

Case Study

Amtech



# Amtech Celebrates 5 Years of Uptime on jBASE in the Cloud



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– Jacqui Jensen, Controller, Amtech

## Objective

- Improve uptime for PRO:MAN, the company's mission critical manufacturing system running on jBASE
- Eliminate manual backup processes and tape archives
- Enable business continuity

## Results

- Streamlined deployment of branch offices and accelerated stand-up time for new manufacturing facilities
- Alleviated strain on Amtech's IT staff by outsourcing support, management, and upgrades for PRO:MAN running on jBASE
- Cut time to recovery from 3-4 days to just minutes
- Enabled employees to work from anywhere, anytime, by providing access to PRO:MAN from mobile devices and laptops via Citrix desktop virtualization
- Accelerated transaction processing of tens of thousands of records per day with AccuTerm
- Improved security by automating data backup and recovery

## COMPANY PROFILE

*Recognized as one of the fastest-growing and most-innovative small businesses in the State of Washington, Amtech manufactures custom-molded composites and fiberglass products for both commercial and military applications, including engine covers, bus hoods, RV caps, and military shelters. In addition to its primary 160,000 sq. ft. manufacturing facility in Wapato, Washington, Amtech has an additional 60,000 sq. ft. facility in Elmore, Alabama.*

Amtech is certified as an ISO 9001:2008 company



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– Mark Hogden, President, PRO:MAN

## Background

Since 2009, Amtech has relied on PRO:MAN, a real-time ERP tool built on the jBASE database from Zumasys. PRO:MAN is an integrated application that connects and manages nearly all of Amtech's internal operations, from sales through the general ledger, accounts payable, manufacturing, and purchasing.

"Our PRO:MAN ERP system is the brains of everything," explains Amtech controller Jacqui Jensen. "It gives us incredible visibility into our organization."

When Amtech changed ownership in 2009, the company performed a thorough audit of its internal IT systems and process, which revealed significant gaps in disaster recovery for the company's PRO:MAN ERP tool, the heartbeat of the company.

Amtech's PRO:MAN application resided on an on-site server that was backed up nightly to tape. Every week, Jensen herself transported the tapes off site for safekeeping. In the event of a disaster, Amtech could lose up to a week of critical business data. It could take up to four days to replace Amtech's PRO:MAN server, during which time critical business operations would grind to a halt. Customer service reps would be forced to hand-write orders, sales would lose visibility into stock and production, and all operational reporting capabilities would be gone.

"The more we looked at it, we realized that having the server on site was a huge liability for us," says Jensen. "We realized that tape backup was dated technology, notwithstanding the time it would take to recover from a tape backup. As our business was growing, it became more and more critical that if we had to restore, we needed to be up instantly."



## The Solution

Amtech began looking for a technology partner to implement a comprehensive Disaster Recovery strategy for its PRO:MAN environment. Zumasys stood apart from other vendors with its knowledge of Pick MultiValue applications, VMware virtualization, and NetApp storage and replication technologies. The Zumasys team proposed hosting Amtech's PRO:MAN environment in the Zumasys Cloud with a comprehensive disaster recovery strategy.

"Most of the vendors we talked to were offering a 'one size fits all' approach, and I knew we had a unique situation with our core application," says Jensen. "Zumasys offered a concrete solution to what we saw as a very big weakness within our IT environment."

Because PRO:MAN is built on the jBASE database management environment, Amtech needed a partner that could provide the PRO:MAN application with the database performance it requires. Zumasys' expertise in transitioning MultiValue applications to the cloud was a critical decision point. With one of the most experienced benches of MultiValue professionals in the country, Zumasys guaranteed a zero downtime migration of PRO:MAN into the cloud.

"We had some challenges at first, but the Zumasys Project Management team helped all the parties work together to find a solution that works," says Jensen. "When you're talking about your ERP system that runs everything, it's important to have that level of trust."

Today Amtech's PRO:MAN application is hosted by Zumasys at The SuperNAP, one of the largest and most sophisticated data centers in the world. Employees access the PRO:MAN application from their Windows devices through a Citrix XenApp server with AccuTerm terminal emulation software. The entire system is backed up nightly to a second data center in Irvine, California, for the added security of geographic distribution.



Using Citrix XenApp desktop virtualization software, AccuTerm, and jBASE, Amtech employees can access the PRO:MAN application from anywhere, thus improving productivity.

## Results

Zumasys' cloud solution has replaced Amtech's manual tape backups with an automated, disk-to-disk replication strategy based upon NetApp's SnapMirror technology.

With its previous solution, it would have taken 3-4 days for Amtech to recover in the event of a disaster at its primary site in Washington. During that time, business at branch offices would also be brought to a standstill. Today, in the event of an outage at Amtech's headquarters, employees can continue to access their data and applications from anywhere with an internet connection and keep business moving across the country.

Cloud computing has also enabled Amtech to pursue an ambitious growth strategy, facilitating rapid expansion to locations across the country. By partnering with Zumasys, Amtech has been able to support 40% year-over-year growth without an in-house IT department. Amtech can now easily stand up IT at branch offices without significant investments in capital or headcount.

"One of the biggest blessings of having our ERP system in cloud is that we can quickly expand operations to other geographical areas," says Jensen. "We can turn IT resources on and off, on demand. Having the ability to quickly deploy new users turned out to be much more of a benefit than we had originally anticipated."

Zumasys' support for MultiValue databases has been key to the success of migrating Amtech's PRO:MAN system to the cloud. PRO:MAN is built on jBASE, a contemporary MultiValue database platform. jBASE offers PRO:MAN the unique flexibility to write in BASIC using JRCS (jBASE Remote Connectivity Service) while implementing trusted routines that interface with print queues, produce PDFs, send emails, and store documents.

"jBASE has always been well ahead of everyone else in the MultiValue space in terms of its development capabilities," says Mark Hogden, President of PRO:MAN.

In 2015, Zumasys acquired jBASE, bringing it into the company's rapidly expanding MultiValue portfolio.

"Having both support and development for jBASE all under one roof is good for the product and great for the customers," says Hogden. "The faster Zumasys can implement changes and release new features, the faster we are able to evolve PRO:MAN to meet the needs of customers like Amtech."

## A trusted relationship for the future

Throughout Amtech's migration to the cloud, Jensen forged a partnership with Zumasys that continues to yield positive results for the company. With no in-house IT department, Jensen depends on Zumasys to act as an advisor. In 2014, Jensen attended Zumapalooza, Zumasys' educational cloud and infrastructure technology conference, for the first time and came away with a new appreciation for her legacy application.

"At Zumapalooza, I gained a lot of great ideas on how to enhance and extend our current technology," says Jensen. "Zumasys convinced me that instead of scrapping my current system, I could achieve much more."

With jBASE now a part of the Zumasys portfolio, Amtech is looking forward to leveraging new features to help it improve efficiency and productivity. "Wherever we want to take PRO:MAN in the future, I'm confident that they can get us there." says Jensen. ■