

## Case Study #1 **Solving Multi-Branch Data Problems**

### Marathon Data Systems

Marathon Data Systems, Inc., the leading software developer in the pest management industry, introduces PestPac.net. This revolutionary web-based software package is designed to handle single and multi-branch companies at the click of a mouse. It is the first web-based office management software to be offered to the pest management industry. Take control of your business today.

Marathon Data Systems, Inc. has led the industry from DOS to Windows, through the Year 2000, and now into the latest web-based technology. Since 1989, their customers have enjoyed outstanding customer service and timely software upgrades that have moved their data right along as computer technology has changed.

### PestPac.net



### Centralizing Data is Key for Copesan's Wil-Kil Pest Control

Copesan is an alliance of regional pest management companies that are united as a single entity to provide quality pest control solutions to businesses with locations throughout North America. Their customers include businesses in the food, grocery, restaurant and health care industries.

Wil-Kil Pest Control, a Copesan company, has provided quality pest control services to thousands of businesses since 1929.

#### The Challenge

For nearly five years, Copesan searched for a software package to handle customer accounting, billing, receivables, etc. throughout the four branch offices and headquarters of its Wil-Kil Pest Control Company.

At the time, there was no vehicle for centralizing data from these varied offices. Any reporting was done manually by perusing and combining data from several individual branches that were running individual copies of their data management software. Their old system was unable to handle multiple

offices and the means it used to consolidate data into one database was inefficient or often inaccurate. In other words, the information management of this multi-branch company was severely hindered and in need of improvement. Kevin Fixel, Vice President of Finance for Copesan Services, was instrumental in the decision to purchase new software. He explains, "The technology in PestPac.net was advanced compared to anything else we had

seen in the market and we saw many opportunities because of it."

#### The Solution

The solution Copesan found is Marathon Data Systems' PestPac.net software package.

"One of the key ingredients was finding a solution that could handle multiple offices. Most solutions were pretty costly or cumbersome or couldn't handle it at all. PestPac.net, being a web-based package, capable of connecting offices via private leased lines or over the internet, seemed like the best solution," explains Fixel.

The fact that PestPac.net is web-based

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Copesan Corporation  
Brookfield, Wisconsin

means that any authorized employee can access the data they need simply by logging on to their web browser. Unlike conventional Windows software, PestPac.net can be run on any workstation using internet browser software only. PestPac.net can be hosted by the individual company or on Marathon's secure servers on a subscription basis. Copesan chose to run the software on their own server.

One of the most valuable aspects of PestPac.net to Wil-Kil's offices is its flexibility. Though the program includes hundreds of reporting configurations, the data can be also exported into Excel or off-the-shelf report writers like Crystal Reports to create other customized reports. This feature is made possible because PestPac.net is built on the powerful Microsoft SQL Server database.

### Data Conversion

The biggest expense in implementing a new software system is not the price of the software itself. Rather it's the cost of having the data converted from your existing system, the labor involved in having your staff edit the converted data, the cost of training from your new software vendor, the cost of labor downtime while your staff is being trained on the new software, and the cost of implementing new procedures to work with the new software. These costs will far outweigh the cost of the software itself.

One of the major concerns in changing software in a company involves the potential problems as a result of the conversion process. "Conversions are the most painful part of the process of changing systems," admits Mike Ayars of Marathon Data Systems. "We know the value of moving data accurately so we focus on working closely with the customer during this process. Copesan used our comprehensive conversion program

designed specifically to convert data from their previous software package. We continually invest in the program and incorporate changes only if and when they benefit the customer."

According to Fixel, the conversion process at Wil-Kil was painless. "We took information from multiple offices, consolidated it and moved it into PestPac.net. The conversion went well and we are pleased with where we wound up, considering the circumstances and conditions of our original data."

*"For both our large, multi-branch operation and our single office operation, Marathon Data Systems understands where the future of customer service and routing software is going and has developed the perfect software to help our company compete."*

Kevin Fixel  
V.P. Finance  
Copesan Corporation  
Brookfield, Wisconsin

### How the solution is working

Centralizing data has made it easier for Copesan's customers to do business with them by allowing commercial customers to access their account information online. Fixel explains, "In addition, the customer service reps log all calls from customers and can easily relay these messages to the appropriate technician."

PestPac.net has made great advances in customer service. According to Fixel, "The problems we had with data immediately preceding the conversion to PestPac.net caused problems with our clients. The new system has come a long way toward reestablishing credibility with our clients and making it possible to

deal with their pest control issues. Our employees can access information from home which helps out. We have templates set up for each type of user which limits the things they can see or do." With PestPac.net, the administrator can easily grant access to data and functions for selected employees and customize the experience for any person in the company.

One of the exciting aspects of PestPac.net is its ability to track profitability of routes, branches and even technicians. Wil-Kil uses PestPac.net to track the profitability of all its routes and branches.

### The future

Copesan has used PestPac.net for only about 6 months as of this writing and has plans to utilize the more extensive features of the program in the future. They intend to email statements and invoices to customers, automate letter writing, use automated prebill invoicing, use contact management more extensively, and web site integration. One of the most important features they will be using is tracking and figuring commission payments and sales by employee. Kevin says, "The software is easy to understand, even for our managers who are not accustomed to using a computer every day."

### Working with Marathon Data Systems

"The support, training and help from Marathon Data Systems have all been superb. They are easy to work with and their ongoing help is wonderful!" exclaims Fixel. "Marathon has been very interested in our suggestions and has incorporated features that they believe will make the software valuable to all users." ●