

## Clever Local Owner Unveils How He Uses Technology As A Competitive Advantage

The Small Business Advantage that allows Halmar International to lower costs & complexity while increasing project profitability.

Rapidly deploy field offices and managing everything technology.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Halmar International

- Heavy Construction, Design & Build, Project Development, Project Management
- Specializing in Transportation—Bridges, Tunnels, Highways, Airports, and Subway Systems.
- Pearl River, NY
- 55 Employees

#### Business Challenge

- Meet strict technology requirements for city and state construction projects.
- Reduce time needed to provide application & network access to new construction sites.
- Support networks for the duration of a construction project that fit budget constraints..
- Increase communications between field offices and the central office.

#### Solution

- ZBRELLA Small Business Advantage Plan provides an entire IT Department for less than a full-time IT Professional.



#### Business Challenge

Halmar International was founded in 1962 by Howard Wein, Al DiLeo and Mike Malagiero. Halmar began as a construction company that specialized in labor and project management. Almost 50 years later, the company is one of the premier transportation contractors in New York State, building and repairing bridges, major highways, airports and even mass transit systems.

The heavy construction industry has changed drastically since 1962, specifically in standards, materials and methods. Another area that has come to have a significant impact on the entire business is technology. Today's massive transit construction projects require highly skilled engineers, project managers, estimators and a rock solid Information Technology infrastructure. Projects sites are dispersed throughout the state making it difficult to acquire services for

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Business Results

- Ability to rapidly provide Internet access, phone lines, computers, high-end printers and phone systems to both small and large job sites improves productivity and enables faster time to profitability.
- Exchange of information between headquarters and field offices helps maintain schedules and project information.

### Call to Action

- Take The 60 Day Challenge
- The 60 Day Challenge Takes the Mystery and Hard Work Out of Managing Technology, Lowering IT Costs and Keeping Your Computers Up and Running All Without Any Risk to You.
- <http://www.zbrella.com>

operations. Today, Halmar is one of the leading heavy construction companies in New York, with many major contracts such as the \$600M Alexander Hamilton Bridge Reconstruction Project. Such massive projects require the best possible information technology systems to operate efficiently, and the mobile nature of the construction operations presents some unusual challenges. Much of the construction takes place in remote areas where obtaining a wired Internet connection is a lengthy and expensive process, and the environments are harsh on hardware and difficult to support.

Application access and network operations are critical in this challenging environment. “Our project engineers are very demanding and require having access to applications and data onsite” says Mr. Larsen, Halmar’s CEO. “Our employees need the technology to be working to provide access to important project data otherwise we are losing thousands of dollars per hour.”

With the expense of housing an internal Information Technology Department or utilizing the services of large hardware providers with help desks on the other side of the planet, Mr. Larsen was looking for alternatives.

“ IT is the first in and the last out. We have 30 days to setup a fully operational field office, then rely on having efficient IT operations to reduce project costs, not increase them. ”

*—Chris Larsen, Owner and CEO of Halmar International*



## The Solution

Mr. Larsen was aware that Halmar was growing rapidly and required an entire IT department that would not only provide support but all the other functions that were crucial to Halmar's profitability and success. Procurement, vendor management, strategic planning, and business process management were essential functions Mr. Larsen was looking for in order to leverage the Information Technology as a competitive advantage. "At Halmar, IT is not a cost center; it is a viable piece of our competitive advantage over other construction companies and delivers value in dollars!"



Mr. Larsen knew that he wanted a local support company to cover all of Halmar International's technology needs because there was a need for tight integration and understanding of local business practices. After researching several solutions, Mr. Larsen had not found any that met his needs. Most support companies could not guarantee budgets, meet the rapid deployment schedule, or did not possess the business skills to adequately put technology in line with his business. "Technology is just a tool ..." The answer came when Mr. Larsen approached a Service Manager at ZBRELLA who described the Small Business Advantage Plan. The Small Business Advantage Plan provides a cost-effective, rapidly deployable, reliable, and always available dedicated local Information Technology Department that not only supported everything technology but also offers a dedicated Service Manager to help Halmar achieve its business goals, not technology goals, all for less than one full-time IT employee. The solution covers everything, no exceptions! The solution also provides a path for growth by adding services when needed and allowed Halmar International to only pay for it needed today, thereby preserving valuable cash.



After taking the 60 Day Challenge Mr. Larsen knew that he had found the answer. The company enlisted ZBRELLA to provide the Small Business Advantage Plan across all field sites, branch offices and the main office. The result was that all current employees and joint venture employees were provided with one number for support where they could actually talk to a human. There was 24/7 monitoring and support both remote and onsite, infrastructure software and backup servers were provided at no cost, there was a defined IT budget and a dedicated service team that Mr. Larsen could utilize to improve business operations. "It was the first time that we knew our IT budget 12, 24 and 36 months out", Mr. Larsen exclaimed.

For very large, multi-year projects, the Small Business Advantage Plan provides project estimating support during the bidding process. If the project is awarded then the Small Business Advantage Plan provides immediate network connectivity, site specific technology deployment within the first 30 days and supports the team for the remainder of the project.

## Business Results

The ability to accurately estimate and control costs is critical to Halmar International, “We are trying to accurately estimate technology costs for the duration of projects, usually several years out, and if we are wrong it directly affects profitability. While cautious of quality and safety, people are also looking at every cent,” says Mr. Larsen. The Small Business Advantage Plan helps Halmar International know the technology budget 3, 4 and 5 years out, establish reliable network communications faster and manage site operations more efficiently, resulting in a faster time to profitability and lower ongoing costs.

The company can establish field office networks according to strict technology guidelines very quickly because there is an entire technology department that is on the ground and knows how Halmar operates. “IT does not build bridges, IT runs the operation. We have field offices setup and running, connected to our main office within 30 days of winning a project,” says Mr. Larsen.

Once the field offices are established, ZBRELLA’s 24/7 monitoring, remote & onsite support, and dedicated Service Manager helps Halmar International maintain business operations while working hard to discover new ways to take advantage of technology for new competitive advantages.

ZBRELLA’s Uniquely Qualified Minds (Halmar International’s dedicated team) also helps Halmar increase its operations efficiency by supporting fast, easy communications between headquarters and the remote sites. Project managers receive critical communications and documents that help them maintain timetables and projects costs. With numerous projects ongoing, keeping works on schedule and construction moving along is critical.

The Small Business Advantage Plan also brings IT communications and support to smaller jobs, for which the time and expense of service was not justified in the past. Now these sites can easily be established, supported and retired while allowing Halmar to pay for services only when required. “The flexibility of paying for only what we use has allowed us to move to from Capital Expense model to a Operational Expense model providing us access to more cash.”



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### Next Steps

Halmar International now leverages ZBRELLA's Small Business Advantage Plan for all of its sites in New York as looks to achieve double digit growth this year (2009). "We will leverage ZBRELLA a lot over the next few years to keep one up on our competitors," says Mr. Larsen

### For More Information

To find out more about ZBRELLA's Small Business Advantage Plan and what it can do for your company, visit <http://www.zbrella.com> or call one of our Uniquely Qualified Minds by dialing (718) 355-9155.

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**Take the CHALLENGE**



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