

New Technology and Services to Enhance the Business Value of Your IT Network

Progent's IT Connection Newsletter

Progent

Highlights

- Wireless technology now plays a vital role in small business information networks
- Progent's Enterprise Team offers expert consulting plus local support for Northern California branch offices
- Microsoft continues to improve security for IT networks, and Progent can help you benefit from the latest tools
- Microsoft Office 2003 helps streamline the way your business communicates and collaborates
- Free, popular network monitoring tools plus the latest Microsoft software can optimize system performance and availability

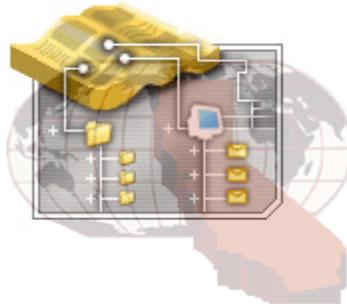
Wireless Consulting Services SERVICE FOCUS Cover a Broad Spectrum of IT Solutions

Progent's **Wireless Consulting Services** offer small businesses a fast, affordable way to select and integrate the latest wireless technology. Few in-house IT staffs have the expertise to keep track of the fast-changing world of wireless products and services, and even fewer have the field experience to cut through the hype in order to identify and integrate optimal connectivity solutions.

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Progent's Enterprise Team IT SOLUTIONS Offers On-site Expertise for Branch Offices



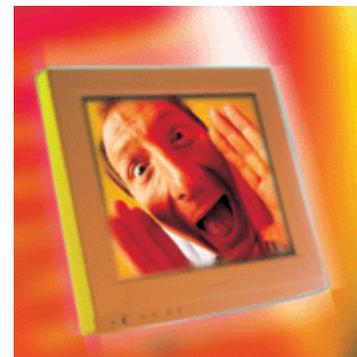
Although Progent's specialty is to provide IT support for small businesses who have few internal IT resources, Progent also regularly works with large companies by providing world-class experience in deploying key Microsoft technologies including Active Directory, Exchange Server 2000 and 2003, SQL Server and Systems

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Improving Network Security: NETWORK SECURITY New Security Solutions from Microsoft

Because attacks on computer security are steadily growing in sophistication and frequency, it is crucial to protect your small business network by staying up to date on security technology. Microsoft has devoted significant resources to improving the security of operating system software, so the heart of the IT security strategy for any small business should be to deploy the latest production releases of

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Microsoft's Office 2003 Enhances Productivity

NEW PRODUCTS

Microsoft Office 2003 Overview



Microsoft's Office 2003 suite addresses major productivity challenges in small businesses by providing better visibility into business information. The Standard Edition includes Microsoft's four core office productivity programs:

- Outlook 2003
- Word 2003
- Excel 2003
- PowerPoint 2003

The Small Business Edition includes Publisher 2003, and the Professional Edition adds Access 2003.

Office 2003 offers improvements over previous versions of the Office suite in four key areas:

- Information management and control
- Business processes
- Communication and collaboration
- Personal productivity

Some of the significant changes of Office 2003 include:

- Broader support for Extensible Markup Language (XML). Both Word 2003 and Excel 2003 offer XML schemas you can customize for using data, smart documents and programmable task panes (such as the Research task pane).
- Greater integration with SharePoint Services. This provides increased collaboration through team sites such as Document Workspaces, Meeting Workspaces and other collaboration tools.
- A new version of Microsoft Outlook with an improved Reading Pane, email conversation thread condensers, and cached email store.

To get all the benefits of Office 2003 requires Exchange Server 2003 and Windows Server 2003. Exchange Server 2003 works with Outlook 2003 to provide a secure end-to-end messaging solution available on a variety of devices. Exchange 2003 also offers enhanced security and a superior messaging infrastructure. By adding smart clients and collaborative servers to Microsoft Windows Server 2003, your business gets easier, more secure, and more reliable access to individual and shared information such as team documents. Progent's expert consultants can help your business upgrade to Exchange Server 2003 and Windows Server 2003.

