

NEC Express5800/BladeServer

Case Study

GMO Hosting and Technologies, Inc.

(Former corporate name "Isle, Inc." has been changed as above in May 2003. Throughout the article below, however, they are referred to by the former name known at the time of

**Isle pioneers in providing licensed Windows® 2000 Server through server hosting service.
NEC Expresses5800/BladeServer makes it possible at affordable prices.**

System Overview	Background	Effects of	Future Prospects	Customer's Profile
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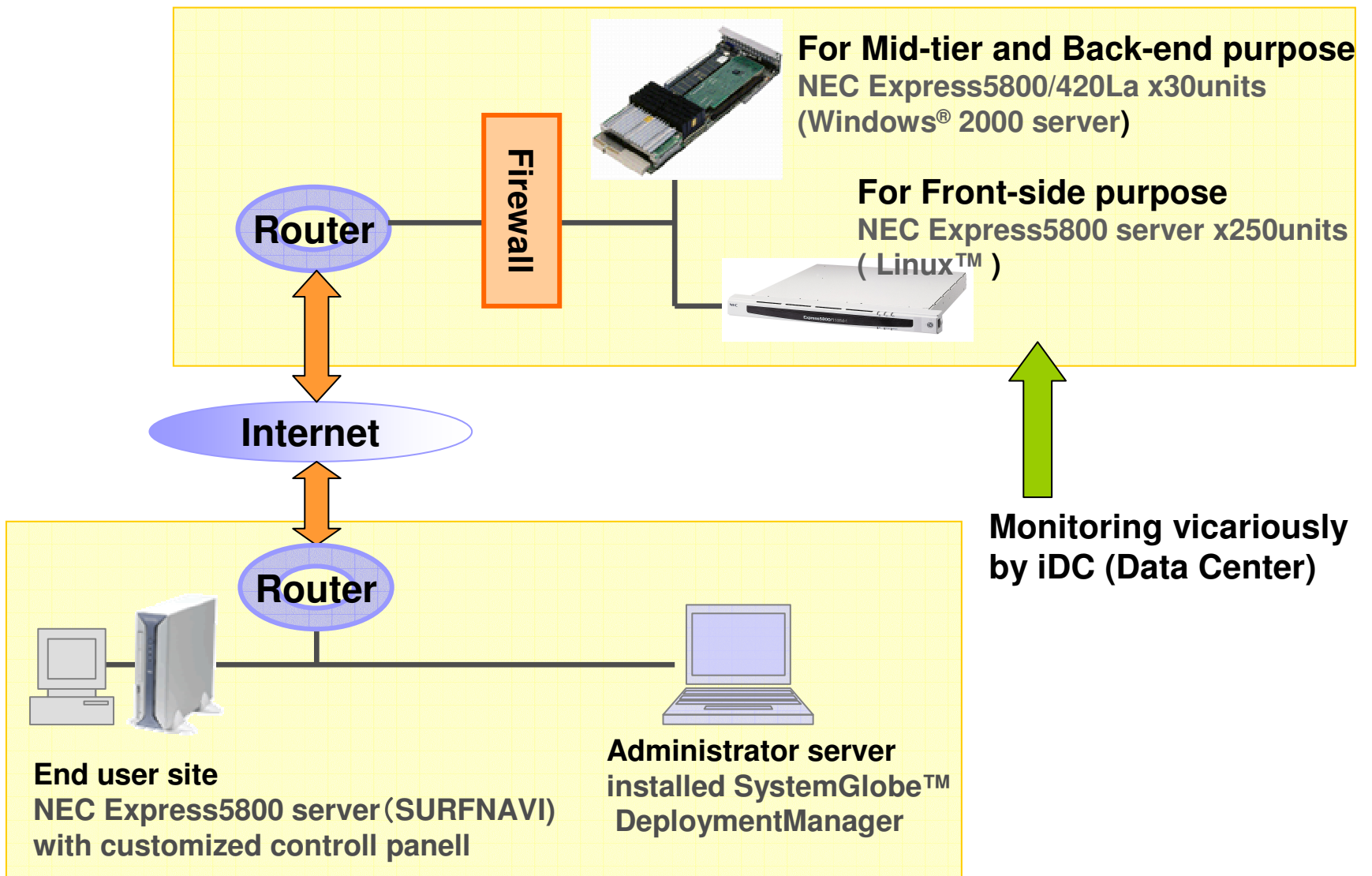
[System Overview](#)

