![OneNeck IT Solutions, a TDS Company]

Spyder Active Sports
Pushing the limits of high performance

The Company

Spyder Active Sports is the largest ski-specialty brand in the world. The company is renowned for integrating high-tech fabrics, fashion and functionality.

Founded in 1978, Spyder revolutionized ski racing with the introduction of the first padded slalom sweater designed "for racing, by racers." Today, Spyder products are the choice of many serious skiers and teams including the U.S. Ski Team and Alpine Canada. Rigorously tested by top athletes around the world, Spyder products range from casual sport-lifestyle clothing to outerwear for any condition.

With global headquarters in Boulder, Colorado, Spyder sells products to more than 550 high-quality, specialty retailers in the United States and Canada. Spyder products are also sold outside North America into 50 countries through the company's Spyder-Europe office and through independent distributors around the globe.

The Challenge

When a company offers to pay its IT provider more money in return for more services, and the provider not only refuses the offer but its service levels continue to decline, it's time to look for a new provider. That's precisely what happened to Spyder's Information Systems Director, Kevin Smith. Tehir contracted IT provider had been purchased for a second time and already declining service levels hit rock bottom when Spyder's headquarters in Boulder experienced an IT outage that shut down operations for four days. To make matters worse, this outage occurred during one of the busiest times of the year for Spyder.

As a result of an improper back-up system, Spyder lost nine days worth of critical shipment data. Since invoices to customers were lost and unable to be retrieved, they had to be recalculated and manually prepared. At the same time, the company was unable to electronically generate orders to its retailers.

Spyder's outsourcing provider had also been experiencing turnover problems given its second acquisition. So, Smith and his internal IT team had to rely on a small and dwindling IT staff to resurrect the system. "Those were some of the worst days of my career, when the system was down," remembers Smith. "And I wasn't confident in the outcome."

Once bitten, twice shy is how Smith described his level of distrust and lack of confidence when he set out to hire another IT provider. In evaluating potential vendors, Smith identified three cornerstone requirements: First, he was seeking a partner with a proven track record that could guarantee reliability and performance. Second, the new company would have to answer an important question: How do you intend to support Spyder's business continuity? For Smith, that meant being proactive and possessing expertise in disaster recovery standard procedures. Finally, the new provider would be expected to operate as a partner with Spyder — an extension of their business — and possess a similar culture in terms of size and growth.

It came down to three potential vendors — a tough choice according to Smith. He said cost wasn't a determining factor since all vendors offered similar pricing. However, a number of factors led Smith to select OneNeck. Among them, he explained, was OneNeck's "undeniable technical expertise," and "genuine interest in forming a partnership."

Spyder Active Sports Summary

Organization	Spyder Active Sports
Industry	High-performance ski apparel
Business Challenges	Spyder was in an unsatisfactory relationship with its previous vendor. This vendor was unresponsive to Spyder's business needs and lacked customer intimacy. Spyder was looking for a new partner who would support the company's business continuity requirements and emphasized high quality customer focus with strong references.
User Environment	125 users Five locations worldwide
Application	JDE EnterpriseOne ERP Symantec Virus Protection Business Intelligence/Reporting Tools
Technical Environment	13 Windows Servers SQL Server 2000 Citrix ICS rfsmart Wireless Data Collection

The OneNeck IT Solutions Answer

With OneNeck as Spyder's official IT partner, attention turned to transition. Spyder needed the switch from the previous application service provider to Oneneck to be as seamless as possible for their worldwide user-base. To ensure the transition would go smoothly, eight weeks in advance of the go-live date, Spyder began sending tapes of system data to OneNeck for testing.

The process was tedious, and there was little help on the part of Spyder's previous provider. According to Smith, this afforded him little confidence that the complete transfer of all files would be successful. With that realization, members of the Spyder/OneNeck team decided to drive to the prior providers data center to pick up a hard drive with the necessary data and then boarded a plane to OneNecks' data center in Arizona

The layers of testing leading up to the ASP transfer, as well as the in-person, hand delivery of critical data, paid off when the new system was up and running on schedule in mid-February 2006. It also set the stage for a collaborative partnership between Spyder and OneNeck.

Soon after the cutover, OneNeck focused on stabilizing and securing all systems. Smith credits OneNeck for securing Spyder's global network. "We have more secure access across the board and tightened access to data no matter where people are located," said Smith. He was referring to the Boulder office and Spyder-Europe in Switzerland, as well as warehouses in Bangkok and throughout Canada, where a secure gateway to hosted applications now exists. Added Smith, "When it comes to security, OneNeck has taken a proactive approach."

The Benefits

Through application expertise, technical savvy, regular communication and proactive systems improvement, OneNeck has provided Spyder with more than operations excellence; they've given them peace of mind. Smith describes the relationship as a "partnership where people are technically competent and able and willing to provide outstanding service."

In fact, when a member of the Spyder IT support team at OneNeck transitioned into another role, she continued to work with Spyder on unfinished projects. "There's continuity in hand-over support staff when someone transitions," said Smith. "People see their projects through."

OneNecks' ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) philosophy — based on industry-leading best practices — also provided Spyder with a framework from which to enhance their IT infrastructure, a critical component to running a high-performance company. And when it comes to high performance, Spyder has built their reputation on it.

About OneNeck IT Solutions

OneNeck IT Solutions LLC offers hybrid IT solutions including cloud and hosting solutions, managed services, enterprise application management, advanced IT services, IT hardware and top-tier data centers in Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oregon and Wisconsin. OneNeck's team of technology professionals manage secure, world-class, hybrid IT infrastructures and applications for businesses around the country.

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