

## CASE STUDY

OMNITI, INC.



# OmniTI Saves Server Space, Speeds Web Delivery with API NetWorks Solution

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**OmniTI, Inc.**, a full service internet hosting company based in Laurel, Maryland, provides secure web hosting in addition to offering custom application development, networking and database consulting. OmniTI is a classic example of a ‘Net niche player’ — adept at pacing its growth while remaining flexible enough to meet the demands of the ever evolving Internet business environment. In order to increase performance and reduce operating costs, OmniTI was investigating available hardware options to provide more capacity, as well as more flexibility and reliability in their Linux based installation.

API NetWorks, Inc., a leading developer of high-performance Linux solutions, subsequently demonstrated to OmniTI how Alpha systems can squeeze more capacity from a Linux server while speeding up complex web sites for clients. A side-by-side test comparing similar configurations based on Alpha technology and Intel technology quickly sold co-owner George Schlossnagle on Alpha and API NetWorks’ UP2000 motherboard.

OmniTI provides high quality web service to its customers from a pair of Linux servers, both using API NetWorks’ UP2000 motherboards — the market’s only server platform that takes full advantage of Linux’s 64-bit architecture — each with 2 64-bit 667MHz Alpha processors. With the revolutionary Alpha Slot B technology — modular cpu package technology designed specifically for Alpha — the UP2000 delivers x86-style modularity, openness and economy to Alpha server design.

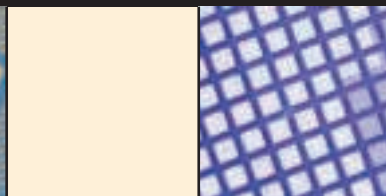
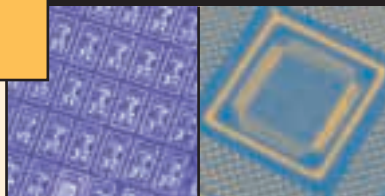
“We began the test by porting all of the applications that we had developed on the Intel platform to the Alpha systems,” said Schlossnagle. “This turned out to require very little effort. For a while we ran it on a cluster, comprised of both Intel and Alpha hardware, before moving completely over to the Alpha.”

The result was a five-fold increase in response speed for members of the National Association of Credit Management (NACM) which is hosted and supported by OmniTI. For example, when members accessed the NACM web site for their proprietary credit information database or shopped from the Association’s online bookstore, page load times which previously exceeded 10 seconds were now reduced to single seconds.

OmniTI, Inc.  
COMPUTER CONSULTING

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"The end users gained significant speed. Response time improved by nearly a factor of five, thanks to API NetWorks' solution," said Schlossnagle, referring to NACM's website where members, national and international, rack up a total of some 600,000 requests per month.

"This site includes a business loss prevention database and searching it means doing a lot of complex string matching," he said. "We replaced the 32-bit Intel systems with 64-bit Alphas. That is where we really see the speed improvement, because the database application can exploit the 64-bit architecture. We've definitely seen a marked improvement in database search time, which has been a bottleneck in our solution."

According to Sherry Schlossnagle, president of OmniTI, every second of response time is important to these business clients because their end customers hate to wait. "All of these companies have their own systems and their own computers, and many of them are working on machines that are not very powerful. So maximizing speed on our end was critical. Those seconds are very important and there is a ripple effect involved — our customer's customer may be on hold waiting for information."

Equally as important, noted George Schlossnagle, is how the API NetWorks solution has enhanced his server capacity without having to add servers and has added a layer of reliability to his application management. "Since there are many other sites hosted on the same server, there are scalability issues involved," he said. "The UP2000 offers significantly more scalability. When we were working with the previous Intel configuration, we were pretty close to capacity. Now there is plenty of room for growth with the solutions provided by API NetWorks."

"The API NetWorks UP2000 also meant robust remote manageability (over a serial console) — a notable improvement over the pre-Alpha setup where the inability to remotely manage the servers often caused unavoidable maintenance delays," said Schlossnagle.

"Before, we could not attach to the serial console on our servers very easily. So if the machine refused to boot — if it failed during the operating system load — there was really nothing we could do remotely. If you have that sort of problem, even if it's a minor problem, you have to be there physically in order to perform the appropriate maintenance. If you are a half-hour away, that's a half-hour of downtime for our client. Running the UP2000-based system, the bootstrap OS (SRM) is available via the serial console, meaning if I'm 400 miles away, so long as the machine has power and there is no serious physical error, I can get on and manage it as if I was in the room"

In Sherry Schlossnagle's opinion, the API NetWorks Alpha solution is valuable for the enhanced response time and overall reliability that keeps customers satisfied. "It's fast and reliable. When I don't hear from the customers, it means they are happy, and API NetWorks has provided excellent technology to make this possible."



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