Isle, Inc has been providing small and medium enterprises and SOHO businesspersons with a wide range of web-hosting services, such as low-cost shared servers and dedicated servers designed for high-end network business environments. In October 2002 Isle launched a new dedicated server service Private Server Hosting Service. The new service is combining the Managed Server Hosting*, which had been provided since the fall of 2001, and the Cobalt Server Hosting. As an outstanding feature seen for the first time in the industry, Isle offers rental-basis server hosting service with licensed Windows® 2000 Server installed. For this service, Express5800/BladeServer plays a key role with its unprecedented high-density mounting technology concentrating server functionality onto one board (blade). A location cost improvement, which is enabled by that high-density technology, is critical to their hosting service. Express5800/BladeServer however realizes not only the cost improvement but also a high level of flexibility of covering the front-end through back-end layers and capability of responding to unexpected system failures. Isle delivers customer enterprises "customer satisfaction and price satisfaction" that have significant importance in their business development. Facing intensifying competition in the hosting service industry, Isle offers the unique service with unrivaled strength in all of service, quality, functionality and price.

(*) "Managed Server Hosting" and the new "Private Server Hosting Service"

"Managed Server Hosting" is integrating the benefits of both shared servers and dedicated servers. Under the principle that "servers are dedicated to specific purposes while lines are shared for common use," Isle has been delivering easy-to-manage hosting service in the way their customers feel as if their host servers are located inside their offices. Along with that principle, Isle's latest "Private Server Hosting Service" supports diverse operating systems, including Windows® 2000 Server, and created a new recognition in the market. Furthermore, the new service is dramatically advanced in that taking into consideration the issues customer companies are facing and also server environments required for Internet businesses they are planning, Isle makes an optimum choice out of the varying service plans and

- Illustration of Private Server Hosting Service by Isle



- Windows is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the U.S.and other countries.
- Linux is a trademark of Linus Torvalds.

Background

To set the same prices for Windows® 2000 Server as for Linux, space cost reduction and simple manageability were critical.



Mr. Hiroyuki Tanaka
Manager of Project
Development Department
Isle, Inc.

Isle's hosting services are available at affordable prices starting at ¥1,900, and even small and medium enterprises no longer have to worry about monthly charges for their servers. Isle also stands out in the industry by the exceptionally high level of customer satisfaction they achieve, as explained by the customer coverage exceeding 30,000 and the withdrawal rate as low as 0.8%. As a leading server hosting provider, Isle's dedicated server service features the support for diverse operating systems, including Windows® 2000 Server, and delivers operability, manageability and serviceability as easily as for shared servers.

Currently among shared server users, there is a growing tendency to switch to dedicated servers and outsource self-owned server management to external hosting service providers. Mr. Hiroyuki Tanaka, Manager of Project Development Department, points out, "Between 2000 and 2001 the majority of our users called upon particular server performance, manufacturers and supported operating systems, but since about later in 2001 many of our customers have become more specific about their needed whole systems when using hosting service."



Mr. Yuichi Yamada
Marketing Manager, Sales
Department
Isle, Inc.

