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— Bob Allen, director of information technologies, South Bend, Ind.

SETTING THE STANDARD

South Bend, Ind., trusts Gateway E-Series desktop PCs.

With just over 100,000 residents, the city of South Bend, Ind., is much more than a bustling suburban town. Settled more than 300 years ago, South Bend has a rich history. From the fur trade post that marked the town’s early settlement to the industrialization of the late 19th century, South Bend’s past helped shape it into a community that works toward the future.

Part of that future is in the hands of Bob Allen, director of information technologies for the city. He and his small staff are charged with maintaining the city’s computer network. The city employs more than 1,300 people with 750 of those staff members requiring access to a networked computer.

A reliable network and dependable PCs are vital to these workers, and to the citizens they serve. Allen standardized on Gateway® E-Series desktop PCs with Intel® Pentium® 4 processors with HT Technology to ensure South Bend’s desktop technology remains up and running.

A New Deal

As recently as 1997, the South Bend IT department procured inexpensive “white box” computers. Although they technically met specifications, the unbranded PCs were unreliable, not standardized and a burden to support.

Fortunately in 1997 Gateway won a state of Indiana PC contract, which was open to local governments as well.

“At that point, we started buying from the state contract rather than bidding it out,” said Allen. “So that helped a lot. We typically buy the computers 50 at a time, several times a year. We have about 750 users on our network, and we replace about 150 computers a year.”

When buying and deploying a large number of computers annually, hardware standardization makes a big difference. With the white box computers, Allen often received a set of 50 machines with similar functionality but equipped

CUSTOMER PROFILE

AGENCY:
South Bend, Ind.

MISSION:
Efficiently provide needed and necessary services to South Bend residents.

TECHNOLOGY OBJECTIVE:
Standardize desktop hardware while providing city staff with reliable, versatile and customizable computers at a low cost.

GATEWAY SOLUTION:
In 1997, South Bend began deploying Gateway® E-Series desktop PCs with Intel® Pentium® 4 processors to provide

city staff with standard hardware while allowing IT staff to customize and scale the machines as necessary.

ROI:
The city’s small IT staff saves time, money and resources with Gateway’s budget-friendly and reliable desktop computers.

“We can order Gateway PCs the way we want, and we can customize them the way we want them.”

— **Bob Allen**,
director of information technologies, South Bend, Ind.

with a variety of motherboards, hard drives, monitors and peripherals.

Compounding the problem was the fact that Allen wanted computers without distracting devices like CD-ROM drives and speakers. Such configurations were sometimes unavailable from his previous vendors. Combined with the dissimilar internal hardware, these complications resulted in hours of labor to get the off-brand computers configured alike.

“We typically configure our computers so they’re all the same, and that was a headache because we had all this different hardware,” said Allen. “The hardware standardization just wasn’t there. The thing about Gateway is they are a name-brand computer. We got the standardization we wanted.”

Savings and Reliability

Allen now orders the exact type of computer he needs instead of manually configuring unreliable off-brand computers. Gateway’s flexibility and build-to-order offerings deliver real benefits to Allen and his staff. In fact, Allen estimates that South Bend is saving hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars as a result of changing to Gateway® E-Series desktop PCs with Intel® Pentium® 4 processors with HT Technology — time and money that used to go into configuring the previous vendor’s computers.

Allen also appreciates Gateway’s convenient parts-replacement policy, should one of the machines need repair.

“Gateway lets us do our own warranty work, which is very nice,” Allen said. “If we have a problem with something, we call them up and say, ‘Hey, I have a bad hard drive.’ No questions asked, they send us a new one and we send the bad one back. We don’t have to go through all the troubleshooting stuff.”

But replacing or repairing the Gateway machines typically isn’t an issue.

“We’ve had very good fortune with Gateway E-Series desktops,” said Allen. “The performance has been very good. And getting everything standardized — they’re a lot more reliable. Warranties are not even an issue anymore.”

Simply Better

South Bend’s relationship with Gateway dramatically improved city operations. Gateway’s highly reliable, easily customizable PCs that are simple to order and simple to fix save money and



Gateway® E-Series Desktops, some with Intel® Pentium® 4 processors with HT Technology, ensure the city of South Bend, Ind., remains up and running to serve its citizens.

reduce downtime to almost nothing. And with a Gateway eSource online procurement site built specifically for Indiana government, ordering PCs has never been easier.

“We’re saving money because we’re not having to do warranty stuff,” said Allen. “Because we’ve had very few warranty problems, our uptime is much improved and that saves us money too. And getting PCs configured the way we want them saves us time in deployment. Having them all standardized solves that configuration problem. We can order Gateway PCs the way we want, and we can customize them the way we want them.”

For Bob Allen and the city, an ongoing relationship with Gateway is another great chapter in the long, proud history of South Bend, Ind.



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