

National natural gas company powers through their Office 2007 conversion



Client Background

This energy corporation is one of the United States' top independent producer of natural gas and the nation's most active driller of new wells with over 7,600 employees. Headquartered in Oklahoma they focus on discovering, acquiring and developing conventional and unconventional natural gas reserves onshore in the U.S., primarily in the "Big Four" natural gas regions: north-central Texas, east Texas-northwestern Louisiana, central Arkansas and the northern Appalachian Basin.

For the past 11 years, this organization's strategy has been to focus on developing unconventional plays onshore in the U.S., where they believe they can generate the most attractive risk-adjusted returns. They have an aggressive and technologically advanced drilling program with an active property consolidation program focused on small to medium-sized corporate and property acquisitions.

The organization is a publically traded company listed on the New York Stock Exchange and named to Fortune List of "100 Best Companies to Work For" in 2008 and 2009.

Client's Problem

The organization had amassed a wide range of customized Excel and other Microsoft Office files to manage their complex gas drilling and production operations. Files dependent on complex Office macros and Visual Basic for Application (VBA) code were critical to business continuity, as the staff used this information in the discovery and development of onshore natural gas reserves.

When it came time to upgrade to Office 2007, they discovered problematic Office files stored across the organization, and were surprised by the scope and magnitude of these problems.

"We had planned a migration project and were shocked to discover massive problems within the majority of our files," said a senior IT executive, from the organization. "We had to suspend the migration, as we couldn't identify which files could be migrated safely."

"Conventional conversion tools didn't provide the necessary reports and actionable data that would allow our IT staff to convert older Office files to the new Microsoft Office format," he continued. "Furthermore, it was critical that all files worked properly after the migration, otherwise, our revenue-producing business operations would be at risk."

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Quantifying the problem wasn't the only issue. The organization also couldn't calculate how much extra time, labor and money it would take to fix the problematic files.

The organization's IT staff first tried to solve the problems internally, using Microsoft's Office Migration Planning Manager (OMPM) tool. OMPM was able to generate some basic reports, but the data it produced was not accurate or detailed enough to help plan the migration. Additionally, the IT team found that the tool's command line interface was difficult to use.

Client's Solution

The organization's IT team learned about ConverterTechnology and decided to try their Office Deployment Risk Appraisal - a limited, one-week engagement, to determine the potential risks of converting the enterprise files. The appraisal and the subsequent OfficeConverter solution utilized the following tools and processes:

DiscoverIT - During the appraisal, ConverterTechnology used its proprietary Enterprise File Landscape Discovery Tool, DiscoverIT, to determine the quantity of problematic files across a sample set of more than 100,000 Microsoft Office files.

ScanIT - Those files were then passed through a deep scan with OfficeConverter ScanIT to determine the level of errors. Specific error profiles were generated against each individual file, as well as aggregate data useful for planning the conversion project.

ReportIT - Data generated in the discovery and scanning steps were imported into ReportIT, which generated reports that would guide the Microsoft Office file migration project. Project metrics could be extrapolated from the sample set to determine whether an automated tool would be necessary.

"OfficeConverter provided relevant, actionable information about our company's massive file landscape. Using this technology, we were able to quickly determine the scope of our problems and determine the time and costs associated with manual and automatic file conversion," the senior IT executive explained.

"During the process, which was user-friendly and easy to implement, our compatibility problems were discovered and rectified, allowing our migration project to successfully move forward," he continued. "Instead of hiring a team of programmers to make thousands of changes to problematic files, OfficeConverter was an extremely efficient tool to change VBA code within files and reflect the new Object Model of Microsoft Office 2007. We used ConverterTechnology's OfficeConverter 2007 suite of products to successfully migrate more than 6,000 employees from Microsoft Office 2003 to Office 2007, without disruption to our business. I'd strongly recommend this technology to others with similar business needs."

ConverterTechnology provides software and services to help enterprises capitalize on the benefits of the Microsoft platform without the migration risks of data corruption, reduced employee productivity and critical business application down time. Founded in 1997, ConverterTechnology has helped more than one million users identify, analyze and fix compatibility errors before they occur, accelerating time to deployment. ConverterTechnology is headquartered in Nashua, N.H., with offices in Europe and Australia, and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Powerlan Limited. For more information, visit www.convertertechnology.com