



## ▶ Technology's Little Helper

*Emtec works its magic in government agency's massive workstation upgrade.*

In the old Brothers Grimm fairy tale, a poor cobbler awakes each morning to find that elves have done his work for him overnight, creating the finest shoes in all the land. Managers of large IT departments should be so lucky.

When organizations embark upon large-scale technology initiatives, a key consideration is how to accomplish the task without disrupting day-to-day business. There are no technology elves flitting about to make the job any easier.

That is why officials with the state of New Jersey's child protection and welfare agency turned to Emtec when they recently decided to begin upgrading thousands of obsolete desktop workstations.

*"It was essential that we have minimal disruption in work time," said Marianne Kloc, IT manager for the Department of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), a division of the state's Department of Human Services. "The primary objective of our case workers is the safety of a child, so when they're on the phone it is usually a very important situation. We can't afford to have them distracted by someone trying to do an installation at their desktop."*

### Time for Change:

DYFS is responsible for investigating allegations of child abuse and neglect and, if necessary, arranging for the child's protection and the family's treatment. Each year DYFS provides services and support to more than 75,000 children and families through 900 community agencies. These groups provide hundreds of programs including parenting skills, respite care, counseling and homemaker services. Thirty-two district offices handle referrals and investigations statewide.

Aging workstations were making it increasingly difficult for DYFS caseworkers to do their jobs efficiently. Like many other government agencies and private-sector businesses around the country, DYFS had curtailed technology spending in the

years since the Internet bubble burst, choosing to make do with older PCs and upgrading only when necessary.

Emtec knows that PCs that are three or more years old can cost organizations time and money. As warranties expire on older systems, component failure becomes a bigger risk. Aging PCs can increase maintenance costs, lead to a more complex and costly infrastructure, and decrease user output.

This is why replacing outmoded PCs is high on the priority list for many public and private organizations. In December 2002, 44 percent of chief information officers surveyed by Morgan Stanley said they planned to spend more on PCs in 2003. In a survey by CRN magazine, small-business IT executives rated desktop purchases as their top hardware/software spending targets for 2003 — just ahead of storage.

### Out with the Old:

Many organizations simply have squeezed the last bit of usefulness out of their existing PCs. It is estimated that millions of the PCs in use today are simply too old to perform the complicated processing tasks being demanded by newer applications.

In general, the last major upgrade cycle occurred in 1999 as companies geared up for anticipated Y2K problems. But now all those Y2K-compliant systems are themselves in need of upgrading.

A recent report by investment bank Lehman Bros. estimates that nearly one-third of the some 500 million PCs in use today are more than four years old. Only a quarter of the PCs now in use are powerful enough to run Microsoft's

Windows XP operating system, which is quickly becoming the standard for desktop and laptop applications.

While upgrading PCs should improve overall efficiency, it also offers compelling financial benefits — one of those being the elimination of the costs and risks associated with maintaining older systems. Microsoft no longer offers technical support for Windows versions 3.1, 3.11 and 95, and will end technical support for Windows 98 and Windows NT 4 on June 30. The lack of technical support, including patches and upgrades, is another compelling argument for replacement.

In late 2002, New Jersey officials determined that the costs of maintaining approximately 2,700 outdated DYFS workstations outweighed the replacement costs.

*“Our machines were five to seven years old, and they couldn’t operate our Web applications and such,” said Kloc. “These aging machines also were breaking down repeatedly, so it was clearly time to replace them.”*

DYFS turned to Emtec to handle the massive project. As a contract vendor for the state of New Jersey, Emtec has worked with DYFS and a variety of other state agencies on past IT-related projects.

*“We have a long history with Emtec,” said Kloc. “We have used them for previous rollouts and we’ve received good service from them in the past, so we worked with them again on this engagement.”*

### A Thorough Approach:

Emtec began work on the project in mid-December, deploying several teams of up to eight technicians to the 32 district offices around the state. According to project manager Fred Bourdette, the teams are replacing a variety of older machines — many of them with old 133MHz CPUs — with state-of-the-art machines from DELL.

*“This upgrade will allow them to run new operating systems and high-end applications that the old machines couldn’t handle,” said Bourdette. “We’ve done business with them before, and I think they knew we had the wherewithal to provide this service smoothly and in a timely manner. The great thing is that they are really cooperating with us, so we’re able to get in and out pretty quickly.”*

Emtec takes a thorough approach to its rollout services, providing a full range of desktop/network setup services for the new machines, removal of the old machines and complete project management.

Emtec technicians deliver, unpack and set up the new workstations in user locations designated by the client site manager. All equipment delivered each day is set up by the end of the workday. The project teams load IP address logs to the network, map printers, capture the serial numbers of all new PCs and monitors with Palm scanners and provide all scan files to the project manager daily.

Emtec also uses Palm scanners to capture the serial numbers of all the old PCs and monitors being removed before packing up the old equipment and delivering it to an Emtec warehouse. There, all PC hard drives are cleaned using DataEraser software before the old equipment is palletized and delivered to client-designated locations.

*“We’ve been very pleased with Emtec’s work,” said Kloc. “They’ve been very sensitive to the needs of our organization and have worked with my IT staff to make sure everything goes as smoothly as possible within each office. We’ve hit a few obstacles, which is normal in any large project like this, but Emtec has done everything in its power to come up with agreeable solutions.”*

Though the project won’t be completed until this summer, Kloc is anticipating a happy ending worthy of the classic fairy tales.

*“I see this project as a bit of a morale booster,” she said. “Everyone is quite happy with their new PCs. People can access data more readily, and we’ll now have the kind of processing speed that will allow us to move forward with some long-awaited applications. We see it as improving things greatly.”*

**About Emtec:** Established in 1964, Emtec, Inc. is a systems integrator that provides IT services and products to the federal, state, local, education and commercial markets. Our market leading value-based management methods, coupled with best-in-class IT technology, consulting and development services, address a wide range of specific client needs, as well as support broader IT transformation initiatives. Emtec’s service capabilities span the United States, Canada and countries around the globe.