

# Critical path

Business



Company: PCS Customer: Critical Path Submitted by: P Romote With the exception of the telephone, email has, without doubt, become the single most important worldwide communications tool. As a result, e-commerce is now becoming an accepted, and increasingly popular means of doing business, and companies are looking for global solutions to their e-commerce needs.

Critical Path is playing a dominant role as a global provider of complete end-to-end Internet messaging and collaboration services. The company currently hosts over 100 million mailboxes worldwide. The services it provides are supported through a patent-pending, global infrastructure with data centres connected to key internet exchange points. In order to support the growing demand for email and messaging solutions, Critical Path has datacentres in London and Munich that are testament to the company's growing position in Europe. The datacentre, Telehouse, which is situated in London's Docklands, and the one in Munich, feature a sophisticated IT infrastructure based on hardware from Sun Microsystems and Solaris software.

Productivity Computer Solutions (PCS), one of Sun's leading resellers, was selected to supply the new technology, which included Sun Enterprise 4500 servers and Ultra Enterprise 2s with networking from Cisco. As Critical Path's hardware partner, PCS was heavily involved in the configuration of the technology and the installation at the UK datacentre. Because Critical Path's unique mail centre architecture can support hundreds of millions of mailboxes across tens of millions of domains, its hardware requirements can fluctuate hugely from day to day, and the company's relationship with PCS

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has already helped to support these needs. Bruno Giversen, VP of Business Development and Marketing at Critical Path, said: “ We have had customers suddenly wanting to sign up millions of mailboxes at short notice and needed to expand systems to meet this demand.

In Munich recently we had a sudden requirement for two heavily loaded Sun E4500's complete with J-Cor cards and a StorEdge L1000 tape library, neither of which are easy to obtain. Thanks to PCS, who took the order with the minimum of paper work, the equipment arrived in Germany only three days later.” Critical Path provide email outsourcing to the ISP, Portal and Telco communities. Outsourcing mail is a painless experience, compared with the cost of setting up and maintaining a traditional mail system. Customers can be guaranteed fixed costs per mailbox per month, no extra hardware, software or maintenance costs, all of which allows the customer to focus on core competency. Research was recently published by META Group, which indicates that dot com data centres and midcap enterprises should seriously consider the efficient outsourcing of their operations.

META Group suggest that these organisations often lack the operations discipline critical to ensuring web site availability and performance, and that as a result, brand equity, mind share and IT personnel credibility can be permanently damaged. They have found that these organisations need to implement operations principles, policies and procedures to ensure IT value, so that the impact of technology on brand equity is continually and controllably positive. It is exactly this kind of outsourcing which is being provided by Critical Path. However, in order to ensure that, once they are utilising Critical Path's services, the customer is never disappointed, Critical <https://assignbuster.com/critical-path/>

Path relies very heavily on its infrastructure. Fraser Robertson, Account Manager at PCS, said: “ It was absolutely vital to Critical Path that their system would not only be powerful enough to support their myriad of service offerings, but which would also be completely reliable at all times. The Sun Enterprise Servers have proven themselves over and over again, and because we now administer a technical support and maintenance service to Critical Path, we can ensure that their systems will never let them, or their customers down.

“ Critical Path provide email outsourcing. Amongst its customers are E\*TRADE, CompuServe, Network Solutions, U S West, Sprint, France Telecom, British Telecommunications, and ICQ. Bruno Giversen of Critical Path, said: “ Not only do we have many of the world’s leading communications companies as customers, we are also keen to maximise on a growing market which is expected to reach over 550 million mailboxes by 2002. When we started to develop our datacentres, we knew that we would need to allow for rapidly expanding hardware requirements, and we had to find a partner who could work with us to achieve our objectives.” We selected PCS because it understood how critical our infrastructure was to the success of not just our business, but many thousands of others, and in addition, they worked closely with Sun Microsystems, which was our hardware and software vendor of choice.

“ With its headquarters in San Francisco and offices in locations throughout the USA, and in Germany, England, Ireland, France, Denmark, Italy, Switzerland, Brazil and Argentina, Critical Path intends to open up new datacentres across the world, including possibly a second one in London.

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Fraser Robertson, Account Manager at PCS, said: “ We are already working closely with Critical Path to to demonstrate the success of our joint collaboration. For PCS, however, the real proof of our own abilities will be in watching Critical Path grow and achieve huge success worldwide. I don’t suppose we will have to wait very long.”