



BULLETIN

MAY 2010

A NEW CHAPTER FOR ac3

ac3 has recently made some significant company structural changes and announced a series of executive and management promotions — two new Senior Executives and one managerial role — reflecting the company’s commitment to build and maintain a strong and dynamic management team across its business.

Along with attracting world-class talent from outside the company, “one of my top priorities is growing ac3’s existing leadership team” said Philip McCrea, CEO of ac3. “Each of these senior people will play a critical role in leading the company into the future. These appointments are a result of their ability to think strategically, the respect they have earned from their peers, customers and partners, and their significant contributions to the company.”

The new appointees are:



MONIQUE MCINTOSH
Chief Operating Officer

Monique previously held the role of Manager, Sales and Marketing, whilst working closely with Eric Whitehouse (previous COO). Monique retains the responsibility for business development and is now also responsible for service delivery and operations.



ANDREW DIMECH
Operations Manager

Andrew has recently joined ac3 to take up the newly created position of Operations Manager, to look after our Microsoft, Unix, DBA and networking support teams. Andrew came to us from Datacom where he was Business Manager for Managed Services.



RICHARD WALSH
Chief Technology Officer

Richard previously held the role of Chief Solutions Architect, and is now responsible for the transformation of business requirements into strategic technical solutions. Richard is also responsible for the growing Professional Services team.

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Farwell to a colleague

Most of ac3’s clients, partners and friends have got to know Eric Whitehouse during his time at ac3. Eric had a distinguished career at IBM and then spent several years at Silicon Graphics before joining ac3 in 2002 as the sole business development person. As the business grew, Eric managed the growing business development team, and became Chief Operating Officer in 2007.

Baby boomers won’t really retire however — not easily, at least! We’re pleased that Eric will still have ongoing involvement with ac3, and has readily accepted the task of continuing developing business for the company in certain key areas.

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A gateway to the future

ac3, in conjunction with the NSW CIO's office, has implemented a Secure Network Gate (SNG) for the NSW Government which provides a seamless and inexpensive way for Agencies to migrate from the Government Broadband Service following its termination in July 2010.

The SNG is implemented on tested infrastructure, and is based on an existing secure gateway that has been operational at **ac3** for several years serving for the Emergency Services Agencies.

The Gateway has been built with reliability in mind. There are two physically separate gateway instances in **ac3**'s two data centres.

Single Sign-on

The SNG has an in-built user authentication service, which enables a user in a particular Agency to access a service or a resource in a different Agency to which s/he is entitled, through a single sign-on.

The SNG takes advantage of each Agency's current user authentication system. These existing authentication systems communicate through an enhanced version of the FiX authentication system that was developed by, and has been operational in the Dept of Lands and elsewhere for some time. No user information is stored in the SNG.

Current Services available through the Gateway

Agencies that are connected to the Gateway can share resources and services. For instance:

- ▶ Images or data files can be shared seamlessly between agencies (with prior approval);
- ▶ Corporate services, such as HR, from one agency can be used by another;
- ▶ Databases can be synchronisation;
- ▶ Virtual private Networks (VPNs) can be established between teams or people cooperating on common projects.

Future services

The SNG can provide the platform for a range of future shared services, including:

- ▶ a common email service,
- ▶ access to software from a NSW Government "cloud",
- ▶ Intranets, collaboration and portal services,
- ▶ voice (VOIP) and video communication,
- ▶ secure access to shared storage, backup and archiving,
- ▶ migration to IPv6.

VIRTUAL HOSTING

ac3 can provide "Infrastructure as a Service" through FlexiServer. A significant number of our clients have reduced their costs and improved their reliability by moving from dedicated hardware to a virtual server environment. Apart from costing less, FlexiServer has the benefit of being able to be upgraded at short notice as our clients need change. So, if your hardware is near the end of its life, don't replace it automatically with new kit — talk to **ac3** to see if it can be accommodated on FlexiServer.

No capital costs and no fixed term — we have made FlexiServer as flexible as possible, by offering it on a month by month basis.

Please contact **ac3** if you would like more details.

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DATA CENTRE UPDATE

Space available

With the commitments we have made to existing clients, **ac3**'s data centre at the Australian Technology Park is for all intents and purposes full. All new co-location business is at our data centre at Global Switch.

