Lightspan Case Study

@Work Illuminates Lightspan's Online Network and Helps Company Extend Its Reach to Elementary Schools Across the United States

Lightspan Partnership is an educational software company that shortens the distance between schools and homes with interactive educational tools utilizing digital video and Internet technologies. Serving students in grades K-6, "Lightspan Adventures," the company's flagship product, puts parents in the educational loop by enabling them to participate in their children's day-to-day learning curriculum. More than 1,000 schools across the U.S. have logged on with Lightspan Adventures, reaching 100,000 students in their homes.

The Internet is the conduit that delivers Lightspan Adventures to students from coast to coast, and a reliable Internet connection is a critical link between Lightspan and schools. If the company's Internet connection is hindered in any way, thousands of students, teachers and parents who rely on Lightspan everyday are affected. Until recently, the San Diego-based company used a national ISP for all its Internet needs, from connectivity to its NT-based intranet. Over time, however, it became clear their ISP wasn't making the grade. Lightspan's network was slow, unreliable and very inconsistent. In addition, the ISP's customer service earned the company a trip to the principal's office as long waits and unreturned phone calls became the norm.

Will Pratt, director of information systems for Lightspan, caught wind of @Work after looking into companies that provide residential cable-modem access to the Internet. After learning the @Home Network could take care of all his Internet needs at home, he wondered if the company might solve his Internet problems at work as well. Much to his delight, the answer was a resounding "yes."

Since implementing @Work in mid-1997, Lightspan's network has received high marks from employees, teachers and students alike. The network runs significantly faster than before, ensuring that students receive fun, challenging curriculum from Lightspan everyday. The company's 300 employees using the network now have fast, reliable access to the Internet without having to worry about outages. What's more, @Work's end-to-end management is like a built-in insurance policy protecting the network's second-to-none performance against any unforeseen bumps in the road.

And for Pratt, what started out as a venture into the unknown is reaping benefits for Lightspan every day. "Because they're so new, it was a gamble going with @Work, but it has definitely paid off."