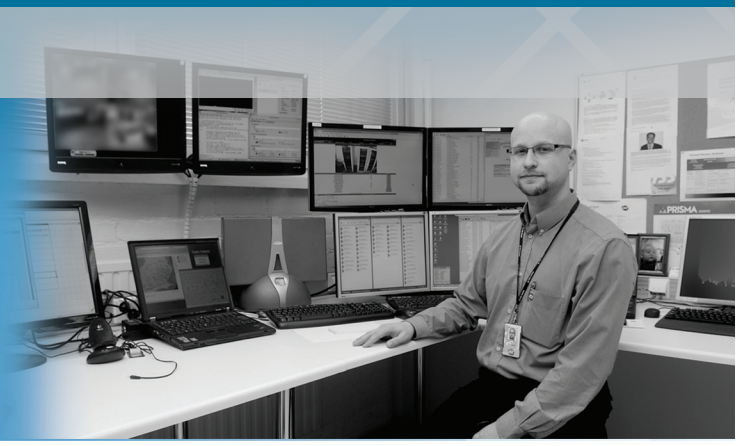
Case Study

Industry: Facility Services



ISS Services

Project: KVM extension and data center monitoring

Major benefit: Safeguarding CPUs and network equipment

The background:

With more than 200,000 business-to-business customers worldwide, ISS is one of the world's largest commercial providers of facility management services, such as support, property, and security services. Part of the real estate maintenance services it offers is the control and management of heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) and other vital building functions for its clients.

A new control center with KVM extension.

As part of its operations in Kuopio, Finland, Mr. Jani Savolainen, project manager for ISS Services, relies on Black Box equipment to help him manage and monitor his control center.

"The whole project started when our Kuopio control center moved to new premises," he explained.

Because of the nature of the business—monitoring facilities for clients—employees at ISS require multiple displays at their desks, which they use to monitor HVAC systems for their clients' buildings.

In the old control center, everyone had their CPUs under their desks. It was crowded, noisy, and hot, which wasn't good for the employees or the equipment. It was so warm, the room needed to be cooled in both the summer and the winter.

When Mr. Savolainen designed the new control center, he had a separate computer room built to house all the CPUs. This keeps the servers safely locked away, and also reduces cooling costs and frees up space in the control room. But Mr. Savolainen needed a way to drive the video, audio, keyboard, mice, and USB signals from the computer room to the control room. Someone suggested Black Box. He called the free technical support hotline and explained the application. The tech recommended ServSwitch™ Wizard Extenders, which work over inexpensive CATx cable.

The next step: real-time environmental monitoring.

Because ISS is responsible for monitoring and maintaining its clients' HVAC systems, Mr. Savolainen needs nearly 100% uptime in his computer room. That meant installing a system to monitor his computer room environment. "The temperature can rise very fast in the computer room if the cooling system fails," he explained. "Black Box introduced us to the AlertWerks™ II ServSensor V4P system, which we found to be excellent for our application."

The AlertWerks ServSensor V4P, a real-time environmental and video monitoring and alerting system, can be configured to monitor eight different things, such as temperature, motion, voltage, etc. In addition, four remote-controlled dome cameras can be attached to it. Mr. Savolainen set up his system to monitor the temperature and humidity of the air in the computer room and in the computer cabinets. In addition, he set up sensors for smoke and water leakage, and to detect if the computer room door is opened. He also added a surveillance camera.

"ServSensor V4P is a good system because it is one complete product and not part of the building automation system," Mr. Savolainen commented. "We classified all alerts as critical so both warnings and alarms go the same way as an SMS-message to mobile phones. "ServSensor has proved to be very smart for us."

After the good experience in the Kuopio control center, ISS is expanding the use of the AlertWerks ServSensor V4P system to 14 other ISS data centers in Finland.

"ServSensor is a good system because it is one complete product and not part of the building automation system. I also warmly recommend Black Box. The people are easy to reach by phone or e-mail and the free technical support is a great value."

Jani Savolainen, Project Manager, ISS Services Real Estate Maintenance

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