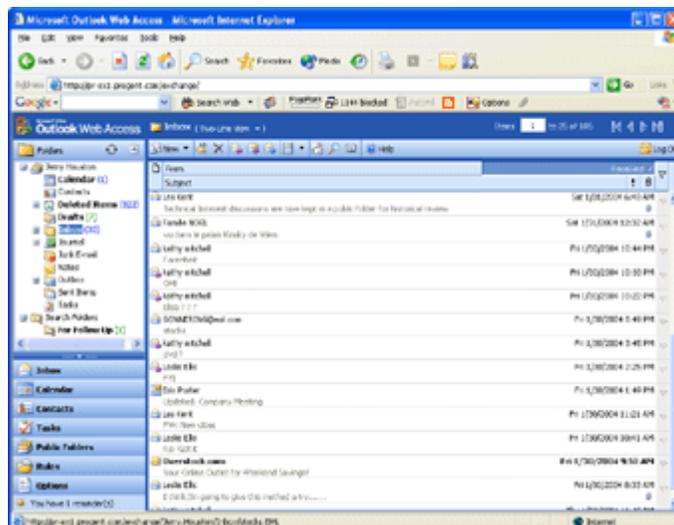
Microsoft Outlook 2003

Outlook 2003 provides an integrated solution for managing and organizing email messages, tasks, schedules, notes, contacts and other information. Innovations include a Junk E-Mail Filter to prevent unwanted messages from cluttering your Inbox.

With Outlook 2003 you no longer have to keep all your email messages in your Inbox to remind you of action items. Instead, you can use Quick Flags to flag messages by priority or by time sensitivity and find them in any folder. Outlook 2003 can also automatically organize messages and receive reminders. Enhanced Rules and Alerts organize incoming email messages according to your preferences and can automatically trigger alerts to remind you when tasks are due or meetings are about to begin.

You can access shared team calendars in Outlook 2003 and view multiple calendars side by side in order to make scheduling meetings faster and more convenient.

The new Outlook Web Access interface is dramatically superior to previous versions in terms of both speed and functionality. Authorized users can instantly access a full-featured and secure version of Outlook 2003 from any web-connected computer running a current version of Internet Explorer (see sample screen below):



with Improved Collaboration and Security

Microsoft Word 2003



Microsoft Word 2003 includes important improvements in collaboration, information sharing and information access.

Word 2003 lets you designate certain sections of your document to be modified by specific people to protect how your document is modified and reduce conflicting comments. You can prevent reviewers from making

changes unless they turn revision marks on, or make the entire document read-only with key portions that can be modified only by specific individuals. This also protects your document's formatting and style.

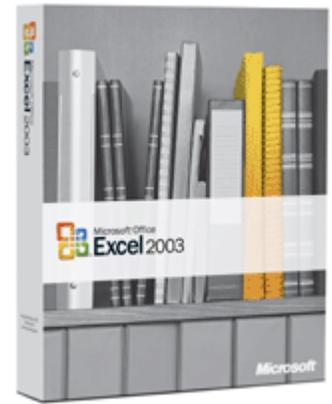
Word 2003 supports both the Extensible Markup Language (XML) file format and custom schemas, providing the basis for building solutions to business problems such as data reporting, publishing, and submitting data to business processes. Word 2003 documents can be saved in a native XML file format which can be manipulated and searched using any program that can process industry standard XML. With Office Professional Edition 2003, you can also use customized XML formats — or schemas — to enable easier and more advanced information creation, capture, exchange and reuse.

Smart tags in Word 2003 are more flexible. You can associate smart tags with specific content and have the appropriate smart tag appear when you point to the associated words. When an item is recognized, Word provides the user with a Smart Tag that makes it possible to obtain additional information from the Web or other Office applications.

To save time when you do research, the Research task pane brings electronic dictionaries, thesauri and online research sites into Word 2003 so that you can quickly find information and incorporate it into your documents without having to leave Word.

