

### **The Customer**

Reeves Brothers Trucking is a transportation company based in Lexington, Tennessee. They were founded over 30 years ago by brothers Jeff and Gaston Reeves and have evolved into a multi-million dollar business with over 10 full-time office employees and approximately 150 drivers (with the majority of trucks owned by the company). Reeves provides its customers, primarily automotive suppliers, with “Just-In-Time” (or JIT) freight across the United States. The trucking business may not, at first blush, spring to mind as an intensive user of technology. However, over the years of doing business, Reeves has become more and more reliant on technology until today where all of their trucks are now tracked real-time via the internet. Their loads (which represent new revenue) are also now sourced via the web. Their reliance on information technology (IT) has grown considerably, making uptime and connectivity essential to their day-to-day operations.

### **The Situation**

Tracking 150 trucks and their payloads is not an insignificant task. Since 2001, Reeves has turned to a local technology service provider named Terry Cole for all their IT needs. Terry was very dedicated in his service and saw their dependency on technology grow over the years as they added GPS tracking systems to their operation and began to rely more heavily on internet and communications connectivity. He helped them implement a Microsoft Exchange server and an ordering system in 2004, added servers in 2005 and then encouraged Reeves to implement a basic network monitoring system in 2007. Terry was diligent in monitoring their operations and providing them with impeccable service...at least until the day that he and Reeves both came to call “Black Monday”.

### **What Happened on Black Monday?**

Terry Cole had been thinking about how he could scale his business effectively when he learned about The Utility Company in 2007. After making the decision to become a Utility Service Provider in early 2008, Terry started talking to his customers and began converting them to become Utility customers – essentially moving them over from zero or basic monitoring of their infrastructures to proactive management of their systems. Unfortunately for himself and for Reeves Brothers, Mr. Cole hadn't yet had the chance to meet with Reeves to discuss a transition over to Utility services before ‘the incident’...

Terry was implementing another client's network project 30 miles away on the opening day of their new office when he received his own alert about a failure of a feature called “failover” on the Reeves' firewall. This failure meant two things to Reeves, both very important in their world of transportation. Their trucks could no longer be tracked during this ‘brownout’ and they could no longer access their source of potential loads – both very critical measurements for companies involved in JIT transactions. Terry could not provide troubleshooting even over the telephone at that particular moment due to the chaotic nature of the project already at hand. He would not be able to get onsite with Reeves until 4 hours later...

### **The Solution**

Once Terry could get onsite, he resolved Reeves' firewall issue easily in about 10 minutes. However, had Reeves already become a customer of The Utility Company the issue could have been resolved with a technician remotely over the phone **immediately**. This incident brought several issues to light:

- Reeves understood that they had become **critically dependent on IT**, and that their subscribed level of support, despite growing over the years, wasn't where it needed to be.
- Reeves realized that Terry's previous ‘one-man shop’ approach **exposed them to too much risk**. Despite a long-standing and happy relationship with their service provider, they believed they had outgrown his capabilities. If something were to happen to Terry or he couldn't respond immediately when they needed help, their business was going to suffer (again).
- Reeves felt the time was at hand to **search for Terry's replacement**.

### **The Result**

Terry immediately realized his mistake in not approaching Reeves earlier. In hindsight, a mapping of Reeves' technology reliance versus their service delivery model demonstrates a vulnerability or gap in their level of support. Business owner Jeff Reeves agreed to meet with Terry on the Friday of that same week given their long-standing history with Terry as their trusted business technology advisor. Jeff and other key employees Alicia Adams and Wes Lange listened to Terry's proposal when he explained his new partnership with The Utility Company and what it meant for Reeves. Terry reiterated that their reliance on technology no longer matched their current service model and stressed the accessibility and expertise of the entire Utility team behind him now. He presented 2 managed options he felt would better meet their growing needs:

- **Connected Office (CO) Managed** - complete monitoring & management of their infrastructure; or
- **Connected Office Network** for their servers and firewalls plus a Per Minute helpdesk solution for end-user support of non-server/network-related issues.

### **The Result**

With everyone then on the same page (in terms of Reeves' technology needs), Alicia happily executed Jeff's decision to sign up for The Utility Company's CO Network package that same day with an email reading: "We are excited to have this service and hopefully prevent another 'MONDAY'". Confident that they were in good hands with Terry and his "team behind him" Reeves no longer has a feeling of potential exposure or business risk because of their information technology.

### **Customer's Thoughts**

"We probably knew in our hearts all along that Terry couldn't be in two places at once", stated co-founder Jeff Reeves, "but until we saw firsthand how critical any amount of 'brownout' was to our business, we didn't really give it a second thought. Thankfully with Terry's new relationship with The Utility Company it means we get the service levels our business requires and still get to deal with Terry in person when need be".

### **Utility's View**

"I felt becoming a Utility Service Provider was necessary for my business to grow", stated Terry Cole. "I knew that being part of a larger team meant I'd have instant access to a helpdesk of trained network technicians – with a variety of skillsets and expertise. I also knew this would allow me to provide full services to my clients – I can be their 'one-stop shop' for all their technology needs. But what I didn't count on was how quickly my customers needed to move to these services. Now with less demands on my time responding to 'break/fix' work, I can devote more of my time to acting as my clients' virtual CIO – reviewing their current and future needs and helping them chart out sound technology decisions for their unique businesses. In other words, both them and I can be proactive, rather than reactive"

## **There is a NEW WAY – join The Utility Revolution!**

The Utility Company is a single-source provider of technology, communications and business management solutions for small and medium-sized businesses across North America. Our Connected Office Technology-as-a-Service program provides a single point of contact for ALL things technology delivering the required hardware, software and service for a monthly fixed fee per user. Customers are supported by local Utility Service Providers delivering on-site service and business-technology consulting to address the two major problems plaguing businesses today:

**Over-Spending** - the average business spends **\$360 per user per month** on technology

**Under-Utilization** – unfortunately **only 15%** of this investment is actually utilized

**Our mission** is to ensure our customers only invest in the technology they require to **operate, communicate** and **manage** their business effectively. **Our vision** is to transform information technology into what it should be – **a utility**.