Crider Foods is the largest marketer and processor of shelf stable and fully cooked products for customers around the globe. As a food supplier to the world, they have a commitment to provide the industry's highest level of quality, service, and corporate integrity for our retail, food service, school, and institutional customers. Crider is very proud of their SQF (Safe Quality Food) Level 3 status. Being SQF certified for three consecutive years is a testament to their customer commitment.

When Crider Foods wanted to modernize their data center, they turned to the experts at the PC Connection family of companies to tackle data center growth and new virtual servers, virtual desktop, power, and racking equipment upgrades. The devices they selected helped them enhance manageability, provide higher security, gain greater data access, and reduce their costs.

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MODERNIZE YOUR DATA CENTER

How Crider Foods Designed an Infrastructure for Tomorrow

Ron Sasser, IT Manager for Crider Foods, was tasked with updating the IT infrastructure, while maintaining control over all the operations. Crider has grown to 900 employees with widespread market recognition. Many of the nation's top food companies entrust Crider with their brand's reputation.

RUNNING OUT OF SPACE

Prior to 2011, Crider was running a standard total of 18 fat client servers—all over seven years old. Space had become an issue, and they determined that it was imperative to migrate to and grow with new technology that could handle their large amounts of data. "We filled up our access, running the live servers. We got so big. We were having problems with getting our backups completed in time," Sasser explained.
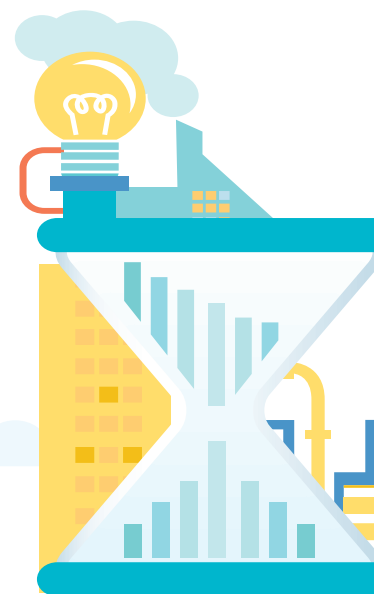
SETTLING ON A STRONG SOLUTION

Confronted with designing a new infrastructure, Crider worked with PC Connection to find the best solution. "After reviewing everything with PC Connection, we determined that a virtual environment was going to cut our purchasing costs by 70% compared to the standard choices of going with the fat client. "

The PC Connection team evaluated the pros and cons across a number of options, and Sasser agreed that Cisco stood out as having strong networking capabilities. He continued, "Cisco worked really well with the storage company that we chose, doing a lot of back-end, better transferring of data without bogging down the network." Crider decided to use Cisco servers since they also needed to upgrade their firewall. According to Sasser, "They had a really great solution with high performance and expandability going forward—which was going to really help impact our company."

With PC Connection's help, Crider deployed Cisco UCS with Intel® Xeon® processors—setting themselves up to grow and expand. "We wanted to make sure that we were in a position to just add more storage or a couple arrays, without completely needing to migrate to some new equipment in five years," Sasser summarized.

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TRUSTING AN EXPERIENCED PARTNER

Sasser had an IT department of only two people supporting the 900 employees at Crider, so finding the right partner to assist them on this project was essential. "I knew we couldn't do this on our own. There was no question...the skill level that's required for the entire overhaul project took people with specialties in each area," Sasser explained. "PC Connection provided a large team of people to accomplish the job in only two weeks."

Crider manages their virtual desktops and servers on a daily basis, so there was a lot of new information to become familiar with. The success of this initiative relied on strong communication between Crider Foods and PC Connection. "There were a couple times where I'd have to email and say, how do I do this, and they gladly responded," Sasser said. "PC Connection kept in touch and helped me really make this product work."

"FROM 1-10, I'D HAVE TO GIVE THEM [PC CONNECTION] A SOLID 10. THEY HELPED ME FROM THE VERY BEGINNING WITH [FINDING] RIGHT PRODUCT AND COSTING. THEY HELPED ME BUILD THE SOLUTION, AND THEN WERE ABLE TO IMPLEMENT THE SOLUTION WITH THE BEST PROFESSIONAL SERVICES THAT YOU COULD ASK FOR."

RON SASSER, IT MANAGER, CRIDER FOODS

GET THE INSIDE SCOOP ON HOW CRIDER FOODS MODERNIZED THEIR DATA CENTER.
Hear the complete interview online at:
www.pcconnection.com/CriderFoods