The good news is that we have up to 200 sq metres (200KW) of co-location space available at Global Switch. If this is of interest, please let us know, as space at Global switch is becoming scarce.

Improved communications

We have improved the communications links between our two data centres, and now have redundant dark fibre between the two centres, via completely different physical paths.

We also have all the main carriers in both data centres — Optus, Telstra, AAPT, Soul, Pipe and Nextgen.



CUSTOMER PROFILE

LEADING THE WAY

ac3 has over 100 clients, drawn from both the Government and non-Government sector. This article profiles one of **ac3**'s long term clients, Sirca.

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Since the Securities Industry Research Centre of Asia Pacific (Sirca) began using **ac3**'s data hosting services in 2001, it has grown to become Australia's leading financial markets research entity. Established in 1994 to promote research excellence, thought leadership and innovation in the financial and related services industries, Sirca's activities span over-the-counter and exchange traded markets, funds management, accounting and e-business technology.

Central to Sirca's mission is the need to enable the sharing of infrastructure amongst its clients at its member institutions, as well as to global clients of Reuters who on-sell Sirca's services. "The major dataset that sits underneath a lot of our services captures around 100,000 records a second from 2,500 different sources, and we have a 12 year history of that," explains Dr Michael Briers, Sirca's Chief Executive Officer.

"It captures trades from every market in the world including news stories and economic announcements. We believe it is the largest financial database in the world. By using **ac3**'s hosting service, we've been able to not only manage a massive dataset and provide extremely quick access to it, we've also been able to normalise the data that comes in different formats from different parts of the world so it all looks the same."

In addition to hosting all of SIRCA's equipment and data (comprising a Unix cluster of 150 servers and 80 terabytes of disk storage), **ac3** also provides Sirca with systems-level services including networking, security, porting of software, systems engineering and operational support.

Sirca provides three different Web-delivered services to Reuters' clients globally. These are typically investment bankers and others who are very discerning about how and when they get their data. Some of this data is also highly sensitive, and therefore its security and the speed with which Sirca is able to access it in a consistent and robust manner has become ever more critical, Dr Briers says.

"Whereas some of our academic clients might tolerate a service being down for a little while, investment bankers don't! Our relationship with **ac3** has consequently grown in a way that has enabled us to deliver higher service levels to a much more discerning client base globally," he reflects.

Mission Critical

When the Australian and United States defence forces rely on your technology to make life and death decisions, the security and reliability of your data-hosting service is truly mission-critical

ThoughtWeb designs cognitive modelling solutions that help the likes of the army, navy and air force gather information from various sources to improve decision making. The Department of Defence's Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) report an 80% increase in the speed and quality of decision making processes through the application of ThoughtWeb in simulated battle conditions.

ThoughtWeb's information aggregation and analysis process is very data intensive. It might involve pulling information from several applications within a customer's site, such as its ERP, HR and CRM systems, as well as data held in PowerPoint and Excel files. ThoughtWeb then uses its "smarts" to figure out what is important,

aggregating and analysing all the information in parallel and real-time to figure out who needs to know what, alerting the right people immediately with collated, contextual information.

"Imagine you need to air-lift supplies to a base-camp in a war zone," explained Chris Murray, CEO of ThoughtWeb. "To make a smart decision about where, when and how to do that, you need access to information as diverse as availability of helicopter assets, how much fuel is required, what staff are at the base, availability of food and accommodation for the flight crews, safe flight paths, security and diplomacy issues, and the list goes on.

ThoughtWeb uses its servers at **ac3** primarily for developing solutions for its clients, be it in Australia or internationally. Some clients are served in a production capacity from **ac3**. According to Chris Murray, the CEO, their clients are happy to be hosted at **ac3** because of **ac3**'s high reputation for security.

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CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

It's hard to believe for those who were there at the laying of the keel, but ac3 turns 10 this year!

The fledgling organisation commenced early in 2000 as the Australian Centre for Advanced Computing and Communications with a focus on managing supercomputers for Universities. The

ATP data centre was constructed in the middle of 2000 and was operational in September. The company was not actually established as an ASIC entity till towards the end of 2000.

ac3's business has changed over the years, and we are now squarely in the "Managed Services" space: our clients entrust us with their mission critical IT infrastructure. We place this infrastructure in our secure and reliable data centres, and provide professional management around the clock.

We'll hold a 10 year birthday party for the company later in the year, and invite all our clients and friends.