



[Dow Corning](#) Saves \$1.6 Million with
Intelligent Backup and Migration

TRAN>KITION

CASE STUDY



Business Overview

Headquartered in Michigan, Dow Corning employs more than 7,500 people at 40 worldwide manufacturing and service locations. More than half of Dow Corning's sales are outside the United States.

Dow Corning introduced new services for their customers in order to differentiate themselves from their competition. The new services essentially help their customers to pay only for the products and services they need.

To create these services, the company invested more than \$100 million in an SAP-based global information technology platform, enhanced their e-commerce capabilities, and redesigned the dowcorning.com web site to support this new choice-based offering. Employees could now give customers immediate access to information they needed anywhere in the world while facilitating the measurement, management and integration of virtually every aspect of their business.

Business Challenge

To make the new services effective, Dow Corning needed to make sure their desktop PCs would operate well in this enhanced environment. This meant upgrading the current Windows operating systems for PCs in 40 locations worldwide while preserving the user configuration and data files on those systems and minimizing productivity loss for those users.

Dow Corning had 9,000 desktop PCs to upgrade and migrate, mostly running Windows 98. The support costs associated with this operating system were high. To compound the issue, SAP did not perform well on the Windows 98 operating system. The company needed to ensure that their user's desktop PCs were capable of operating in the new \$100 million SAP environment. Research showed that upgrading users to the latest operating system on the existing PC hardware could prevent most support calls to their IT help desks.

A cost-effective process for upgrading these 9,000 PCs was needed to minimize the number of technicians needed to perform those upgrades, audit the process, preserve user data and configuration information and fit an in-place

operating system refresh. Backups of locally stored data on the PCs were not routinely performed, so process controls to ensure the integrity of the locally stored data were critical.

"When I took over the project, a lot of the initial work was already complete," said Jason Stefanich, Workstation and Server Engineering Support Leader. "I did see some areas where we could realize some improvement in terms of business results and technical effectiveness."

Stefanich wanted a fully automated migration. The entire process would run from central servers so results would be repeatable and reliable. He realized that if the automated process could be initiated by the user rather than by sending a technician to each workstation, huge cost-savings could be realized.

"The original plan called for using technicians to perform migration procedures manually. This process involved high labor costs, since technicians would have to visit 100-150 machines each week to perform the upgrades. Additionally, the risks of data loss due to technician error when performing the tedious and repetitive tasks were too high."

Stefanich knew that the migration process needed to be controlled to avoid user-induced errors and to have sufficient checks in place to report problems and errors before they resulted in loss of data. If these requirements could be satisfied with an automated process, he knew technicians would not have to visit most of the 9,000 PC's they'd be managing.

Technical Challenges

"Tranxition got involved with Dow Corning at the formative stage," said Gordon Rielly, co-founder of Tranxition. "Dow Corning's facility in the U.K. performed a deep evaluation of all available products. We responded quickly to Dow Corning's requests, and made a couple of special changes for them on short notice."

Because users log into their systems every day and start programs as a regular task, Dow Corning's engineers believed that the risks to allowing a user to initiate the migration process were low. "We thought that the cost

“Tranxition’s product is one of the best tested and supported software products I’ve ever used. After more than 5,000 migrations not a single instance of failure of the software was recorded.”

- JASON STEFANICH, *Client Server Engineering Leader*

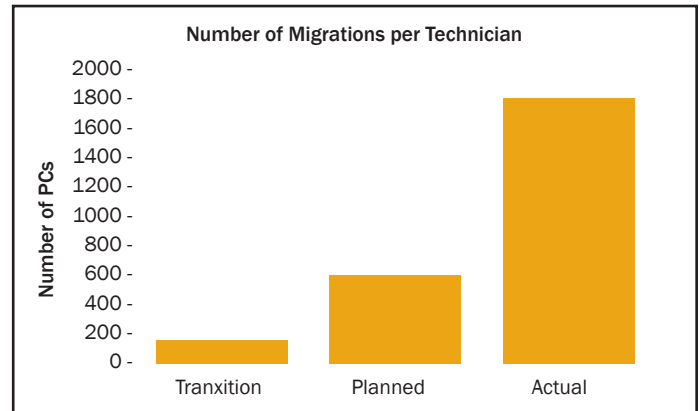
savings were well worth any perceived risk with respect to end user involvement,” said Stefanich.

Rielly agrees, “There is a natural reluctance on the part of IT to rely upon the user to initiate system upgrades. But when you really look at it, users are doing a lot of things right with their machines. As long as the process remains controlled, the user-initiated process is very cost effective.”

Technical Process

Dow Corning created the following automated process that was initiated by the user at their convenience and required no user interaction once underway.

1. The user initiated the upgrade process by request or at the direction of the help desk (if a problem could be resolved by an upgrade.) The user started the migration by clicking a link on the corporate intranet or local server. From this point forward, the process proceeded without user interaction.
2. The user’s data as well as system and application settings were extracted using Migration Manager and copied to a server.
3. Files needed for the rest of the process were copied locally from the network. These files included applications to reconnect to the domain and the disk imaging application.
4. The hard drive was imaged with new operating system and the standard applications in their common operating environment (COE).
5. The user’s data and settings were injected to the newly imaged system using Migration Manager.
6. The user was guided through installation of any additional applications needed that were not part of the current COE disk image.
7. The computer was rebooted and the migration was complete.



Business Results

The original process of using technicians rather than end users to initiate and manage each migration was extremely expensive and subject to higher risk of data loss.

When Dow Corning initially estimated the effort needed for a more efficient automated process they guessed that only one in ten migrations would require the assistance of a technician. This would mean a savings of 90% in labor costs over the original method. In the final analysis, Dow Corning actually required only one technician per 30+ migrations.

Dow Corning says they saved \$1.68M in IT labor costs by implementing the user-initiated, automated migration process and Tranxition’s Migration Manager. In a typical week, 100-150 PCs were migrated, with an average of only one technician visit to all the users during and after migration.

As an added bonus, user productivity wasn’t impacted during the process because the user selected a convenient time to perform the migration so that their workday wasn’t interrupted.

Part of the savings for Dow Corning were also a result of Migration Manager’s enterprise-level dependability. Stefanich said Tranxition Migration Manager “is one of the best tested and supported software products I’ve ever used. After more than 5,000 migrations not a single instance of software failure was recorded.”

About Tranxition

Tranxition delivers excellence in software and services for our corporate IT clients and partners. We enable IT professionals to quickly complete flawless migrations every time.

Contacts

Tranxition
516 SE Morrison St
Suite 242
Portland, OR 97214
1.503.688.5046

Tranxition Sales
503-688-5046
sales@tranxition.com

Technical Support
1.503-688-5046
support@tranxition.com

www.tranxition.com

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