



Profiles in IT Management Ray Engineering, Inc.

At a Glance

The Context Pressure is building on engineering firms to make the most of IT opportunities.

The Client Ray Engineering has relied on freelance IT technicians.

The Problem IT technicians lack understanding of Ray Engineering's technology "big picture."

The Choice All Covered provides a comprehensive, strategic solution.

The Results Ray Engineering's IT system is more secure, more reliable, and better performing; firm freed to focus more on its core business.

"While our staff is small, we are typically working on major projects for about 50 different clients at a time. Without the kind of IT network we now have in place from All Covered, we would not be able to do all this nearly as effectively."

Judy White
Ray Engineering, Inc.

For Ray Engineering, Inc., All Covered means comprehensive, cost-effective, strategic IT management.



The Context

In the late 1980s and 1990s, information technology (IT) dramatically changed the work lives of civil and structural engineers. One by one, they abandoned their drafting boards and manual tools for workstations and software tools such as AutoCAD. Then, with a growing reliance on computing, came a growing reliance on IT networks to transmit virtually everything from electronic files of engineering drawings to emails. The reasons were obvious: the benefits of convenience, time-savings, and increased productivity were just too good to pass up.

Along with this solution, however, came new IT challenges. How did engineering companies, especially small ones with limited resources, manage increasingly complex, rapidly evolving networks with maximum effectiveness? How could they make the networks work for them instead of—as was often the case—against them?

The Client

Founded in 1990 and located in Stone Mountain, Georgia, Ray Engineering, Inc. experienced this evolution first hand. The firm, which provides dozens of consulting engineering services for developers, realtors, lending institutions, property management companies, architects, and general contractors, quickly adopted workstation and networking technology. Instead of hiring an internal IT resource, the company chose to rely on outside technical assistance. Over the years, this meant a succession of different people—one available only at odd hours, some hard to contact when a crisis arose, all working alone—who mainly responded to calls for help.

The Problem

Perhaps the biggest problem of all, notes Ray Engineering's office manager Judy White, was that the firm did not fully understand how large a role IT could play in their business success. "Looking back, it's clear that the people we were counting on didn't have the understanding of the technology 'big picture' that we needed," she says. "Many of the actions were little more than reactions, and many of the solutions were just patch work."

The Choice

The turning point came in September 2001 when Judy received a sales call from All Covered. After years of living with an unpredictable network that required more of her attention than she wanted to give and a series of one-person break-fix IT service providers, All Covered offered a different approach: true 24x7 support, comprehensive, knowledgeable, and strategic.

Enter All Covered

After considering her new option, she called All Covered in to perform a network assessment.

One of the first findings was the lack of a reliable backup system, something the staff at Ray Engineering was not aware of. All Covered addressed this issue immediately, proposing and then installing a DDS3 backup unit on Ray Engineering's server.

Since then, All Covered has made regular improvements to the network. One major change was the installation of a firewall for greater security. Before then, the network had been extremely vulnerable to everything from viruses to spam. Another important improvement was standardizing the computers and workstations around Microsoft Office XP Professional.

In addition, All Covered delivers All Covered Care (ACC), a suite of regularly scheduled services from virus protection to long-range network planning that assures network security and stability, and addresses potential problems before they become real ones. Recognizing the value of ACC, Ray Engineering has used this service since January 2002.

The Results

With All Covered's help, Ray Engineering's new, preemptive approach to IT management has yielded several dramatic improvements.

"We're hardly ever down," says Judy. "Our system is many times more reliable than it used to be. It delivers far better performance. With the firewall, we're much more secure. And, because of All Covered Care, we have regular check-ups and a plan in place for future development. Altogether, we're much more productive."

In addition, Judy has been impressed by the fast response, knowledge, and solutions orientation of All Covered's consultants. "Usually, someone from All Covered will be here the day we call," she says. "It's a relief to come to work knowing that All Covered is just a phone call away."

Staying Focused on the Core Business

In a recent study, National Small Business United reported that:

- 46 percent of small business owners surveyed agreed that managing changes and upgrades to their IT systems is a major business challenge.
- 40 percent expressed a desire for support and guidance in anticipating and planning for business technology investments.

The main reason for these concerns? In its Annual Outsourcing Index Survey, the Outsourcing Institute noted that staying focused on the core business is the main reason why companies with fewer than 500 employees choose to outsource. With IT systems growing in complexity and the need for small and mid-size businesses such as Ray Engineering to concentrate on what they do best, it's no wonder that a strategic IT service provider such as All Covered is a natural solution.

About All Covered

All Covered is the only nationwide information technology (IT) outsourcing services company that focuses solely on the unique computing, networking, and application needs of small/mid-size businesses and branch offices of larger companies. Serving thousands of organizations across every major industry, the company helps clients achieve their business objectives by lowering the cost and maximizing the performance of their IT systems. All Covered's broad geographic reach, extensive knowledgebase, automated systems, proven methodology, and preferred vendor relationships meet the IT planning, design, procurement, implementation, maintenance, and management requirements of both single- and multi-location businesses. For additional information outlining how All Covered can help your business, call us toll-free at (866) 446-1133 or visit our web site at www.allcovered.com.

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