Progent's Experts Team can help you incorporate Word's powerful features into the workflow of your business, assist with designing templates and building macros, or provide 1-on-1 training to keep your business up to speed on Word 2003.

Microsoft Excel 2003



Excel 2003 enables you to turn data into information with powerful tools to analyze, communicate and share results. Excel 2003 can help you work better in teams and also protect and control access to your work. In addition, you can work with industry-standard Extensible Markup Language (XML) data to make it easier to connect Excel 2003 to business processes.

If you have Microsoft Windows Server 2003 and are running Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services, you can save Excel 2003 spreadsheets to shared workspaces where other team members can get the latest version and save task lists, related files, links and member lists.

If you have Microsoft Windows Server 2003 and are running Microsoft Windows Rights Management Services (RMS), you can use information rights management (IRM) functionality to protect company assets by preventing recipients from forwarding, copying or printing important spreadsheets. You can grant others permission to view, review or modify your spreadsheet, and you can set an expiration date after which others cannot view or change it.

Excel 2003, like Word 2003, can read data in any customer-defined XML schema without reformatting. You can analyze and manipulate XML data sources using charts, tables or graphs. Excel 2003 spreadsheets can be saved in a native XML file format which can be manipulated and searched using any program that can process industry standard XML.

Progent's Experts Team can help you create state-of-the-art Excel-based applications, create automated business reports using Crystal Reports or FRx, or provide 1-on-1 training in the latest features of Excel 2003.

Infrastructure Support

Progent's consultants can help your business build and maintain a secure, robust network and communications infrastructure to support Office 2003-based solutions. For more information, call Progent at **1-800-993-9400**.

Free Network Monitoring Tools Complement Microsoft's Network and Server Monitoring Products

INFRASTRUCTURE


Network monitoring typically consists of observing a network's resource utilization in order to identify data traffic bottlenecks or troubleshoot hardware or software problems. Microsoft offers several tools that can be used for network monitoring, and these can be economically supplemented by powerful free software that runs under Windows or Linux.

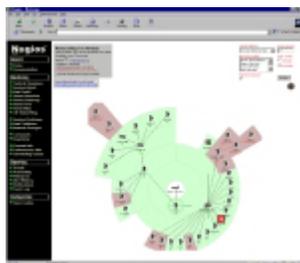
Network Monitor, also known as NetMon, is a utility included with Microsoft's Systems Management Server (SMS). SMS is intended primarily for change and configuration management, but you can use NetMon to capture and analyze network traffic patterns.

Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM), which is intended for monitoring various application servers across a network, can also track the usage of other network devices such as printers and routers.

Both SMS and MOM are useful in providing insight into problems that affect network throughput and reliability, but for more in-depth network monitoring capability engineers often use two popular, powerful and free tools: Nagios and MRTG.

Nagios

Nagios is a host and service monitor that operates under Windows or Linux. The monitoring daemon runs intermittent checks on hosts and services you specify using external plug-ins which return status information to Nagios. When problems are encountered, the daemon can send notifications to administrative contacts in a variety of ways (email, instant message, SMS, etc.). Current status information, historical logs and reports can be accessed via a web browser.



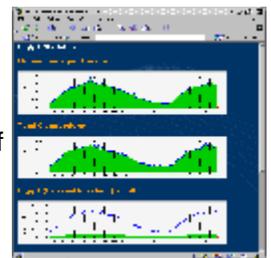
Some of the major features of Nagios include:

- Monitoring of network services (SMTP, POP3, HTTP, NNTP, PING, etc.)
- Monitoring of host resources (processor load, disk and memory usage, running processes, log files, etc.)

