

Customer Profile: California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR)



Dorado Software's Redcell™ offers Centralized Network & Systems Management to Get Rapid IT Growth Under Control

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Lorenzo Shells, network systems engineer for the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Customer **California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation**

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) is the second largest data infrastructure in the state of California and one of the largest public networks in the country.

In 2008-2009, the CDCR is implementing a global IT improvement plan that included the expansion of the network operations staff into a full-fledged NOC (network operations center). The newly formed Network Operations Department is the information backbone for the CDCR. It provides mission critical applications and services to the CDCR with the mission of enhancing public safety through safe and secure incarceration of offenders, effective parole supervision, and rehabilitative strategies to successfully reintegrate offenders into our communities.

The challenge was a cost-effective centralized management system to automate deployment, configuration and management of their converging infrastructures and managing IT change. Dorado Software's Redcell™ enabled CDCR to gain visibility and control over this distributed multi-vendor infrastructure from systems, to networking to network printers.

Challenge **Managing IT Growth, Converging Infrastructures & Departments, and Controlling Costs**

When the IT infrastructure expands, so, too, should the IT department's ability to manage that infrastructure. Otherwise, that "infrastructure" becomes little more than a collection of unmanaged, unmonitored systems. To prevent growth from devolving into chaos, IT departments need a standard system for managing inventory, configurations, and change requests. They also need to monitor and troubleshoot disparate applications and hardware.

Such was the situation at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, based in Sacramento, when it merged the IT systems and staff of several departments into one network operations department. The network operations staff at the agency quickly realized it was in need of a centralized management application that could handle the various types of IT assets, system configurations, and application change requests.

"We did not have a tool at the time that could do configuration management, change management, and handle the various levels of administration and work with multiple vendors such as Cisco, HP, Juniper, and others," explains Lorenzo Shells, network systems engineer for the CDCR.

Because the six departments that merged all had different IT infrastructures, a single-vendor management system was not an option. "We had HP OpenView, which did HP well but nothing else. We bought CiscoWorks, but that only did Cisco," explains Shells.

Faced with an IT improvement plan that included the expansion of the network operations staff into a full-fledged NOC (network operations center) in the coming year, the IT managers realized that they needed to invest in a more

comprehensive, cross-platform management application to administer the growing collection of systems.

Solution **Centralized Automated Management with Redcell**

After researching and investigating several management applications, the CDCR selected Redcell from Dorado Software. Redcell is a suite of integrated IT life cycle management products for both network and systems management, and designed to provide uniform access and control over IT services, applications, and assets. Redcell includes management modules, including configuration management, inventory management, policy management, monitoring, security services management, and change and compliance management. It supports a range of platforms and technologies, including products from Dell, Microsoft, Cisco Systems, Juniper, EMC, HP, and others.

*Cross-Platform
Support,
Integration, and
Customer
Support were
Key Selling
Points*

That cross-platform support has been the key factor in the CDCR's decision to purchase the software, but it's not the only reason it opted for Redcell.

Another characteristic that weighed in Redcell's favor, says Shells, is the tight integration of its various modules, a trait that some competing products did not share. "We looked at another product from Solarwinds that we thought was pretty neat, but it was more like a conglomeration of little tools, not built from the ground up," he says. "Two or three of the tools seemed to do the same thing," indicating they likely had been acquired separately rather than developed to work together.

Dorado consultants explained the software and let CDCR staff work with it during an evaluation period. The agency is now implementing the Redcell software. The main product it bought is Redcell Infrastructure Management (RIM), which is designed to provide event monitoring, inventory, change and configuration management of multivendor technologies, including systems, networking, security devices and printers.

Solution Components

In addition to deep device discovery and equipment group management available in all Redcell products, the key product components of Redcell Infrastructure Manager are:

Configuration Management. Real-time (discrete) configuration file management and global configuration file management includes configuration file creation, backup and restore, proactive configuration file scanning, and reporting.

Inventory Management. Asset inventory management, a CMDB (configuration management database), template-based inventory reporting, and the ability to export data to CSV, HTML, and PDF formats. Includes an Equipment Discovery Wizard that identifies devices and does deep discovery of links, subinterfaces, software, and firmware. Informs CDCR as to what equipment they have in the network, enabling them to manage the devices more effectively and upgrade the network when necessary.

Change Management. Used for change detection, compliance, and reporting, the product's automated deep discovery capability provides an inventory of the

network and how it is configured and makes it possible to implement a change approval process and to control access to prevent noncompliant changes. Keeps track of any changes made to the network, providing a detailed audit trail to determine exactly who made changes and when. Redcell assures compliance with CDCR's company policies, and notifies administrators in real time whenever the network is out of compliance.

