



Thrifty Bankers' Future IT Investment Pays Off Big From Day One

Out-of-the-Box Ready Server Eliminates Email Downtime, Supports CRM, Web Conferencing And Scales Easily for Huge Planned Future Growth

“We had a real hodgepodge of white boxes and we needed to re-organize the IT department because there was no plan for expansion. With the help of Penguin, we were able to upgrade all of our servers and condense a room full of hardware to just three full server cabinets.”

- Kerry Miller, Network Engineer and PC Services Manager
First Victoria National Bank

Summary:

Texas-based First Victoria National Bank (First Victoria) had been growing steadily since it opened its doors in 1867. But, since they never do anything small in Texas, now it wanted to really grow – more than double in ten years, to a \$2 billion dollar company sprawled across South Central Texas. That was a real wake up call to the information technology (IT) staff who already struggled with an IT system that was not getting the job done for the bank's current needs. But the bank planned ahead and invested in an IT overhaul based on Penguin Computing Relion™ servers.

With Penguin Computing's help, the IT group streamlined their cross-platform infrastructure elements into an efficient, scalable system that virtually eliminated email downtime and now supports a new customer relationship management (CRM) database as well as web conferencing. With no set-up or implementation issues and no problems since deployment, the First Victoria team is already scaling the new IT system upwards to meet the future banking needs of Texas.

The Challenge:

With locations across Southern Texas and \$1 billion in commercial and personal assets, First Victoria relied on technology for keeping in touch with key contacts and customers as well as tracking all customer records. But steady growth over the years had resulted in an increasingly complex technology infrastructure. The IT system was “a real hodgepodge

of white boxes” using all types of software formats, according to First Victoria Network Engineer and PC services Manager Kerry Miller. Despite the variety of technologies the bank had accumulated, the management of the diverse systems was difficult at best and took so much time and effort that there was little left for planning future growth.

To begin with, they wanted to improve the Windows NT4-based email system. The bank had been using Lotus Domino server software for e-mail, calendaring and scheduling. However, the bank had no capacity to do any SPAM filtering so email volume was becoming unbearable. It was also causing the email system to constantly crash, causing work slow downs severe enough to require First Victoria to re-boot the servers every week or two.

The First Victoria team decided they needed a more powerful server solution – but it had to be cross-platform compatible because half of the bank's applications run on Windows and the other half on Linux. They also wanted something that was robust – but since they had a lot of other transactions to process flawlessly, they needed a low maintenance server system. They needed something scalable – but, since they work in a bank, the team was not going to pay a steep price just for a fancy name or pretty logo. In short, they wanted it all.

The Solution:

After evaluating the server suppliers who



Products:

- > 1U Relion™ server
- > 2U Relion™ server

Key Benefits:

- > Easy Install and Scalability
- > Highly Reliable and Robust
- > Cross-Platform Compatible
- > Easy Purchase Process:
Flexible Product Configurator,
Knowledgeable Sales Team

Advice from First Victoria National Bank:

1. Buy for today's needs but keep in mind what your business needs will be in the future and make sure your solution works for both.
2. Choose a vendor that helps you understand all the aspects of the proposed solution so that there is no guesswork that makes it hard for you to buy or implement a new system.





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The Solution (cont.):

could meet First Victoria's criteria, the team chose Penguin Computing because it offered a great price point and flexible, scalable solutions that met First Victoria's needs.

According to Miller, "we needed to re-organize the IT department and network because there was no plan for expansion" so they had to bank on IT that showed more return on investment.

The team chose several thin 1U Relion servers and a few 2U Relion servers to replace their existing servers. These high-performance robust Intel processor-based products gave First Victoria a solution that ran Linux right out of the box and was compatible with Windows.

“ With the help of Penguin, we were able to upgrade all of the servers and condense a room full of hardware to just three full server cabinets, ”

Miller said.

Even the purchasing process was easy with Penguin Computing, according to Miller. Buying the right hardware from Penguin was easy partly because of the level knowledge and expertise that Penguin's pre-sales staff offered.

Another major reason it was so easy to work with Penguin was the high level of customization options available through Penguin's web tool, the product configurator.

The configurator helped the bank determine and then build the exact product they needed and wanted. Knowing the servers were already compatible with Linux eliminated the need for costly internal testing.

Even more than typical businesses, bankers like knowing all the costs up front and were happy to see that the configurator showed all the associated options and price tags for the solution before buying, including operating systems supported, storage options and customer support packages. None of the other vendors offered a product configurator with as much flexibility or ease of use as Penguin's.

The Installation:

First Victoria installed twenty-six 1U Relion servers for various applications on Windows and Linux along with four 2U Relion servers to support its email system, web conferencing and CRM database software. Today, the Lotus Domino server runs on Penguin Computing hardware with RAID 5 on Linux.

There have been no problems since installation was completed two years ago and First Victoria has never had to re-boot, except to move the servers or re-cable. In addition, First Victoria has already upgraded the highly scalable Penguin servers by simply adding memory and a second processor to accommodate the first set of planned bank expansion.

With this level of IT infrastructure consolidation and initial upgrades already under their belt, the bank is more than ready to handle additional growth now.



About First Victoria National Bank

In an era of mergers and takeovers, First Victoria National Bank is proud of being one of the premier independent banks in Texas. Since 1867, financial strength, sound management, true customer service, and a spirit of giving back to the community have separated us from all the rest. First Victoria National Bank currently has in excess of \$1 billion in total assets with locations in Victoria, Port Lavaca, Taft, Edna, Ganado, New Waverly, Spring/Woodlands, Bryan, Hearne, College Station and Huntsville, Texas.

First Victoria National Bank
www.fvnb.com

About Penguin Computing

Penguin Computing is the leading innovator of highly scalable, powerful Linux cluster, server and workstation platforms based on open standards hardware and software. The company has focused 100% on Linux since its inception and as a result, its solutions are robust and reliable, with a price/performance that's hard to beat. Founded in 1998, Penguin Computing is headquartered in San Francisco, California. To learn more about HPC and Linux clustering, please visit:

Penguin Computing
www.penguincomputing.com

