

Uptime Wins 'Innovative Business of the Year' Award

The Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce recently named Uptime the most "Innovative Business of the Year" for 2006!

"Uptime is very honored to receive this prestigious award from the Chamber and to be recognized for our efforts in the Las Vegas business community," says Shelly R. Rounds, CEO of Uptime.

Rounds accepted the award on behalf of the company at the inaugural Small Business Excellence Awards luncheon hosted by the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce on Thursday, Sept. 14. Held at the Las Vegas Hilton, the "BIZ E's" honor small businesses, entrepreneurs and non-profits that epitomize excellence.

Founded in 2001, UptimeLV, Inc. has since flourished into one of Nevada's foremost information technology consulting firms. In 2002, it became the first company in Las Vegas to offer a "managed services" solution, providing the necessary maintenance for small business networks, and has expanded to offer "real-time" and "passive" monitoring and reporting for small and medium-sized businesses. Uptime offers seven different service products to fit customers' needs and budgets, including a "flat-rate" program with unlimited service calls.

During its five years of business, Uptime has established many strategic partner-



Uptime CEO Shelly Rounds, center, accepts the BIZ E's Innovative Business of the Year award from John Wilcox, LVCC Chairman, and Kara Kelley, LVCC President and CEO.

ships and alliances with key national vendors, allowing the firm to become a client's one

source for all needs. Microsoft, Cisco, Dell and many others meet with Uptime on a

monthly basis to support growth.

In 2005, Uptime earned distinction as the first locally-owned IT company in Las Vegas to become a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner with three Microsoft designated competencies. Microsoft awarded Uptime with the Best Practices Award for Excellence in Competency.

The firm is continually ranked in the top 25 percent nationwide among Microsoft Partners for customer satisfaction. Uptime is also the first company in Nevada and one of the few in a seven-state region to obtain Microsoft's Small Business Specialist Certification.

Uptime Recruiting, Inc. Division Launched

Uptime has just launched its newest division, **Uptime Recruiting, Inc.** (URI), a turnkey recruiting provider matching results across a number of disciplines including technology, sales, marketing and executive placement.

"As a company, we are aware of not only how difficult it is to find good employees, but good employees who fit in with the company's culture," says Uptime President Stephen Flaherty. "Uptime Recruiting, Inc. is dedicated to creating a harmonizing match between a company and valuable workers."

A wholly-owned subsidiary of UptimeLV, Inc., URI focuses on reducing clients' burden of screening candidates by taking on the role of discovering qualified candidates for potential employers.

With more than 30 years of recruiting experience, the management team at URI has created an inclusive approach in searching for suitable and experienced applicants. Through a series of questionnaires, the company matches applicants with prospective employers by employing its "CCA" approach - Comprehensive job specification, Cultural awareness and Applicants "skill set match."



By studying a client's company, URI is able to fully comprehend its culture and match applicants accordingly. Serving multiple markets and disciplines, the full-service recruiting firm is headquartered in Las Vegas with a branch office in Chicago.

For more information about Uptime Recruiting, Inc., please call 702-407-2387.

• How to Assess Your Power Needs •

By Dave Rounds,
Chief Technology Officer of Uptime

Why is assessing power needs crucial?

Assessing the power needs is absolutely critical to ensure a highly available data center.

There are a few elements to consider when assessing power needs: source, consumption, distribution and just as important, cooling of the data center.

These elements, in effect, make up the foundation of a data center, just as a foundation does for a house.

Practical formulas to assess power.

As far as formulas go, I think everyone has their own. I always add at least 30% for growth concerns. If I have the detailed information I need, I may trim that down to 20% to curb costs.

American Power Conversion and many other manufacturers of UPS and network equipment have tools to assist in power calculations, usually found on the website. Dell and HP both have these; however, if you are using multiple manufacturers, I have found it easier to use a UPS manufacturer.

Even if you don't plan on using a specific manufacturer for a UPS, check out all the tools and find the one you like the best. I personally like APC's as it also gives information on cooling (BTUs).

Steps to properly assess power needs.

There are many items that must be considered when assessing the power needs, all with equal importance. The first is to determine the immediate need of power consumption and distribution. This is done by referring to manufacturer specifications of all of the equipment to be installed.

The next step is to determine future requirements. This step is by far the most difficult to determine, as it requires the data center planner to have a detailed understanding of the future growth plans of the company. It is critical that the planner has a solid business understanding of what is planned for the next one, three and five years for the company, and what network services may need to be deployed. Once this information is known, an educated guess can be made about what new equipment could go into the data center, and space as well as power and cooling can be determined.

The next step involves the actual structure of the data center. Again referring to manufacturer specifications, what is the best method for distributing power?

Some larger data centers may choose to construct every power outlet on a large battery backup system and use Power Distribution Units (PDUs) to distribute power within the racks. Other methods used more commonly by smaller data centers may include multiple UPSs placed in racks as necessary with no PDUs.

Here, the most important decision relies on the size of the data center and the level of reliability and availability of power, as well as the determination of power requirements decided upon earlier in the process. Once this decision is made, be sure to check specifications on the equipment for the distribution method used to ensure that load does not exceed recommended levels.

Finally, the source of power must be determined. Is the company going to rely on utility power alone? Does the company need to plan for long-term power outages such as a data center in an earthquake, hurricane or tornado zone? Reliability is the key for power. Is the power "clean," or does the power regularly spike above or fall below normal levels?

Challenges in power assessment.

I think the biggest challenge is being able to predict the future. What additional equipment will need to be installed? What is the weather is going to do? The one challenge that can be overcome is how much it is going to cost.

As a general rule of thumb in data centers, whether power, or network services, the more available, reliable, and redundant it is, the more it will cost. Sometimes sacrifices have to be made due to cost. So the challenge is to determine allowed levels of downtime.

It is easy to become ridiculous in attempting to reach 100% of all 3 of these concerns.

For example, assuming a company determines that they need a UPS to cover short-term outages, then what about long-term outages? Ok, we will get a generator. Then what kind - gas, diesel or bio-diesel? Ok, diesel. How big of a storage tank are you going to purchase? What if the tankers can't get through to you for a month? The answers to each one of those questions means more money.

Planning for future power demand.

The key is information and planning. Top-level IT personnel are not just geeks who like to tinker around with computers. The best personnel have a solid understanding of business and business requirements. Keep a majority of your higher-level, "in-the-trenches" IT personnel informed about where the business is going. Keep them trained on industry and IT trends. Make sure the end-users have a forum that they can express needs and desires about computing to IT.

When you put these all together, it will breed an environment where the best IT personnel will excel. Most importantly, they will have the necessary information to predict the future of your data center.

Another important thing is to have the proper electrical infrastructure in place to allow for future expansion. There is nothing worse than having to reconstruct for power needs.

For example, one customer wanted to add to an existing power source by installing new equipment. Although an electrical panel with enough capacity was present, the physical cables to the breaker box were not of sufficient type. The result was a two-week delay, complete loss of power to the data center for 12 hours, and a budget overage of 30% - all due to improper planning in the beginning and using an electrician based upon price, not experience.

Pick the most you think the data center's power requirements would ever be - then add some. It is less expensive to do it once than to redo it!