



ACECOMPUTERS
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Seamless Build for Air Force Mission Planning

“The bottom line is that I remember talking to our Air Force contact after this was all over and I thanked him for the faith he had in us from the beginning. He said it was a no-brainer because it was the best machine at the best price with the best service.”

Mitch Hanson, Area Sales Director, Ace Computers

Their Challenge

Located in Illinois, about 300 miles southwest of Chicago, Scott Air Force Base is one of the top strategic Air Force bases in the U.S. With its primary mission global mobility, the base commands and controls all logistics of the U.S. military in air, over land and across the sea. So it's no surprise that when the base's Mission Planning Organization, Air Mobility Command (AMC), needed to replace nearly 1,000 workstations in critical aircraft, they looked for a custom computer builder with a reputation for quality, cost-effective products, and impeccable service.

Mitch Hanson, Area Sales Director for Ace Computers, explained, “This project centers on mission planning—you can think of it as air traffic control for about 1/3 of the Air Force. Officers are sitting in front of these computers tracking Air Force planes all over the world 24/7. These computers are used on planes by the pilots in conjunction with satellite communications. It's very complex, but we knew if we made any mistakes a plane could crash into a mountain and lives would be lost.”

Since Mission Planning ordered so many workstations (963) they expected outstanding computer performance *and* a competitive price. The specifications required leading-edge workstation technology but also required legacy (older) components that are difficult to find in large quantities.

“Most builders don't want to deal with legacy components,” Mitch said. “They are difficult to order and there are long lead times. It wasn't that easy to get some of those components and most technology suppliers aren't willing to put in the time and effort it takes.”

Our Solution

Many of the planes the Air Force deploys are decades old, but still in excellent condition---they just need to be updated from time-to-time. To make the same technology upgrades that Ace Computers accomplished, the plane's manufacturer would have charged significantly more.

Ace Computers took advantage of their considerable in-house expertise to meet (and in many cases exceed) technical requirements, warranty and support requirements, and specialized packaging and labeling requirements. The end result was the best overall technical solution at the best price.

The specific product was Ace Computers' LogiCAD Workstation (a high-end Xeon-based workstation) configured to meet all technical requirements including incorporating legacy components. There were also custom multiple labeling requirements that needed to be met and custom user and installation guides that needed to be created. Ace Computers used a system board that optimized their ability to support the Air Force's legacy systems and incorporated a high-quality CPU and discrete video that exceeded the minimum requirements while staying within budget. “Due to the fact that we worked with one supplier for the case, motherboard, and video card the system compatibility is unsurpassed,” Mitch said.



As with most builds of this size, there were some challenges that required Ace Computers' engineers to think outside the box and draw on their experience. They had to customize a workstation that met all of Mission Planning's very specific requirements. They also had to support legacy technology (i.e. PCMCIA / PC Card and SCSI adapters). "The process of wiring the systems was very time-consuming, but necessary," Mitch said. "One of the things that Ace Computers is known for is not cutting corners—ensuring quality no matter how much time it takes."

The pre-shipping inspection was seamless. Phil Holeman, Mission Planning Systems Hardware Manager, Scott AFB, remarked that it was one of the best inspections he has ever conducted. "The pre-shipping inspection went perfectly. We did not note any discrepancies. While there was one defective PCMCIA reader, they fixed it on the spot. I expect this will continue to be a successful partnership."

For Mission Planning and any other projects where reliability is key, service is extremely important. Mitch explained, "In making their decision, Mission Planning looked not only at the end products but service and support for 5 years. This means that the hardware we build for them must be reliable. I spent a lot of time going over the support logistics with Phil because he was understandably adamant about it."

Their Success

As with all of their clients, Ace Computers provided and continues to provide phone and Web-based support and technical resolutions within 72 hours or less of the initiation of the warranty claim. They also provide international support and warranty service. Ace Computers has weekly conference calls with the client to update them on the status of the project, any compatibility issues, component availability issues, etc. In addition, they have additional conference calls with the client as needed.



"They won the award with a superior product and a competitive price," Phil said. "Based on the work they have already done for us, we would be confident making additional purchases from Ace Computers. And because we are very pleased with the products they've built for us, we would be happy to recommend them to others."



The bottom line, according to Mitch is, "It doesn't matter if it's Ace Computers or HP, when a customer is looking to pick up a new source for something that is mission critical it needs to perform up to specifications, be competitively priced, and be backed up by excellent service. I remember talking to Phil after this was all over and I thanked him for the faith he had in us from the beginning and he said it was a no-brainer because it was the best machine at the best price with the best service."

Ace Computers' LogiCAD Workstation

LogiCAD workstations from Ace Computers are custom configured to each client's individual needs. Offering solutions from 1 to 4 CPUs and with up to 8 GPU's in a single system, custom configurations are nearly unlimited. Options include rack or tower-based solutions and remote access engineering workstations using PCoIP technology,

About Ace Computers

Multiple award-winning Ace Computers is a Woman-Owned Small Business custom technology systems builder and reseller for the public sector as well as the commercial sector. It has been an industry leader since 1983. In addition to some of the finest academic institutions in the U.S., long-term clients include the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Department of Defense. Ace Computers builds custom technology with the same components that top manufacturers use without the premium price. Its principal, recognized industry expert John Samborski is an alumnus of Intel's prestigious board of advisors. In addition to its Greater Chicago headquarters, Ace Computers has locations in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Idaho. To contact Ace Computers, call 1-877-223-2667 or 1-847-952-6900 or visit www.acecomputers.com.

About Scott Air Force Base

Located in Illinois, about 300 miles southwest of Chicago, Scott Air Force Base is one of the top strategic Air Force bases in the U.S. Its primary mission is global mobility. The base commands and controls all logistics of the U.S. military in air, over land and across the sea. Scott AFB also supplies forces to theater combatant commanders. The base is operated by the 375th Air Mobility Wing and is also home to the Air Force Reserve Command's 932nd Airlift Wing and the Illinois Air National Guard's 126th Air Refueling Wing.

Links

Scott Air Force Base
www.scott.af.mil

Ace Computers Worldwide Support and Service – US Based

Contact your Ace Account Representative to discuss the best options for warranty coverage, maintenance and post-warranty support. Ace offers custom solutions, including taking advantage of your local IT staff, to reach the lowest total cost of ownership in the industry.

Ace OEM Branding and Customization Program

Ace Computers can customize any system, provide a bezel with your custom logo, and implement other custom features including BIOS splash screens and custom packaging. Get the look and feel you want. For more information, contact your Ace Account Representative.

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