- Ability to define network host hierarchy, allowing detection of and distinction between hosts that are down vs. hosts that are unreachable
- Contact notifications when service or host problems occur and get resolved (via email, pager or other user-defined method)
- Ability to define event handlers to be run during service or host events for proactive problem resolution
- Support for implementing redundant and distributed monitoring servers
- External command interface that allows on-the-fly modifications to be made to the monitoring and notification behavior through the use of event handlers, the web interface, and third-party applications
- Retention of host and service status across program restarts
- Scheduled downtime for suppressing host and service notifications during periods of planned outages
- Web interface for viewing current network status, notification and problem history, log file, etc.
- Authorization scheme that allows you to restrict what users can see and do from the web interface

MRTG

The Multi Router Traffic Grapher (MRTG) is a tool to monitor the traffic load on network links. Compatible with Windows or Linux, MRTG reads the traffic counters of network routers and generates web pages which provide a live visual representation of this traffic.



MRTG lets you graph the bandwidth in and out of any SNMP-enabled network device. This includes servers, routers and switches. You can use the resulting information to identify network bottlenecks or trouble spots.

Information you can graph with MRTG include:

- Bandwidth in and out in bits or bytes per second
- Connection rate (in connections per second)
- Bandwidth in an out of a particular VIP/virtual server or node/real server
- Total number of concurrent sessions

Contact Progent for Network Monitoring Expertise

Progent's network monitoring experts are skilled in using a variety of network monitoring tools in order to help you repair or optimize your network infrastructure. For more information, visit Progent's web site at www.progent.com or call Progent at 1-800-993-9400.

Progent's Wireless Consulting Services

(Continued from page 1)

Progent's extensive background both as an integrator and consumer of wireless technology makes it possible to offer expert consulting support for a broad range of wireless applications including:

- Mobile connectivity
- In-building networking
- Building-to-building bridging

Mobile Connectivity



A large and growing array of portable devices are available to connect mobile workers wirelessly to vital applications such as email or to enable



remote wireless access to the corporate information network. Products such as the RIM BlackBerry line of wireless handhelds or cell phone cards that act as wireless modems for notebook computers can dramatically enhance on-the-road productivity. However, choosing the appropriate devices for your business and integrating them securely and efficiently into your network can be challenging without expert help.

Progent's consultants can save your business time and money by using their wireless expertise to help you select and configure mobile connectivity solutions that make sense for your business. Progent can also optimize your IT infrastructure so that mobile data devices work better. For example, Progent can help you migrate to Microsoft Exchange 2003 Server, which significantly improves support for mobile workers by offering a broader Web Outlook feature set, Outlook 2003 performance improvements via MAPI compression, lower latency for wireless modems, HTTP access from Outlook 2003, plus HTML mobile phone browser support.

In-building Networking

If you want to set up a high-performance



wireless network based on any version of 802.11 (WiFi) technology, Progent's Cisco-certified consultants can help you build a solution that is secure, reliable, manageable and easy to expand. Progent can recommend and integrate access points, wireless LAN client adapters, bridges, antennas and accessories. Progent can also propose and implement a wireless security strategy to deny intruders access to your wireless network or its data.



Building-to-Building Bridging



License-free wireless bridges offer a quick and affordable way to establish secure, high-speed data connections between buildings. This can eliminate the cost of an extra leased line, provide an emergency redundant communication link, or act as an inex-

pensive data backhaul. By reducing installation costs and eliminating recurring fees associated with standard T1, E1 or DS-3 lines, wireless bridges can often pay for themselves within a few months. Data rates for various wireless bridges range from 1.1 Mbps to a gigabit, and distance between buildings can exceed 40 miles.

Progent offers expert wireless consulting to help you plan, implement and maintain point-to-point and point-to-multipoint wireless building-to-building bridging.

Wireless Case Study

An independent school system in Northern California occupies two campuses, about 1.5 miles apart, housing its elementary school and middle school. The sites are in the foothills, making line-of-sight possible.

The school requires a link between the campuses for data traffic and for Voice over IP capability for the phone system used by the administration offices and classrooms. The school considered a dedicated T1 or Frame Relay line, but the equipment expense and ongoing subscription costs were too high for a small private school. To save money, they decided to go wireless.

The school's original 802.11b solution was too slow. The remote site complained of network sluggishness and dropped or fuzzy phone calls. Progent assessed the wireless link and found that it was saturated. To make matters worse, neighbors were causing interference with the school's publicly available access point.

