



CUSTOMER

J&E Duff inc.

TYPE OF BUSINESS

Mason Contractors

LOCATION

West Chicago, IL

Contact

(630) 562-3800

www.jeduff.com

J & E Duff Had Enough, Then Turned to Partners In Technology

“We were a mismatch,” says J & E Duff Controller Dale Richards of the company’s previous IT service provider. “They refused to share control of our computer system, and insisted on holding all the cards.”

Like most construction firms, a sharp downturn in the industry had an impact on this family-owned mason contractor based in the Chicago area. Dale says, “We were looking to cut costs and didn’t have the budget to outsource ALL of our IT needs. I know just enough about computers to be dangerous and wanted to handle some of the day-to-day things in-house, and then outsource the more advanced technical aspects as needed.”

It’s All or Nothing

But the former IT service provider wanted 100% control or nothing. Even when the smallest glitch occurred, the staff at J & E Duff were left waiting, completely dependent on the availability of a technician.

“To top it off, the previous vendor had created an IT solution that was overkill for our needs and so compli-

cated that we were afraid to touch anything,” recalls Dale.

Unable to come to an agreement to share the workload, J & E Duff cut ties with the previous tech support company. According to Dale, “When I asked to transition from a full-service contract to an as needed basis, the company wouldn’t budge. It was all or nothing. So we decided to handle things entirely in-house from that point forward.”

Enter Partners In Technology

They continued supporting their own IT needs in-house until the company hit a tipping point. “Our workstations were becoming obsolete and struggling to keep up with the current version of our accounting and estimating software. Then one day our server crashed and we knew it was time to get help.”

That’s when J & E Duff turned to their accounting firm and longtime trusted advisor, [Dugan & Lopatka](#), who recommended [Partners In Technology](#) – a wholly-owned technology division within the accounting firm. Dale says

“Partners In Technology is extremely accommodating, providing a ‘Right-Sized’ solution with as much or as little IT support as we need. It’s a cooperative approach.”

- Dale Richards, J&E Duff

“I was impressed with Partners In Technology right out of the gate. They were very responsive, sent someone out right away, and got us up and running again quickly.”

In the old environment when the server went down, J & E Duff lost access to everything - internet, email, files, and printing. But Partners in Tech redesigned the network and server configuration to remove that single point of failure, improve server uptime and resilience, and reduce the overall complexity of the IT system. They also migrated the company’s internet service provider (ISP) from Cbeyond to Comcast which included moving email to Microsoft Exchange Online.

IT Support That’s Just the Right Size

Once the immediate fire was put out, Dale began discussing his ongoing IT support needs. That’s when he discovered the [Managed Services](#) approach from Partners In Technology and together, they structured a “right-sized” IT maintenance plan that provided exactly what he was looking for.

“Partners In Technology was extremely accommodating,” says Dale, “offering a cooperative approach that provided as much or as little support as we needed. I was also intrigued with their **Tech Watch** technology that continuously monitors our IT systems and servers and notifies us of a potential issue well before it becomes a problem that can halt operations.” With

Tech Watch in place, Dale gets an email alert anytime they’re running out of memory or a server goes down.

Maintaining System Health

Even though it’s a small family-owned company, technology that’s up and running 24 x 7 is still an important requirement for J & E Duff. “We’re 100% union and run payroll in-house. If we don’t get checks cut on time, we’re in hot water,” says Dale. He adds, “Plus, our crew in the field needs remote access to the accounting and estimating software. So if our systems go down, we’re out of business for a while. With Partners In Tech, those things don’t happen. They provide us with a nice safety net and peace of mind.”

More Than a Just a Vendor

The managed services contract with Partners In Tech includes automatic backup and data storage, along with continuous system oversight and technical support. And with access to a built-in IT dashboard and a full slate of reports, J & E Duff has as much control over the system as they want.

Dale is pleased to have an ongoing relationship with Partners In Tech. “They worked collaboratively with us, finding a right-sized solution that fits our needs and budget,” he says. “At the end of the day, we feel like they value us as a customer and are more than just a vendor ... they’re a partner in our business.”



PARTNERS IN TECHNOLOGY

At Partners in Technology, we are passionate about helping small and mid-sized businesses in the Chicago metropolitan area and throughout the United States achieve growth and success through automation. Our customers benefit from improved inventory management, tighter internal controls, expanded business intelligence, and accurate accounting and financial reporting.