OS/Patch Management. Hardware and OS patch provisioning allows IT administrators to quickly and easily push BIOS, Firmware, OS Driver and security updates out to managed Windows™ systems and groups of systems across the network from one central console. Being able to quickly identify and remediate servers that need to be patched improves the efficiency of IT resources, ensures system security and stability which lowers the risk of downtime.

Monitoring. Provides SNMP traps, syslog monitoring, real-time and historical views of events, and a variety of notification options, including email and paging, as well as visual alarms.

Print Management. Let's IT staff view all of network printers in a single screen and administer them with drag-and-drop management tools. It also monitors printer utilization and service issues and can discover printers on the network.

Deployment Description

The deployment of Redcell will take place this spring and summer, at the same time as the CDCR will be finalizing its NOC and hiring additional IT staff. The department currently has 50,000 employees, with approximately 20 network operations employees. When the NOC is up and running, the total will be 30.

It will also coincide with a massive redesign of the organization's WAN infrastructure, with new switch rollouts and the migration of 22,000 users to the new network. Taken all together, it's a huge undertaking, as Shells readily concedes, and each part of it will require help from outside consultants.

To handle all of the new development, along with the Redcell implementation and the day-to-day operations, the department is bringing in contractors to help with infrastructure design, IT standards, and the implementation of the various technologies.

When all is done, however, life should be much smoother for both the IT staff and the end users, Shells believes. "We will be able to go to one place to find everything, all of the inventory for XYZ equipment, and can report on it or effect a change on it. If there is a bug in code that needs to be rectified quickly, we can do that quickly," he says.

That will be very different from the way CDCR IT staff handled changes just a few months ago.

"We first had to find it, validate it, and implement it in the spreadsheet . . . and that's just for one request," explains Shells. "For each new request, we had to do the whole thing again."

It will also make adding and updating IT systems and keeping an inventory of IT

assets faster and more accurate.

“We are currently setting up standards for our [asset] refresh plan. To do that, we have to know how much we have, how much of it we want to replace. In the past we had to do it by hand, which means we could only do it on an annual basis or even every three years,” says Shells. “Once we get the Redcell tool in place, we could do it every day.

“This will allow us to get a handle on what’s out there, what we have, what’s in its configuration, and when we want to replace it.”

Results

Dorado Software’s solution delivered the following business results to CDCR:

Centralized Control of IT Infrastructure: Redcell offers CDCR a single, central management system for visibility across the entire multi-vendor, multi-technology environment. One management console enables CDCR to monitor, configure, and manage all network devices and their servers and PCs.

Availability: Redcell’s advanced monitoring minimizes downtime and outages, preserving network and system, and ultimately information, availability.

Automation: CDCR must manage an enormous network without employing a massive staff of technical engineers. Redcell automates the deployment and maintenance of applications and infrastructure devices, saving CDCR time and money. Group, or one-to-many, operations assist the IT staff in managing change in their large environment while reducing manual errors.

Reduced Errors: Redcell’s automation of the configuration process eliminates the errors caused by CDCR’s previous manual processes.

Reduced MTTR: The visibility presented by Redcell across the multi-vendor network keeps CDCR apprised of inventory, compliance and performance, enabling the company to solve service issues more quickly, reducing the mean time to repair (MTTR).

Scalability: Redcell automation enables CDCR to scale the network when needed to accommodate future requirements, whether new devices, new services, or larger deployment configurations.

Low Cost: Redcell was an economical solution for CDCR – thousands less than our competitors. Redcell also saves CDCR on IT operations including deployment, training, and maintenance costs, and allowing the organization to carefully manage to its IT budget.

Customer Profile at a Glance

Customer: California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation

Reseller: Western Blue Corporation

Challenge: Managing change of their converging multi-vendor infrastructures, reduce manual processes and errors, reduce disparate tools and tight budget.

Dorado's Value: Scalable, cost-effective, and integrated network and systems management solution to consolidate and automate management of their multi-vendor network.

Key Benefits:

- Single management interface for multi-vendor network
- Automated management of end-to-end infrastructure
- Highly available distributed solution
- Granular inventory and change management
- Easy and affordable scalability

Solution:

- Redcell Infrastructure Manager
- Managed Infrastructure:
 - Cisco
 - Juniper
 - HP



Dorado Software Contact Information

North America – Corporate Headquarters

110 Woodmere Road, Suite 200

Folsom CA 95630

USA

T +1 916 673 1100 / F +1 916 673 1042

sales@doradosoftware.com

URL: www.doradosoftware.com

Email: info@doradosoftware.com

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