

CASE STUDY

Case Study: Red Gold Tomatoes



Challenge

Red Gold needed to find a partner that could help them cover IT responsibilities like systems administration, security, and disaster recovery while keeping their IBM i infrastructure on premises.

Selection Criteria

- Broadest coverage at the best price
- Deep bench of IBM i talent
- Long-term partnership potential

Platform

IBM i

Results

- IT headcount kept level
- Better disaster preparedness
- Modernized security approach
- Improved Monitoring and Alerting

For four generations, the Red Gold family has been working with local farm families to grow the highest-quality, best-tasting tomatoes in the world. Started in 1942 by a father and daughter coming to the aid of their country by supplying food for the troops, Red Gold is now the largest privately held tomato processor in the United States.

The Challenge

As Red Gold's operations grew and IT became more complex, Red Gold business leaders knew they needed to take a different approach to managing their IT infrastructure. Red Gold is located in rural Indiana, about an hour north of Indianapolis. The area is known for its rich, fertile soil and long growing season. It's not known for its internet connectivity. So migrating mission critical applications to the cloud wasn't an option for the enterprise.

Red Gold's IBM i systems were central to their operations as these systems housed their Infor ERP system and other mission-critical applications. The limited availability of qualified systems administration talent presented challenges as well. As Brian White, Sr. Manager of Applications and Product Management, explained, "For some time now, IBM i talent has become increasingly harder to come by. We had lots of people on our IT staff with responsibility for some component of the IBM i system administration, but no one full time."

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The Solution

Red Gold was already using a third-party service provider to manage their SQL Server database remotely, so partnering with a managed services provider for their IBM i systems seemed like the way to go. “Adding headcount was not in our plan. We wanted to make sure we chose a partner that had a deep bench, so we didn’t have to worry about maintaining those skills in house,” said White.

The organization considered three to four different providers before selecting Connectria to manage their IBM i systems remotely. “Connectria was easy to work with. We knew what was covered and what wasn’t. And, we didn’t feel like we were going to get nickel and dimed every time we asked them for something,” said Jeff Goltz, Software Development Manager at Red Gold. “Our remote management partnership with Connectria allows us to focus on the things that move the ball forward for our business.”

Ultimately, Red Gold partnered with Connectria for day-to-day system administration tasks as well as bringing the managed service provider in to strengthen their IT security and disaster recovery planning.

The Results

With Connectria managing their systems remotely, Red Gold hasn’t had to add any new talent to their in-house staff. In addition, tasks that had been cumbersome in the past are now much easier. According to Goltz, “We’ve gone through several operating system upgrades since working with Connectria. They’ve all been short, sweet, and simple. Connectria does these upgrades all the time, so we don’t even think twice about them.”

Red Gold is no stranger to disaster either. In the early 1900s, on three separate occasions, the original cannery that became Red Gold was destroyed by fires and a tornado. They know how important it is to have a comprehensive disaster recovery plan. “We had a disaster recovery plan before bringing in Connectria, but since partnering with them, we’ve become more disciplined in our approach. We’ve also been able to broaden the number of people internally who understand what needs to be done in the event of a disaster,” said White.



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Thankfully, nothing severe has happened in recent years, but one incident did put Connectria to the test. Almost four years ago, Red Gold's disaster recovery IBM i was destroyed during a move. Connectria stepped in and worked with Red Gold's IBM business partner to procure a temporary server. Then they installed that server and quickly restored the necessary data to minimize the organization's exposure to not having a mirrored environment.

While Connectria was chosen for their deep bench of IBM i talent, Red Gold's IT managers also appreciate the stability of the Connectria team. They've worked with one system engineer for practically the entire time they've been partners with Connectria. They also have an account manager who has been with them just as long with whom they have monthly meetings to review the relationship.

Like many modern manufacturing enterprises, Red Gold takes the philosophy of continuous improvement seriously. "We've been working with Connectria since 2013, and they've embraced our approach to continuous improvement," said White. "When we identify an issue, we work together to address it and more importantly how to prevent it from occurring again. Connectria is very proactive when it comes to identifying potential improvements. That's very important to us."

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Moving forward, the company has ambitious plans to modernize IT, including its ERP stack. White isn't concerned. "I'm grateful to have a partner like Connectria watching our back and making sure we still have all the bases covered while our internal team focuses on the modernization and learning new skills."



About RedGold

Red Gold Tomatoes has been passionate about one thing above all for over 75 years: to provide the freshest, best tasting tomato products in the world. Since 1942, four generations of the Reichart family have worked with local family farms to sustainably grow tomatoes with love and care, as only a family farm can do. Today, we're proud to help you turn everyday meals into delicious family favorites.

For more information visit
www.RedGoldFoods.com

About Connectria

From Fortune 100 enterprises to medium and small businesses, Connectria provides managed cloud, managed services, and compliant cloud security solutions to more than 1,000 global customers. Working as an extension of each customer's IT team, we deliver technology-agnostic solutions consistently, with depth and breadth of engineering expertise, scalable solutions, and speed to market. Our "No Jerks Allowed®" philosophy includes flexible terms, straight-forward pricing, and custom solutions. With a culture based on integrity and an unwavering employee commitment to treating every customer with a relentless focus on satisfaction, it's easy to do business with Connectria.



Connect with us today

Talk to one of our IT advisors by calling **800.781.7820** or reaching out to us by email: sales@connectria.com.