Progent proposed Proxim's Tsunami 60Mbps wireless bridge devices. This inexpensive solution offers security, high speed, plus immunity from 802.11 interference. Progent installed the link in about one day, requiring no downtime during business hours. The school noticed immediate improvements. Network performance improved 10 times, phone problems went away, and network latency decreased from 240 to 40 milliseconds. The Proxim solution also provided the school with a hot-swap redundant back-up wireless link between sites.

For more information, call Progent at **1-800-993-9400**.

Progent's Enterprise Team Offers Expert Consulting and On-site Support for Branch Offices

(Continued from page 1)

Management Server. For national or global enterprises with branch offices in Northern California, the San Francisco Bay Area or the California Central Valley, Progent has assembled an Enterprise Team with extensive experience acting as a seamless local extension of corporate IT management.

Progent's Enterprise Team

The consulting experts in Progent's Enterprise Team can help large businesses to plan, deploy and support major rollouts of key Microsoft technology. Progent has worked with some of the world's largest companies to integrate mission-critical IT solutions based on Microsoft technology and provides ongoing local consulting services and on-site technical support to branch offices located throughout Northern California.

Branch Office Support

Progent's services to keep branch offices productive include server hardware and software upgrades, HQ coordinated migration projects, desktop OS and application standardization, desktop upgrades, WAN support and upgrades, and detailed service documentation. Progent also offers on-site troubleshooting, trouble ticket initialization, and support coordination for multi-vendor WAN, VPN and ISP links.

Active Directory Help

Progent's Microsoft-certified Enterprise Team includes experts in designing, deploying and troubleshooting complex Active Directory (AD) installations and can address common AD issues such as replication problems, multi-domain partition configurations, corrupted AD objects, clean-up of legacy beta software configuration objects in production AD environments, and repair of failed installations of AD and AD-integrated applications. Progent also offers help with "expert only" AD tools such as ADSIEDIT, NTDSUTIL, DCDIAG and NETDIAG.

Exchange Expertise

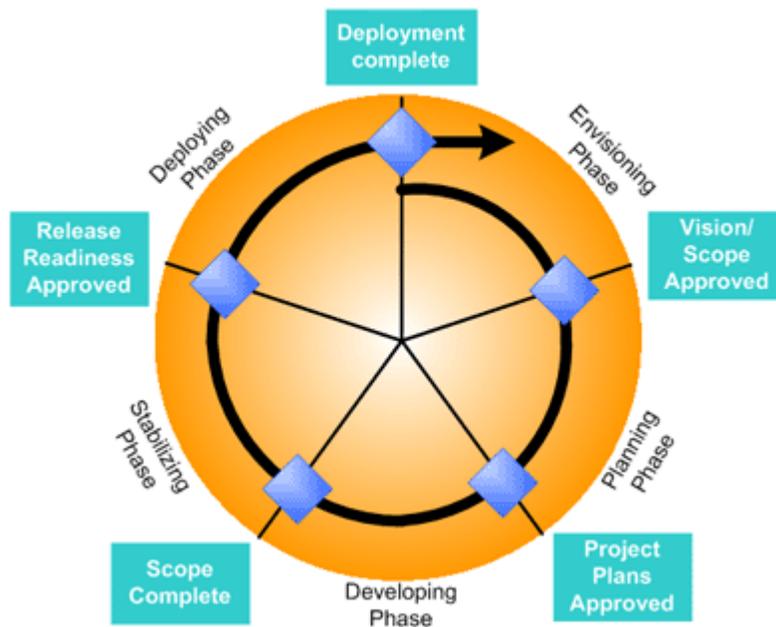
Since Microsoft Exchange Server's first release in 1994, Progent's MCSE-certified engineers have performed hundreds of successful Exchange migration projects. Progent's experts have helped some of world's largest corporations with architecture, deployment and troubleshooting Exchange environments. Progent's Enterprise Team has overseen migrations of Exchange environments with thousands of users and dozens of servers.

