

LANSA Case Study

Terminix services rapid growth with LANSA

The Terminix International Company, based in Memphis Tennessee, USA, and part of the ServiceMaster group, is the largest termite and pest control company in the world, safeguarding over three million homes and businesses. Terminix replaced hundreds of standalone UNIX systems and a COBOL mainframe with a central LANSA iSeries system. Used by 12,000 staff at 400 locations including 5,500 service specialists with handheld devices, it also interacts with third-party systems using Web services.

Lee Crump, Terminix vice president and CIO, says, "One reason that we have been able to support the growth in annual revenue over six years from 600 million dollars to over a billion dollars, is our iSeries and central LANSA-based system. We don't have any capacity limits. Without LANSA as our development tool we could not have completed this major system development in the short time frame we did."

The Challenge of Rapid Growth

Terminix has 12,000 employees, including 5,500 service technicians, across its head office and 400 wholly owned business locations in the USA.

Previously, each branch had its own small IBM UNIX server and data was collected in overnight batch jobs and transmitted via dial-up lines for processing by the head office mainframe. Plus, the only way to move customer information between branches was to fax it for rekeying in the local server.

When Crump joined Terminix in 1999, his first mission was to establish a more efficient IT infrastructure. "The focus was on improving sales and services," he notes. "We were a 600 million dollar business. The plan was to grow the business rapidly, but our architecture and software was very antiquated."

"The old distributed IT system hampered our growth. Setting up new branches was cumbersome and support of the individual servers was labor intensive."

"The mainframe was on average 48 hours behind the branches as it took the whole night to collect the branch's data and most of the next day to process that data."

"Our 100 plus person call center in Memphis did not have the latest customer information and for recent customers sometimes there were no details at all."

Crump decided to replace the branch servers with a single centralized database and base the new centralized architecture on an easier to manage, cost efficient and reliable iSeries model 890. After evaluating packaged software solutions, Crump also decided on in-house development.

"Almost 60 percent of pest control business is handled by companies with less than a million dollars in revenue, mostly small family-owned companies. We are a one billion dollar company with 12,000 staff and want to positively differentiate our systems to give the business a competitive advantage."

"Without LANSA we couldn't have done the development in the time we did."

"IBM Rochester recommended we look at LANSA because of its productivity. We liked LANSA because, with a single set of source code, you can create green-screens, a Windows-like interface and handle XML. LANSA is not dependent on any specific database," says Crump."

A Centralized Solution

Crump and Terminix's director of systems architecture, **Gabriel Sgolombis**, spent three months visiting branches and talking with staff to find out system requirements first hand.

Development started in the third quarter of 1999 and just over one year later, three branches started using the system for an 18-month pilot. The full rollout started in July 2002, with around 25 branches brought online monthly.

By April 2004, all Terminix's branch locations and its call center in Memphis were online accessing the same LANSA applications and information in real time.

Currently over 12,000 devices at 400 locations connect to the system via a frame-relay network as well as 5,500 service specialists via wireless handheld devices. The system has 3,000 functions, 2,000 screens, 1,500 files, 30,000 fields and 600,000 lines of code.

The system's core functionality covers customer leads, proposals, service schedules, billing and meeting regulatory reporting requirements for companies working with chemicals.

"But that's just the bare minimum, any system would do that," says Crump. "To gain a competitive advantage from your IT system, communication with the customer becomes increasingly important. We now have all the information to improve communication with the customers and help our employees be much more productive."



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Better Customer Communication

Technicians on the road have wireless handheld Dolphin devices loaded with a custom Windows CE application. The Dolphins are updated with the day's scheduled jobs, accounts-receivable information and customer notes. During the day, technicians time-stamp their arrival at the customer, enter the chemicals they use, time-stamp job completion and enter payment details.

Currently, most technicians still need to go to the office at the beginning and end of the day to upload and download information, but as part of Terminix's Smart Truck initiative, communication will soon be in real time.

"Our technicians have up-to-date customer information at their finger tips, raising the customer service level. Our records get updated instantly by the technician who did the job. There is no rekeying involved," comments Crump.

As part of the Smart Truck initiative, over 5,000 service vehicles are also being fitted with a GPS solution to constantly transmit their position.

"We can tell customers more accurately over the phone when the technician will arrive. More importantly, if a customer has an emergency, we can display vehicles in that area and send the work order electronically to the closest available technician immediately."

"The GPS solution keeps track of every stop the vehicle made and how long that stop was. From an audit and a quality control point of view, it is an additional tool to manage our service delivery better," says Crump.

Faster, Easier System Interaction

"It takes millions and millions of transactions to get to be a billion dollar company," says Crump. "To handle that volume your system needs to be scalable and your integration with other systems must be fast and easy. We achieve both with LANSA."



Lee Crump, vice president and CIO at Terminix, with one of the wireless handheld devices that give 5,500 service specialists up-to-date customer information at their fingertips.

Company and System Information

- The Terminix International Company L.P., based in Memphis, Tennessee, USA, is the largest termite and pest control company in the world and safeguards over 3 million homes and businesses against all types of pests in 45 U.S. states and 14 other countries.
- In 1986, Terminix joined The ServiceMaster Company, one of the largest service companies in the USA with system-wide revenue in excess of \$3.2 billion. Companies in the ServiceMaster family include TruGreen ChemLawn, TruGreen LandCare, American Home Shield, American Residential Services, ServiceMaster Clean, Merry Maids, AmeriSpec and Furniture Medic. For more details visit: www.terminix.com
- Terminix now uses an 24-way iSeries model 595 with 0.5 terabytes of memory and 20 terabytes of disk space. Terminix has a development team of 70 as well as 50 support staff that report to the ServiceMaster shared services group.

"With our central LANSA-based iSeries system we have no capacity limits."

"Our goal is to use a Web services infrastructure for all systems interaction with third-party systems and the ServiceMaster IT Enterprise Group," adds Sgolombis.

"We are making LANSA Integrator and Web services our standard way of interfacing."

"For example, LANSA Integrator is used to receive and process leads generated by ServiceMaster. Every 30 seconds we use Web services to pull in leads on an almost real-time basis. The leads are automatically distributed to a branch based on zip code and the system alerts the sales representative on call with a cell phone text message so they can immediately call the customer."

"OurServiceMasterEnterpriseGroupisattheforefrontofutilizing address verification software and GPS facilities for efficient scheduling of services. Every time a new address is entered in our database, either manually or by the lead processing system, LANSA Integrator triggers a Web service from our parent company to get the latitude and longitude and automatically corrects the address to meet U.S. Post standards."

"Our recently piloted Routing and Scheduling initiative uses Web services from Point Serve, a company that specializes in routing and scheduling, to divide customers into very tight routes to minimize drive time."

"We also interact with our own damage claims division and many other external parties such as banks, credit card companies and advertising agencies. Whenever we can, we are replacing these interfaces with LANSA Integrator and Web services," says Sgolombis

More Productive Development

"I am glad we followed IBM's advice to evaluate LANSA," concludes Sgolombis.

"The LANSA world is much more productive than the typical RPG 3GL world. Our developers would hate to work with anything else."

"With LANSA we can create green-screen, Windows, XML and browser applications from a single set of source code."

"Everything we write is 100-percent LANSA, so now we are not locked into a specific platform or database," says Sgolombis.

"The cost of opening new branches and growing the company is much less than the old distributed model," continues Crump.

"But in a centralized environment, if our computer goes down, we lose operations in the entire company. So, to us the reliability of the iSeries and LANSA are critical."

"We feel very strongly and positively about our relationship with both the iSeries and LANSA," concludes Crump.

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