



The Good Side of Recession

*Mike Melton of United Systems
Describes How New Technology and
Innovative Programs Benefit
Companies Even More During an
Economic Downturn*

QUINCY, IL – April 24, 2008 – Whether you think we're in a recession or not the fact of the matter is the economy has experienced a dramatic downturn. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), economic growth in the United States is expected to slow to a crawl of just 0.5% this year, which would mark the worst pace in 17 years. The United States won't fare much better next year either. The IMF projected the U.S. economy will grow by a feeble 0.6% in 2009.

With a recession comes a weeding out process in the business world. Those companies with the right people, making the right decisions, and implementing the right strategies will come out of the recession with flying colors while those that do the opposite will be a distant memory. With the advent of new communications technology and the gaining popularity of innovative programs with the sole purpose of increasing profitability and giving competitive advantage the impact of a recession will be significantly reduced for those businesses that adopt these solutions. As a result, they will have a higher probability of survival and eventual success.

One of the most basic business 101 concepts says – why pay cash for a depreciating asset. Just like driving a new car off the lot, the minute your business implements new technology it becomes outdated. Cash is king, especially during a recession so why would any organization dump thousands of dollars up front in owning technology. It just doesn't make sense.

The method of buying technology on a lease agreement is not new; however, subtle changes have been made that eliminate technology's two greatest risks – obsolescence and price (also known as outright ownership). United Systems' Current Technology Assurance Plan (C-TAP) ensures that the communications environments are refreshed with the latest advancements and value added solutions, thereby eliminating technology's obsolescence. For instance, updates (also known as refresh) to a company's voice and data system can occur anytime after 24 months with no change in their monthly payment.

Furthermore, C-TAP focuses on the cost of technology rather than its price, thus eliminating the second risk. The cost is a known entity and customers on C-TAP never receive another invoice. Because of C-TAP, companies are able to transfer technology costs from a capital expense to a fixed monthly expense absorbed by an organization's operating budget. This enhances the financial health from both tax and budgeting standpoints.

Luckily, recent advancements in communications technology that have only scratched the surface in market penetration such as SIP Trunking will also help companies minimize the effects of a recession. Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) raises the bar of Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) communications by adding intelligence to business processes and providing companies with greater control over their communications. In simple terms, SIP supports any form of real-time communication regardless of whether the content is voice, video, instant messaging, or a collaboration application.

Many companies have made the transition to Voice over Internet

Protocol (VoIP) based phone systems; however, most are only using it for communication on the LAN. In this scenario VoIP is only being used as a one-to-one replacement for traditional telephony. These businesses realize a sound return on investment by lowering administrative costs as well as costs associated with calls made within the company. SIP trunking, on the other hand, provides a greater return because it takes VoIP a step further. For instance, full potential for IP communications can be realized only when communication is taken outside of an organization's LAN. SIP trunks thus eliminate the need for local PSTN (Public Switched Telephone Network) gateways, costly BRIs (Basic Rate Interfaces) or PRIs (Primary Rate Interfaces). Furthermore, it directly operates with existing IP PBXs so there is no need for additional hardware.

A third area that will greatly benefit companies especially during recession is in managed network services. Essentially, managed services was designed to assist companies in maintaining and supporting their network, IT infrastructure, and phone system. Types of services may include remote network monitoring and reporting 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, firewall monitoring, intrusion detection, patch assessment and vulnerability scanning, preventative tasks, disaster recovery, data backup and regular performance analysis.

Outsourcing the support of a company's network has a number of unique benefits. First and foremost, experts in the field analyze the network to develop a complete game plan. Modeling and simulation tools assess current network traffic and evaluate the performance of desired enhancements and upgrades to determine the most

appropriate solution before implementation. The end result is a custom designed system that supports future growth and change through flexible and scalable network environments. Why pay one or more full time in-house IT professionals and all of the loaded costs that come with it when this function can be outsourced saving your business thousands of dollars each year?

A recession is a time where companies need to think about how to do business differently. It requires solid answers to a number of mission critical issues such as why own a depreciating asset, why utilize

antiquated technology when new solutions can provide increased profits and a competitive advantage, and why manage something in-house when it has nothing to do with your core competency. The previously mentioned solutions provide an arsenal that will help attack the recession head on and in the end propel your company ahead of its competition.

ABOUT UNITED SYSTEMS, INC.

Founded in 1986, United Systems, Inc. is committed to establishing and maintaining a dynamic partnership with every customer. Extensive

technology and service experience allows the United Systems, Inc. team to develop an understanding of each customer's unique requirements, and to respond to those requirements quickly and effectively.

Our mission is that we are in business to serve every customer in the tri-state area with priority service. Our goal is to make their businesses profitable and provide a competitive edge with the use of technology and services.

For more information on United Systems, Inc., call (217) 228-0315 or visit www.4unitedsystems.com.