Progent is experienced working with complex Exchange environments including enterprises with multiple sites, servers and data centers. Progent can manage challenging projects such as Exchange upgrades in branch offices with no remote resources, multi-language environments, consolidation of multiple Exchange organizations into a single unified Exchange 2000/2003 system, full re-implementation, migration/integration of legacy email systems into Exchange, server consolidation, and non-disruptive server rebuilds and migrations.

Project Methodology

For enterprise projects, Progent uses a phased approach based on defined milestones in order to meet budgetary, scheduling and engineering goals while minimizing business disruption. Progent's methodology utilizes project management standards based on the best practices defined by the Microsoft Solutions Framework (see graphic) and includes requirements definition, design and architecture proposals, pilots, design tuning, and implementation. All phases are documented to provide

a detailed description of technical services delivered and to assist in ongoing system maintenance.



Contact Progent for Expert Enterprise Consulting

If you are looking for high-end Microsoft or Cisco consulting expertise or if you need professional local support for a branch office, call Progent at **800-993-9400** or send email to EnterpriseTeam@Progent.com.

Improving Network Security: New Security Solutions from Microsoft

(Continued from page 1)

Microsoft operating systems and to stay current with security patches.

Windows Small Business Server 2003 and Windows XP Professional incorporate new or enhanced security solutions that can help keep your network safe from virus attacks, malicious hacking, and unauthorized use. Many of the latest security technologies from Microsoft, such as IIS Lockdown Wizard and Urlscan, are free downloads or are included in Windows Server 2003 and Exchange Server 2003. All you have to do is initiate them and configure them properly.

Windows Small Business Server 2003

Windows Small Business Server 2003 provides many important new security features and improves on the security features originally included in Windows 2000 Server. These include:

- Internet Connection Firewall
- Secure IAS/RADIUS Server
- Secure Wireless and Ethernet LANs
- Software Restriction Policies
- Security Improvements for Servers on Ethernet and Wireless LANs
- Increased Web Server Security
- Encrypting the Offline Files Database
- FIPS-compliant, Kernel-mode, Crypto Module
- New Digest Security Package
- System Security Improvements
- Credential Manager
- Certificate Autoenrollment and Autorenewal

Windows XP Professional

Windows XP Professional offers desktop computers the best security, privacy and security management features Windows has ever provided. These include:

- Corporate Security
- Controlled Network Access
- Simple Sharing
- Blank Password Restrictions
- Encrypting File System
- Certificate Services
- Credential Management
- Fast User Switching
- Personal Privacy
- Internet Connection Sharing
- Internet Connection Firewall
- Software Restriction Policies
- Internet Protocol Security

How Progent Can Help

Progent's certified security experts can help you realize the benefits of Microsoft's latest security technology by performing an assessment of your existing network. Progent will follow up with recommendations for software upgrades, infrastructure changes, and business process improvements. Progent can also help configure your system and application software to match the level of security and performance your business requires.



Some of the security services available from Progent's consulting professionals include:

- Configuring and updating antivirus software
- Setting up firewalls and auditing firewall rules
- Periodically assessing Information System Security
- Critical update management using Microsoft's Software Update Services
- Securing Windows Server 2003 with Policies and Templates
- Implementing Virtual Private Networks (VPNs)
- Deploying Secure Wireless Networks
- Upgrading Windows NT 4.0 Domains to Windows Server 2003
- Installing and configuring network intrusion software to detect and correct security weaknesses or breakdowns before they cause you to lose productivity
- Clean up and repair services in case of successful attacks from viruses or hackers

Call Progent for Security Help

For small businesses unable to afford in-house experts who stay current on the latest security technology, Progent's consultants represent an easy and affordable way to keep your IT network up to date and safe. Progent can also provide a CISSP-certified consultant for a comprehensive assessment of your network security.

For more information, visit the Network Security section of Progent's web site at www.progent.com.

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*Helping small businesses build
and maintain IT networks
based on Microsoft technology*

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