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Sirius Canada outsources e-mail, Web to Fusepoint

Satellite company unloads IT infrastructure to compete in bustling radio market

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by Sarah Lysecki



When it was looking to break into the hotly-contested satellite radio market last December, satellite radio provider [Sirius Canada](#) hired somebody else to keep the lights on while it got its business up and running.

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"By choosing Windows Server over Linux, we'll save an estimated one million dollars over the first four years."

- Rick Dempsey, CIO



On Tuesday, Sirius Canada, which is owned by CBC/Radio-Canada, Standard Radio Inc., announced a one-year, \$100,000-contract with Mississauga, Ont.-based [Fusepoint Managed Services](#). Under the deal, originally reached last fall, Fusepoint hosts, manages and maintains Sirius Canada's Web site as well as hosts and manages its Microsoft Exchange infrastructure and provides wireless BlackBerry support to over 30 users. On the e-mail side, Fusepoint's services include spam and content filtering, patch management, 24x7 monitoring and wireless BlackBerry capabilities.

Sirius Canada selected Fusepoint for the job after Navantis, which was developing some

of Sirius Canada's in-house systems, recommended the provider for the job.

"We were familiar with Fusepoint and we had heard of them before," said Andre Allen, director of IT at Sirius Canada. "For us it was an easy decision."

Fusepoint got Sirius Canada up and running in one month so that the satellite radio provider would

be ready in time for its launch in December 2005.

"One of the things they were looking at in a provider is someone who could react very quickly," said George Kerns, president and CEO of Fusepoint Managed Services. "It was a very tight implementation time frame."

Fusepoint has three data centres in Canada - one at its corporate headquarters in Mississauga and two others in Vancouver and Montreal. All three centres support a variety of operating systems and applications including Sun Solaris, Microsoft Windows and Linux platforms.

Sirius Canada offers 100 commercial-free music, entertainment, sports and news channels, including four CBC channels, to its Canadian subscribers. Sirius Canada does not publicly divulge how many subscribers it has but a company spokesperson said that its initial projections are well ahead of its expectations. Sirius's major competitor is XM Satellite Radio, which currently has the market lead on Sirius in the U.S. Sirius Canada is actively promoting its service through in-store marketing at retailers like Futureshop and Best Buy as well as in television and print ads.

Allen, who started working for Sirius Canada in November, said the decision to outsource its Web and e-mail portions of its business was mostly a time to market decision. "It allowed us to focus on our core business of getting our subscriber management systems up and hiring staff," said Allen.

Sirius Canada is looking to build more functionality into its Web site to provide more interactive content to its subscribers such as the ability to set up an account online as opposed to over the phone, which is the only option for customers currently.

"We wanted to be able to focus our resources with getting that functionally as opposed to getting the Web servers running," said Allen.

Kerns said the infrastructure on the hosting side will continue to grow as Sirius Canada adds more functions to its application. "As they continue to release new apps onto their Web site at some point in time there will be infrastructure upgrades to support the robustness of the application," he said.

Outsourcing continues to be a popular choice for many organizations that are looking to focus on the core elements of their business, as in the case with Sirius Canada.

"There's still a propensity to outsource," said Kerns. "Even the larger companies are looking at the price point that someone like Fusepoint can provide to them because we have the economies of scale that they don't have."

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