

## Reaping the Benefits of Cloud Computing



### Company

Prime Time International is a produce grower, packer and shipper based in Southern California's Coachella Valley with operations throughout California and Mexico.

### Objective

Upgrade the company's server infrastructure and implement a solid disaster recovery plan.

### Solution Details

- ▶ Outsourced to the cloud
- ▶ Implemented server virtualization and a robust disaster recovery system
- ▶ Transitioned from Novell email system to Microsoft Exchange Server

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- Raun Singleton, CFO  
Prime Time International

### Company

Prime Time International is a produce grower, packer and shipper based in Southern California's Coachella Valley with operations throughout California and Mexico. Known as *The Pepper People*, Prime Time provides multi-colored peppers year-round, as well as other produce products on a seasonal basis. The company has 90 employees, plus a team of contract growers and laborers in the thousands.

### Objective

In 2009, when Raun Singleton joined Prime Time as CFO, one of his first priorities was to conduct a full systems evaluation to determine whether the company had the infrastructure it needed to support its continued growth. Working closely with Prime Time's IT Manager, Juan Palacio, he discovered that the company's dependence on 10-15 servers which were at least four-years-old was putting the business at risk. An additional concern was the insufficient disaster recovery mechanism that Prime Time had in place. The need to ensure equipment reliability and improve its disaster recovery plan were Prime Time's primary drivers for upgrading its infrastructure.

### Solution

Juan Palacio had worked with Zumasys on various IT trouble-shooting and server stabilization projects for over five years when Prime Time began looking for a partner to help upgrade its infrastructure and implement a more robust disaster recovery plan. Zumasys was one of the companies approached during the RFP process and was the first to demonstrate a longer-term vision to help Prime Time achieve its business goals. Zumasys saw transitioning Prime Time to the cloud as the ideal solution to its equipment and disaster recovery needs. While cloud computing was a new concept for mid-tier companies, Prime Time recognized it as the obvious choice based on the return on investment analysis they conducted.

Prime Time selected Zumasys because of the strength and cost-effectiveness of their cloud computing solution, as well as their solid experience and clear understanding of the agriculture industry. Raun Singleton notes, "Zumasys had good answers, good solutions and a track record in produce. Knowing that they had done this before in our industry and that cloud computing was a proven solution gave our ownership the confidence to move forward."

As a first step in implementing its cloud solution, Zumasys helped Prime Time develop a vision for its IT future. To build the framework for the move, the team evaluated all of the different software running on Prime Time's servers, as well as how moving to the cloud could help connect the company's various locations





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## Results

- ▶ Eliminated capital expense of purchasing new servers as well as the ongoing maintenance costs
- ▶ Enabled a cost-effective, flexible solution for growing IT footprint to keep up with business expansion
- ▶ Implemented a solid disaster recovery plan with no additional IT expenses and management
- ▶ Experienced a rapid return on investment
- ▶ Increased time for improving and enhancing the company’s technology infrastructure by 20%
- ▶ Reduced time for troubleshooting business applications by 30%
- ▶ Facilitated faster problem identification due to Zumasy’s extensive monitoring

in California and Mexico. While Prime Time knew it wanted to transition from its existing Novell email system to Microsoft Exchange Server, that effort was originally slated for the second phase of the project. Based on the advantages that Exchange would offer the company, the team decided to fast track the migration, integrating it during phase one.

After putting together a plan for the actual physical movement of systems and data, it was time for implementation. Because of the nature of its business, Prime Time operates six days a week. As a result, the transition to Zumasy’s cloud began on a Saturday evening. By Monday morning, Prime Time was live with its new virtual servers in the Zumasy’s cloud and, aside from having a new email system, end users were not impacted in any way. At the same time, the transition to the cloud automatically gave Prime Time a comprehensive disaster recovery plan to help safeguard its future.

## Results

By transitioning to cloud computing, Prime Time saw significant savings both in terms of not having to replace all of its servers as well as the associated maintenance costs. According to Singleton, “The Zumasy’s cloud computing solution had minimal up-front capital cost, quick return on investment, and offered significant ongoing savings. Plus, it gives us incredible flexibility as we grow.” Prime Time now has a more cost-effective way to keep up with its consistent near double-digit growth. As business develops, Zumasy’s handles any additional equipment needs and can easily expand Prime Time’s cloud footprint.

Beyond benefitting from the cost savings, the move to cloud computing also automatically provides Prime Time with a solid business continuity strategy. Previously the company used tape back-ups, which could have required 6-7 days to restore operations in the event of a disaster. With the new solution, even if a disaster struck Southern California, Prime Time could continue working by connecting through the Zumasy’s Las Vegas back-up facility.

Prime Time has continued to enhance its cloud solution based on its regular meetings with its Zumasy’s account team. “One of the things that has impressed me about Zumasy’s is how proactive they are. They are always looking for ways to improve our solution,” states Singleton. According to Juan Palacio, the Zumasy’s cloud computing solution affords the two-person Prime Time IT team 20% more time to focus on improving and enhancing the company’s technology infrastructure because they no longer have to spend time on day-to-day IT maintenance. They have also seen a 30% reduction in time spent troubleshooting business applications. Potential problems are identified faster because Zumasy’s proactive monitoring provides insight more quickly than was previously possible. Raun Singleton sums it up, “We are experts at growing peppers, not at managing IT. With Zumasy’s, I have some of the top IT experts working on our systems all the time. It’s a much better use of my resources.”

As a leader in the produce industry, Prime Time is always looking for ways to stay on the cutting edge and improve competitiveness. Having Zumasy’s on its team has made implementing new ideas and the latest technology easier and more effective. Singleton explains, “We look at Zumasy’s as the IT arm of our business. They’re not just a vendor. The security and knowledge they bring to our company is invaluable.”

