending Too Much Time Managing Applications

ePartners implements, deploys, and manages leading business solutions for middle market companies with revenues from \$10 million to \$500 million. As the largest global partner for Microsoft Great Plains, Solomon, Best Software, SalesLogix and Siebel's Mid-Market Edition, ePartners is the safe choice for companies looking to benefit from middle market business solutions. The company employs solution consultants based in six different regions. Each consultant supports at least three ERP or CRM applications and various application sub-components such as core financials, distribution, or manufacturing modules.

Updates to software packages are published on a regular basis, and these need to be applied in a uniform manner. In the past, each publishing partner sent CDs to the field offices, which often resulted in updates and patches being applied inconsistently or in a less than timely fashion. In addition, solution consultants had to load each application on either a separate hard drive or separate machine, spending an average of one day a week installing, reinstalling, or patching applications. The costs were considerable, not to mention the potential lost revenue when consultants had to tell prospective customers, "I'm sorry, we don't have the application you're interested in loaded, so I can't show it to you."

### VMware Workstation Reduces Lost Time and Opportunity

In January 2002, ePartners Vice President of Solution Consulting, Alan Hopp selected VMware Workstation to be the corporate standard for solution consultants. Director of Solution Consulting Ben Vollmer's team then built and distributed a library of images that:

- Save hours of configuration and testing time so the solutions consultants can be in the field, not in the office setting up software.
- Allow ePartners's consultants to demonstrate multiple enterprise software environments on one physical machine.

- Allow consultants to demonstrate hard-to-install Web applications, helping to increase average deal size
- Allow consultants to come up to speed on new environments and applications quickly.
- Allow ePartners to institute standardized environments to be used by all solutions consultants.

According to solution consultant Suzanne Clark, "VMware Workstation allowed me to load and be ready to demo the Microsoft Business Solutions eEnterprise image in about one hour, compared to the days I would have spent installing and configuring the software on my physical machine."

## Complex Demos Become Simple

ePartners consultants carry a single laptop to demonstrate business solutions to prospects. ePartners demos are nothing if not complex. Consultants can show any of seven sanctioned versions of full ERP or CRM systems, each including a different set of applications drawn from a list including:

- Microsoft Business Solutions
- Best Enterprise Suite
- Siebel Mid-Market Edition
- SalesLogix
- Microsoft Customer Relationship
- Management, Internet Information Services (IIS)
- Microsoft SQL Server 2000
- BizTalk
- Terminal Services, and others

In addition, the consultants specialize in different industries and modify the demos to fit the requirements of their prospective customers.

Before VMware Workstation, the solution consultants were only able to have one or two of ePartners' base applications loaded. They were also limited in their ability to sell Web applications, which tend to be difficult for a non-technical solution consultant to install. Hopp estimates that the cost of time lost due to consultants constantly having to install, update, and reconfigure software was in excess of \$200,000 annually.

Vollmer recommended VMware Workstation after considering a couple of other ways to solve his problem, including using Norton Ghost images. He was able to ramp up quickly with VMware Workstation, which lets him manage the software configurations, updates, and patches centrally with experienced personnel, and simply distribute system images in virtual machines to consultants. Having the demo image pre-loaded also has the advantage of letting solution consultants ramp up on new software versions without having to rebuild their machines or learn the new module's implementation methods.

## VMWARE VIRTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE AT WORK

### Hardware

- Laptop systems from multiple vendors running 650MHz - 1.6GHz CPUs, with 512MB-1GB RAM

### Host OS

- Microsoft Windows 2000 Professional and Windows XP Professional

### Guest OS

- Microsoft Windows 2000 Server and Windows XP

### Applications

- Great Plains eEnterprise
- Great Plains Dynamics
- Solomon IV
- Best Enterprise Suite
- Siebel Mid-Market
- SalesLogix
- FRx, FRx Forecaster
- Microsoft IIS
- Microsoft SQL
- Microsoft CRM
- Microsoft Exchange

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ePartners now runs VMware Workstation on all of its solution consultants' laptops, which the company procures from multiple vendors. The laptops generally run either Microsoft Windows 2000 Professional or Windows XP Professional host operating systems. The guest operating systems are Windows 2000 Server and Windows NT 4.0 Server, to match the server applications in the demonstrations.

"Consultants can have all of our primary solutions, as well as third party products, loaded and available for demos. It also lets us leverage demos that have been tailored by consultants to provide the best benefit to prospects. By replicating their data and practices, we can insure that all members of the ePartners team share and utilize each other's best practices," says Vollmer.

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