Birkman Taps Data Foundry as Data Center Outsourcing Partner

Data Foundry’s Enterprise Data Center Services Keep Birkman’s Sensitive Data Safe And Secure.

The Company
Birkman International, a 60-year-old firm based in Houston, Texas, is one of the top behavioral and occupational assessment companies in the world, generating nearly 8,000 online assessment reports every month. They’re the developers of The Birkman Method®, a well known questionnaire and human resource assessment methodology used by more than 1,000 organizations throughout the world – from the largest Fortune 100 companies to small, independent consultancies. More than 1.5 million people have taken the Birkman questionnaire to date.

The Opportunity
For years, The Birkman Method had been delivered to companies, consultancies and individuals via Birkman’s proprietary client-server software. Then, in 2001, the company launched BirkmanDirect®, a fully integrated web-based system that would ultimately replace its client-server software. BirkmanDirect was an instant success. Demand grew rapidly, and soared when the company signed a large new client with exacting requirements for web-based services. However, even as BirkmanDirect gained popularity with clients, Birkman faced an increasingly unwieldy IT infrastructure challenge. At the time, it wasn’t uncommon for Birkman’s in-house web servers to go down one or more times a day, or for the company’s Internet connection to be unknowingly bumped offline for entire weekends. “We were not monitoring effectively and had no built-in redundancy for our web systems,” noted Beverly Martin, Director of Information Systems for Birkman. “We went from 50 online questionnaires a week to over 200 every day. We needed an IT partner who could help us manage this growth, and do it quickly, reliably and cost-effectively.”

The Results
A complete and scaleable outsourced data center solution to keep Birkman’s sensitive data safe, secure and available:

- Colocation and Managed Tape Backup services
- Managed firewall services
- 24/7 network monitoring
- Fast, bulletproof Internet connectivity

“... and even helped us identify gaps in our IT infrastructure. DataFoundry is proactive, unquestionably reliable and cost-effective – they’re everything a corporate IT partner should be.”

- Beverly Martin, Birkman International

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CASE STUDY: BIRKMAN

The Solution

After evaluating more than four candidate companies – some local, some as far away as Atlanta, GA – Birkman chose Data Foundry as its IT partner, signing on as one of a growing base of corporate datacenter customers. Data Foundry immediately stood apart from its competitors because it offered:

- Exceptional network and data center reliability
- A financially stable history of consistent profitability
- Knowledgeable and resourceful sales and customer service engineers
- Better return-on-investment for its services and products

"Data Foundry already had a solid presence in the Houston market, and we corroborated this with several independent inquiries we made prior to coming on board," Martin noted. "We liked that Data Foundry’s salespersons were highly technical." Today, Birkman’s web and database systems are colocated off-site at Data Foundry’s secure, state-of-the-art data center in Houston. The data center offers the advanced equipment, facility technologies and utilities that customers need to house and protect mission-critical servers. Data Foundry also provides a complete suite of services that gives Birkman the reliability, redundancy and security its IT infrastructure requires, including managed Internet and firewall services, server and router monitoring and routine tape backups on daily and weekly schedules.

Corporate Data Centers: To Outsource Or Not?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum Data Center Requirements</th>
<th>In-House</th>
<th>Data Foundry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24x7x365 multilayered security (physical and network)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guaranteed 100% uptime due to multiple levels of power, network, router and switch redundancy</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Precise humidity and cooling systems control, raised flooring</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managed daily and weekly tape backup with secure off-site data storage</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully redundant power and multiple backup generators</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24x7x365 network monitoring</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
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</table>

Often no more than back-room closets, in-house corporate data centers frequently lack the security and infrastructure companies need to protect their data and servers. However, companies like Data Foundry, with four state-of-the-art data centers throughout Texas, allow companies to meet and maintain the minimum criteria above.
CASE STUDY: Birkman

The Power Of Partnering: Data Foundry's Corporate Data Centers Outsourcing Solution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Foundry Service</th>
<th>Benefits to Birkman</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colocation of Web and database services</td>
<td>Protects Web-based applications and databases at safe, off-site Internet DataCenter; easily scalable solution to match company growth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managed tape backup</td>
<td>Automated backup prevents loss of data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managed firewall services</td>
<td>Keeps data safe from intruders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peacekeeper™ Server and Router Monitoring</td>
<td>Enables early identification and remedy of system problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managed Internet Services</td>
<td>Provides fast, bulletproof Internet connectivity via the TexasNAP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managed load balancing</td>
<td>Promotes consistent availability of data, especially during demand surges</td>
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The Results

Today, more than 99% of Birkman’s clients tap into The Birkman Method through BirkmanDirect. With Data Foundry as its corporatedata center outsourcing partner, Birkman’s IT infrastructure now has the redundancy, security and reliability to ensure that:

• Clients have continuous access to BirkmanDirect, and
• Clients never need to worry about the integrity of Birkman questionnaire data.

“It’s been nearly two years since we started working with Data Foundry, and we’re still as impressed with them as we were on day one,” Martin said. “Data Foundry is available at any hour, day or night. They’re proactive, unquestionably reliable and cost effective.

“Data Foundry’s specialists worked directly with our team to ensure a smooth transition of Birkman’s servers to the Houston data center – and accomplished this well within our pressing deadline,” said Martin. “They did their homework regarding our needs, answered our questions, provided detailed operational schedules and were available throughout the entire process.”

About Data Foundry

Data Foundry is a privately held company headquartered in Austin, Texas that provides data center colocation, disaster recovery and managed services for enterprise customers across a variety of industries including energy, healthcare and financial services. The company’s premier data centers are supported by experienced onsite technicians, security staff and customer support 24 X 7 X 365. Founded in 1994, Data Foundry was one of the first 50 Internet Service Providers in the United States. Today, Data Foundry owns and operates purpose-built, carrier-neutral data centers in Texas and operates a global network with colocation presences for deployments worldwide. For more information, visit www.datafoundry.com or call 1.888.839.2794.