

NorthWrite Platform and Methodology:

Overview of the NorthWrite Platform and Enterprise Data Center.

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NorthWrite, Inc.
The WorkSite Company
How Simple Can You Get

The ASP Promise

NorthWrite Platform and Methodology

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The ASP Promise

Application Service Providers (ASP's) are revolutionizing the way organizations are acquiring and using business software and IT services. In the ASP model, software applications are delivered to end users from service providers who deploy innovative solutions as a bundled service in a one-to-many model. The promise of this model is that it will make business applications more effective by removing the burden associated with the end-to-end application life cycle, reducing implementation time, and providing a more cost-effective solution through economies of scale.

The requisite components of an ASP offering include applications, networking, hosting facilities, and databases, all delivered directly to the customer as a comprehensive service.

From its inception, NorthWrite has focused on developing an infrastructure specifically for delivering powerful yet simple applications over the Internet. This service requires that users be able to access sensitive data over the Internet with performance comparable to locally stored data on a LAN. In addition to the need for high performance and security, the ASP promise must meet the demand for mission-critical reliability, flexibility, and scalability.

With thousands of clients today, NorthWrite is not only the leader in delivering ASP services to the buildings market, it also leads in the understanding of these requirements. To meet these requirements and to ensure we deliver against them, NorthWrite has taken a full-service approach. We have designed and built a specialized technology platform - the NorthWrite Global Services Platform - to optimize our delivery against these requirements.

NorthWrite Platform and Methodology

Supporting NorthWrite's mission to lead the delivery of ASP solutions to the vertical market resellers and end users has been a corporate philosophy that values, above all, customer service, product quality and delivery, and a culture that fosters innovation. This environment and principle have been necessary to enable the many innovations of the NorthWrite organization and our service delivery team.

The NorthWrite Global Service Platform is the result of years of research, development, and client service experience. This has been specifically designed to exploit the inherent opportunities of the ASP service model, to overcome its inevitable challenges, and to address the requirements of the NorthWrite customer.

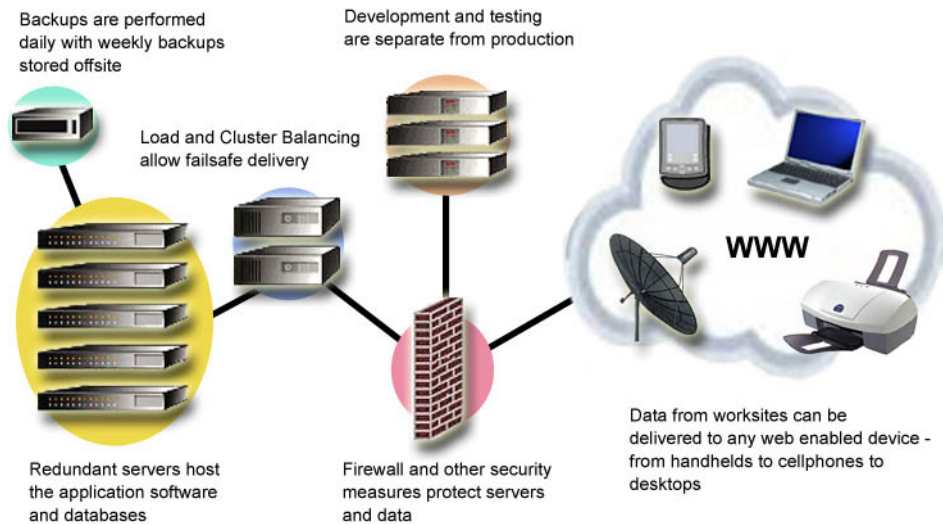


Figure 1. NorthWrite Platform Structure

Data Center Tour

NorthWrite's state-of-the-art data center provides unsurpassed security, reliability and scalability to thousands of WorkSite clients. Located in Minnetonka, MN, our Data Center is designed and staffed to ensure the highest possible reliability for your hosted solution.

Key features of our data center:

High Speed Network. NorthWrite is connected to the Internet by multiple OC-3 links, which are carried over three different OC-12 fiber optic SONET networks via two separate telecommunications providers. NorthWrite consistently places in the top 96% of the Keynote Business 40 Index, which benchmarks website responsiveness.

