



Processing big savings at E.D. Smith

Is there a contradiction between cutting MIS costs and upgrading to the latest technology? Not at Winona, Ontario-based E.D. Smith, a fourth-generation family-run processor of more than 700 fine fruit and sauce products. Smith's production and administrative operations, spread over several buildings on the company's original site, are supported by an IBM AS/400-based network linking approximately 165 fixed-function terminals, 80 PCs and 30 printers.

That amalgam, says Beverly Russell, E.D. Smith's Director of Information Systems, simply doesn't meet the information needs of this fast-moving company. It's expensive to maintain and service, and the fixed-function terminals inhibit effective communications between workers who, particularly in around-the-clock operations, seldom if ever encounter each other.

Russell has begun a conversion process that, within the next few years, should

Application	Cutting MIS costs, improving communications at processing plant
Hardware	AS/400, IBM Network Station
Software	IBM Network Station Manager, OfficeVision





Beverly Russell, Director of Information Systems, E.D. Smith. The IBM Network Station is the small black box at right.

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—Beverly Russell, E.D. Smith’s Director of Information Systems.

replace all of Smith’s fixed-function terminals and some of its PCs with new IBM Network Stations. Russell is very pleased with the immediate dollar savings the Network Stations will offer. She’s even more pleased at the ongoing savings she will experience because of the ease of management provided by the Network Stations.

Easy to own and manage
“If I were to buy 160 PCs, it would cost me a fortune,” she says. “Adding network clients isn’t nearly as big an expense issue. More important, the long-term implications are dramatic. We have multiple versions of various software applications on different machines right now. Since the software will be on the server with the Network Station client, I can be sure

everybody has current versions of drivers and application software. It no longer will take days to make the rounds to ensure that everything is implemented. And if a user does some ‘creative things,’ shall we say, with the desktop, we can now resolve that centrally.”

Rejuvenating applications
The company relies on OfficeVision/400, Russell notes, and is looking forward to providing its capabilities to everyone on the network. “We use OfficeVision/400 as a tool to communicate all of our manufacturing and quality information between shifts and between buildings. That’s critical, because changes in production plans are a daily reality. With the Network Station, users who are now on dumb terminals will be able to interact directly with their PC-using colleagues, enhancing communications and speeding up operations.”

That enhanced functionality also will be quickly beneficial for faxing. “We’re a big customer of fax support,” Russell says. “We’ve kept expanding our usage of it between customers and the company, and the company and its sales force. I have two integrated fax adapters with four lines; we run our main office fax number through our AS/400. Right now, anybody on a dumb terminal gets faxes e-mailed to them just as other people do. But to view it, they must either go to the nearest PC or print it. Soon, the integrated fax viewer is going to let them view the fax directly on the Network Station.” That not only makes things more convenient for users, she says, but also, by saving them time, boosts their productivity.

E. D. Smith was founded in 1882, and had 1996 sales of C\$120 million. While many of the company’s products are packaged under the Smith name, others bear the private label banners of major food retailers in Canada and the U.S.

For more information
To find out more about how network computing with the IBM Network Station and the IBM family of servers can help you make the most of your business opportunities, call 1 800 IBM-7080, priority code 6N7BK005, in North America. Outside North America, call 416 383-5152, priority code 6N7BK005. Or contact your IBM Business Partner or local IBM representative.

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