

Independence IT Alleviates Association's IT Burden

Founded in 1959, the **Association of Executive Search Consultants (AESC)** represents retained executive search consulting firms around the globe. With its headquarters in New York City and a European office in Brussels, AESC has a staff of about 25 people managing association operations for 6,000 executive recruitment professionals in 70 countries.

Challenges

To effectively run an organization with members and staff dispersely located requires a strong technology backbone. Many of the AESC staff telecommute and rely heavily on remote access to their systems and files. When accessibility to its file servers became a challenge and its in house IT staff cost more than outsourcing, AESC decided it needed a change. Independence IT came to the rescue in 2004 with its managed desktop

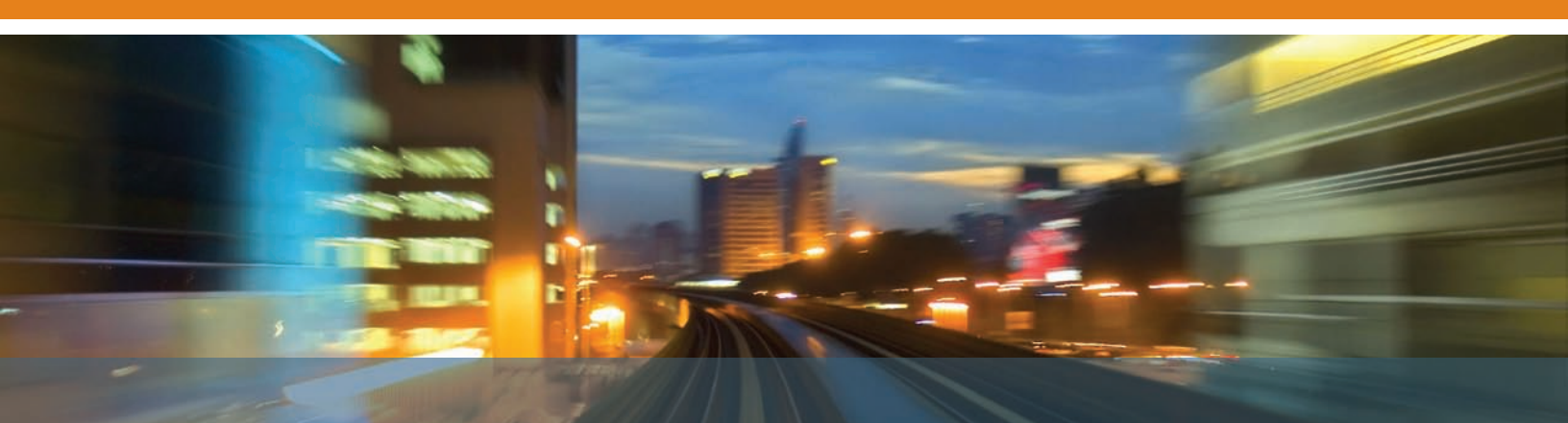
solution – hosting and managing AESC's computer environment for a cost effective monthly fee.

Solution

Independence IT hosts all AESC's productivity applications, including Microsoft Office and its Windowsbased file sharing. With the hosted approach, AESC no longer needs to install, update or maintain software or set up or remove users from the email system, for example. Independence IT handles the management of these systems

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remotely, eliminating the time spent on these mundane tasks for the AESC IT staff.



For more information, contact Independence IT at (888) 299.4552 or info@independenceIT.com.

By outsourcing the IT function to Independence IT, Matt Helbing, director of technology, is AESC's only IT professional now and is also able to hold other non technical responsibilities. "Running in a Windows environment, there is always the threat of viruses, which can be a full time job to manage," explains Helbing. "With Independence IT essentially serving as our IT department, we can focus more on our core competencies."

In addition to its basic applications, AESC also uses a webbased association management solution that requires Internet Explorer – a program not compatible with Macs. By having Independence IT host the application, AESC's Mac users now have no challenges accessing the software. Additionally, AESC uses Peachtree accounting software, which was its last legacy application managed in house.

Maintaining a local file server for Peachtree required diligent protection against viruses, among other time consuming tasks. AESC has now moved Peachtree to Independence IT's hosted platform – providing easy access for its accounting staff and less responsibilities for Helbing.

Properly protecting AESC's mission critical data had always been an overwhelming task. Data backup had been done onsite using some tape backup. "Now, Independence IT performs remote nightly backups for us and is able to restore our files on demand, if necessary. This gives us peace of mind knowing our

data is protected," said Helbing.

Compliance is another issue that had to be addressed by AESC's IT team, as it is required to retain copies of its documents for seven years. The hosted solution enables AESC to easily store its data remotely and comply with the industry's retention of documents requirements.

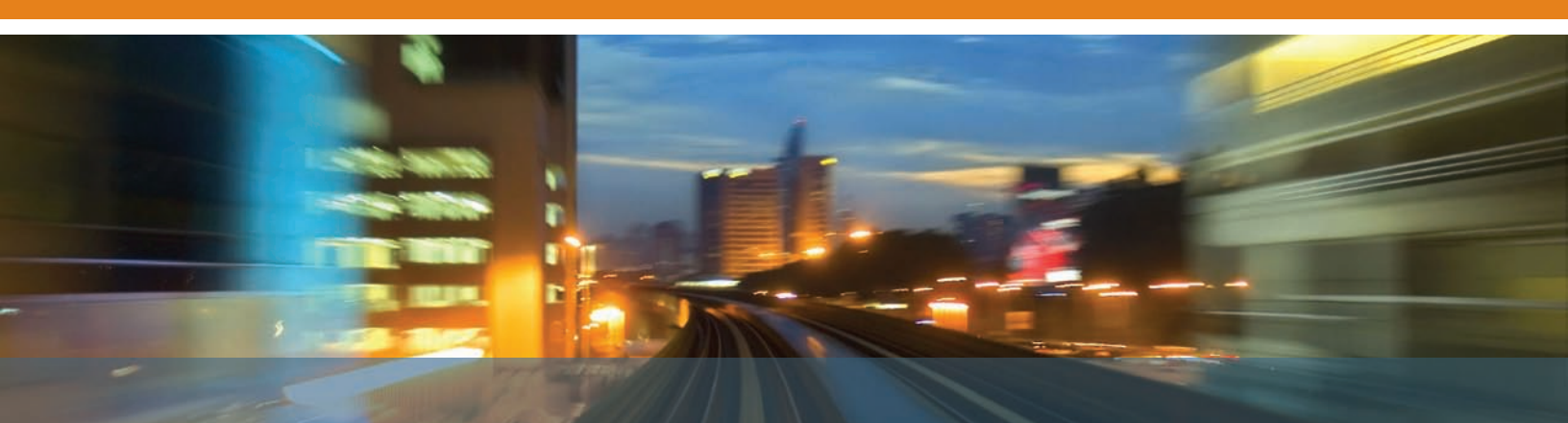
Benefits

"Handing over our IT responsibilities to Independence IT has proven very beneficial," explained Helbing. "Reducing the size of the IT staff was critical for an organization of our size. And, with Independence IT serving as our IT department, we are now able to focus more on what we do best."

"With secure access to our files and applications online, the hosted solution enables our staff to access and share files no matter where we are located. This is extremely important for a multi national association like ours," added Helbing.

"Access and reliability of our systems is critical, but so too is customer service," said Helbing. "Independence IT has been very accessible and quick to respond to our questions. The team has also made many recommendations that have significantly improved our processes. We are very happy with the level of support we have received over the years."

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