

Success Story: LEAGUE Financial Partners

Markets Served
Data Centers & IT

Eaton had the best product and the best price.

Ian Robertson, chief technology officer

BladeUPS proves vital asset for financial firm

Location:

Victoria, Canada

Segment:

Real Estate/Investment

Problem:

The company required a UPS that could not only provide high availability to its network infrastructure, but would also be easy to install and manage, and offer scalability.

Solution:

Eaton® BladeUPS, Eaton 9130 UPS, Connectivity, Service

Results:

The Preassembled BladeUPS fit the bill for the financial firm, delivering uncompromised uptime for its critical equipment, with the ability to grow as needed.

Background

Founded by Adam Gant and Emanuel Arruda in 2005, and with more than \$1.8 billion in assets under management as of January 2013, LEAGUE Financial Partners has rapidly evolved into one of Canada's fastest growing real estate asset managers. The firm was recently ranked No.13 in the 2012 listing of the fastest growing companies in Canada, and was designated No. 3 among the biggest investment fund management firms in British Columbia.

The firm manages private investments on behalf of more than 7,000 member-partners, as well as public investments for a multitude of shareholders. LEAGUE also is the manager of the public \$550-million Partners REIT, an open-end real estate investment trust focused on acquiring and managing a portfolio of retail and mixed-use retail community and

neighborhood centers; and real estate limited partnerships ranging from office buildings to big box retail power centers and mixed-use developments.

Currently, the company supports two office locations in Victoria, as well as offices in Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto.

Challenge

Because LEAGUE Financial Partners operates a virtualized environment within its primary data center in Victoria, the ability to achieve the highest level of availability and reliability is paramount to the firm's success. Continuous uptime is especially important considering that the data center supports operations at LEAGUE's outlying offices, as well.

"If Victoria was to go down, then everything would go down," emphasizes Ian Robertson, chief technology officer. "So it is critical for us to keep Victoria up and running. If the data center went down, it wouldn't be a matter of sending 60 people home, we'd actually be sending 120 people home, from different locations."

In the summer of 2012, LEAGUE had grown frustrated with the lack of reliability and manageability offered by its existing power protection solution, which consisted of several stand-alone APC units.

"Our previous UPS solution was far less than satisfactory," Robertson acknowledges. "So we made a plan to get a new UPS and generator solution to cover our Victoria data center."

Solution

The Eaton BladeUPS proved to be right on the money for LEAGUE. With a 36 kW model installed in its Victoria data center in October 2012, the company has significantly enhanced protection of its data center equipment, which includes multiple servers, switches, phones, network WIFI devices and other networking gear. "Our entire server room is on the UPS," Robertson says.

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Specifically designed for high-density computing environments, the revolutionary BladeUPS delivers 12 kW of efficient, reliable power while occupying just 6U of standard rack space — including the batteries. Capable of expanding from 12 kW to 60 kW in a single industry-standard, 19-inch rack, the BladeUPS offers a scalable architecture, which enables the solution to grow in building-block format with expanding IT applications — one of the benefits LEAGUE values most.

“We wanted a solution that could grow as we grow,” Robertson explains. “We did not want something that you just clip into a rack and if you need to expand, you’re stuck with it. With the BladeUPS, a year later we can throw on another 12 kW module or whatever we need.”

The unique design of the BladeUPS enables the unit to be deployed in a number of different manners, from a distributed architecture with one unit in each rack, to an end of row configuration with up to six units in a rack, to a central system placed in the electrical closet rather than on the IT floor. Furthermore, its intelligent design automatically detects parallel modules and fully configures itself for parallel operations.

Roberston is quick to praise the UPS’s ease of deployment. “It comes ready to go,” he explains. Indeed, all modules include rackmount kits for installation, and units can easily be configured, deployed and serviced by an in-house IT professional. Even more, the BladeUPS offers seamless expansion — without any help from Eaton — since adding parallel units is a simple plug-and-play procedure.

Noting that the preassembled version of the BladeUPS arrives on a pallet on a fold-down ramp, Robertson says, “it comes off the tailgate and you roll the UPS into position, take off the plastic, plug it in and it’s good to go. It’s a very out-of-the-box,” he emphasizes. “It’s as turnkey as a hardwired electrical solution can possibly be.”

Once installed, managing the unit is just as easy. LEAGUE opted to install a ConnectUPS Web/SNMP network card, which enables remote monitoring and provide HTTP, SNMP, SMTP, WAP, Telnet, SSL, SSH compatibility and advanced RS232 communications.

LEAGUE is also cashing in on the BladeUPS’ industry-leading 97 percent efficiency, which not only contributes to the company’s green initiatives but can save thousands of dollars in power and cooling costs. The unit’s high efficiency also results in extended battery runtimes and cooler operating conditions for the UPS, both of which extend the overall life of components and further bolster reliability and performance.

LEAGUE was so impressed by the BladeUPS solution that it opted to deploy a second unit in April 2013 within its Calgary office. Now safeguarding switching infrastructure and local network services, “It saves me from dealing with the pain of blips and blackouts,” Robertson reveals. “The UPS keeps me and my team happy.”

In the second BladeUPS, the company added the Power Xpert Gateway UPS card, which provides Web-enabled, real-time monitoring of Eaton UPSs, power distribution units and remote power panels for power quality status and fast response to power-related events.

“The interface is great,” Robertson shares. “It offers exceptional ease of visibility and reporting capabilities.”

Now that Robertson has so much confidence in the quality of the company’s power protection solution, the CTO is left wondering about how many power glitches may have been damaging sensitive equipment prior to the deployment of the new UPSs. While the Victoria data center has experienced two outages in the past 267 days — in which the BladeUPS performed just as expected — Robertson points out that he is alerted about some type of power anomaly every week or two.

“If it detects any power issue, I get email alerts,” he explains. “It’s a large enough blip for the UPS to detect it and protect the equipment. But how much of that was happening before, and how much of a toll was taken on the servers?” he questions. “This is protecting us now, and showing me things I didn’t even realize were there before.”

LEAGUE has also standardized on Eaton units to safeguard its desktops, with approximately a dozen 1500 VA Eaton 9130 units rolled out so far. Furthermore, the company expects to ultimately add a third BladeUPS unit at its future major office site planned in Colwood.

To ensure the UPSs continue to perform at an optimal level, LEAGUE also relies on an Eaton service plan, which includes regularly scheduled preventive maintenance visits. “We like to avoid the unexpected potential costs if a problem were to occur,” Robertson explains.

Results

With the deployment of the BladeUPS units, LEAGUE can rest assured that it has made the paramount investment in power protection. “Eaton had the best product and the best price,” Robertson confirms.

With the UPSs in place, the company is now able to:

- Ensure the high availability of its data center, as well as safely shut down equipment in the event of a power outage
- Expand its power protection solution as needed with the scalability of the BladeUPS
- Easily manage and maintain its units
- Reduce power and cooling costs with the efficiency of the BladeUPS
- Maintain the ongoing health of the units with an Eaton service plan



Eaton BladeUPS

For more information about the BladeUPS, visit Eaton.com/BladeUPS.

For more information about the 9130, visit Eaton.com/9130.

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