Physical Security - Each data center is monitored and protected by video surveillance cameras, 24-hour security personnel, and access control systems. To prevent unauthorized network access, NorthWrite utilizes a combination of technical platforms to counter attack all known methods of compromising the core network. Firewalls are utilized to restrict access to the network and filters have been added to the routers and the switches. IP restrictions and username/password authentication are utilized where appropriate. NorthWrite also utilizes a pro-active monitoring platform to proactively determine potential intrusion. These methods individually and in conjunction with each other provide the highest level of security.

Redundant Power Management - NorthWrite's data center facilities are powered by two separate Xcel Energy grids and equipped with multiple 75 KVA full time inline UPS equipment. In addition, a natural gas generator and a Diesel generator are located onsite in the event of a sustained electrical outage. All NorthWrite core services are complete and n+1 redundant, providing maximum fault tolerance.

Temperate Control - At each Data Center, temperature and humidity is controlled by multiple computer room air-handling units (CRAHU) installed in a redundant configuration.

Fire Suppression Systems - Data Center facilities are equipped with state-of-the-art gaseous and redundant dry-pipe fire suppression systems. Fire detection devices monitor the sub floor plenum and ceiling space. Each data center facility is enclosed by a one-hour firewall.

Network Operations Center (NOC) Offsite Backup - Our Minneapolis NOC provides centralized monitoring and control of the NorthWrite data centers and network. Disaster recovery is a key component to the longer-term viability of today's business and remote off-site storage is essential. Data is backed up locally every evening, and backed up off-site every Friday night.

Software Development Cycle

The key for a successful ASP is the product offering. Our WorkSites deliver business solution software to the marketplace at a low cost. We favor a quick development cycle that closely involves the customer and sets short-term goals for modular delivery.

Identify Functional Needs - We work closely with our customers to identify key needs and product functionality focusing on functionality that will scale across our customer base.

Create Requirements – The key functional needs are expanded upon to create the requirements and specifications document.

Develop Software – Designers, programmers, database and security experts work together to develop the software.

Testing – We run our software thru a rigorous testing cycle that includes stress and limits testing.

Acceptance and Delivery – Working closely with select customer groups, we roll out new versions of our software to minimize customer impact.

Customer Support - Always responsive to customer input, we're there when our customers need us, whether it's to answer a quick question or for help solving key business needs.

Process Management

While we strive to maintain an environment of innovation, quick turnaround and adaptation to and adoption of new technology, we recognize that a key to being a dependable solution provider is the stability that comes with process management. We accept that core processes are necessary to ensure the security and dependability of our product offerings.

Disaster Recovery – The heart of our disaster recovery procedure lies with protecting our clients and their data. We will keep customers informed and quickly recover or restore service while maintaining the integrity and quality of our system.

Incident Response – Our policy for incident response is to: Isolate events as soon as they are identified, maintain data integrity and restore service as quickly as possible.

Change Control - Several people must approve each change to our production environment. For software changes, the software developer, the technical project manager, the customer service rep and the sales rep must all understand, test and approve the change.

Software Upgrades and Revisions - Upgrades to our software components are modular. We can release a new version of an application in the WorkSite to a select group of customers without releasing it to everyone at once. This allows us to work closely with customers and get initial feedback and quickly do revisions without affecting all customers.

Security and Data Integrity

NorthWrite recognizes the importance of the trust that our customers place in us. We take seriously the protection, security and confidentiality of the information and data that is in the NorthWrite system. It is our job to protect this data from inappropriate disclosure, destruction or corruption. We have policies in place to ensure the security and integrity of our customers data. All employees have the responsibility to report incidents that point to risks in their areas of accountability, as well as follow policy and procedures.

Policy

Information Management will work with departments and managers to build programs, obtain security devices, and build protective mechanisms and procedures to overcome risks from accidental or intentional modification, destruction or disclosure of information. Continuous quality improvement procedures, such as policy and procedure review, new technology research, and internal and external audits, will be employed.

Security Mechanisms

Firewall hardware and software are in place to protect NorthWrite servers, controlling the traffic allowed on the network and access to the servers.

System Monitoring

NorthWrite continuously monitors its entire infrastructure to ensure systems are performing at the peak of efficiency. Monitoring ensures that problems are immediately identified and the appropriate actions are taken.

Backup and Recovery

NorthWrite employs various techniques to enable all of the computer systems to return to operation after a failure or catastrophe. This will include the use of fault-tolerant or redundant systems, regular backup

mechanisms, use of uninterruptible power supplies (UPSs) for all production servers. This includes provision of an off-site remote location backup site for data.