



Thin clients, big business

A steady diet of thin client IBM Network Stations means big business for IBM Business Partner RYNO (Realize Your Networking Opportunities) of Benicia, California. RYNO, a 40-employee company near San Francisco, has grown to \$10 million in annual sales compared to \$7 million just two years ago using a marketing strategy based on thin clients.

"Thin clients now drive some 70 percent of our sales," Steve Kaplan, RYNO's founder and president, says. "Our clients appreciate the fact that they can distribute their software and manage their systems easier and more economically from the server than if they had a PC on every desk. The IBM Network Station offers the best overall value in the thin client arena right now, and it's consistently getting better.

Driving services revenue

"Now that we can work with ICA as well as clients, we feel really good about selling the Network Station. Network Station Manager is a wonderful software tool that no other Windows terminal manufacturer can match, and IBM's technical support is second to none. The transition to thin clients drives large services opportunities, and that's where we make most of our profits."

RYNO had sold several hundred Network Stations through the third quarter of

1998, with firm prospects of closing sales of another thousand or more by year-end. Kaplan focuses most of his company's energies on prospects that understand the cost of managing a network of "fat" clients, and are motivated to reduce cost and complexity. One of the most important parts of RYNO's marketing efforts is the assistance it gives prospects to prepare a five-year cost projection to confirm the business case. RYNO charges for its installation and support services even if it agrees to a free trial. "The sale is straightforward when both upper management and the IS function understand the financial overhead of an enterprise with a proliferation of PCs on their desktops," he says.

One highly motivated RYNO customer is Contra Costa County, which was quick to recognize the merits of the Network Station. John Forberg, deputy CIO of the County's Central Information Technology Department, says, "Right off the bat, we could see that the Network Stations were going to save us at least 35 to 75 percent versus deploying PCs." With support from RYNO, the County's installed base of Network Stations is growing, as more of

the County's 8,000 desktops adopt the thin client.

Confident of success

For RYNO, such customers ensure a constant demand for integration, design and support services. Kaplan explains: "It takes special skills to make a thin client environment successful. You need to be familiar with the many different types of servers often found in an enterprise, and be sensitive to technical and cultural factors. You also need to be confident in proposing an IBM hardware and software solution, and as the product has gotten better and better, our confidence has soared."



Steve Kaplan, RYNO's founder and president