To address such diversifying needs of customer companies, Isle's Private Server Hosting Service offers the following three service categories according to the purposes customers have:

- * Standard (customized for user needs, such as RAID configuration)
- * Limited (Optimized for low-cost startup)
- * Solution (Packaged for specific issues and purposes)

The standard category has a lineup of services, one of which supports Windows® 2000 Server for lower than ¥70,000 per month. "From our own perspective as a web-hosting professional, we select the optimum dedicated server service from our extensive service choices based on customers' business purposes and budgets, and offer it faster than any other providers in our industry. We are proud of our success in doing this," says Mr. Yuichi Yamada, Marketing Manager of Sales Department. ASP is already in use among many of small and medium customer companies. It was therefore rather inevitable that Isle made additionally available Windows® 2000 Server on their rental-basis servers to meet service needs of such ASP users.

Isle pursues "customer satisfaction and price satisfaction" and never makes an exception for Windows™ 2000 Server. They set the monthly charges in the way to include the licensing fee for Microsoft and make the service available at the same price as for Linux servers. In doing this, Isle was the forerunner in the industry. Mr. Tanaka says, "We wanted to meet our customers' expectation that 'Isle can assure us server environments we need, yet for reasonable monthly charges.'" To address such an expectation, it was vital to review management costs underway. As the result, Isle chose Express5800/BladeServer with unprecedented high-density architecture concentrating server functions onto one board (CPU blade). The likely cost reduction through the space-saving architecture and the ease of manageability were key factors in their selection.

Effects

**Space efficiency is twice that of 1U server , so it cuts cost for rack space by half.
High expandability and reliability assuming unexpected failures underpin high-quality and stable hosting services.**



Ms. Emiko Okamoto
President's Office
Isle, Inc.

Express5800/BladeServer entered the blade server market in January 2002, earlier than any other servers of this kind from domestic leading server vendors. Comparing to other blade products, which only seek the high-density feature, Express5800/BladeServer delivers advanced reliability, functionality and scalability through its unprecedented high-density mounting technology, dual Intel® Pentium® III-S processors on a blade and hard disk drives accommodated not on the blade but in the slots inside an enclosure. Furthermore, Express5800/BladeServer not only responds quickly to any changes in customers' server management plans and varying needs for such RAID configuration as mirroring, but also enables troubleshooting only by replacing internal disks. "Express5800/BladeServer clears out almost all concerns over hosting servers that I can think of. While other server vendors only stress how many blades they can concentrate in 2U and 3U enclosures, NEC is far different from them in product concept. I was strongly convinced by NEC's architectural concept giving due consideration to unlikely failures," says Mr. Tanaka.

Express5800/BladeServer is also optimized for a broad range of processing from the application layer to back-end layer, other than the front-end. In the Private Server Hosting Service, Express5800/BladeServer with Windows® 2000 Server installed is assumed to play its major role in the middle layer and back-end layer while the front-end layer deploys Express5800/110Rc-1, Linux server developed by NEC exclusively for Isle in 2001. Through this server hosting system, Isle is able to manage internally constructed multiple server environments of their customer companies.

The space-saving enclosure improving location efficiency is another crucial feature. Comparing to 1U servers, the 3U enclosure containing six CPU blades doubles its space-efficiency and reduces the cost for rack space by half. This is one of the factors enabling Isle to deliver low-price services. In addition, ESMPRO/DeploymentManager, a software tool that comes standard on Express5800/BladeServer, greatly contributes to human resource reduction and management efficiency improvement, controls the ON/OFF status of each CPU blade and installs operating systems and applications through one administration PC. For many of Windows® 2000 Server users who are used to the GUI control panel, NEC's SURFNAVI(*3) is a right solution that puts all functions necessary to deploy Internet servers in one. Being connected to Express5800/BladeServer, SURFNAVI controls and monitors the operation of Windows® 2000 Server and Linux through its control panel that has been developed by NEC. It is also another advantage of the Private Server Hosting Service that Isle provides easy-to-handle management functions to reduce the burden on users.

The Private Server Hosting Service received a significant amount of responses from companies in various Internet businesses for the first 3 days after the service launch. Ms. Emiko Okamoto, President's Office, says, "Most customers who contacted us had their own clear visions toward the systems they need, such as E-commerce through Web servers and FTP servers, electronic banking, small-size storage server and groupware, and they asked specifically, 'what kind of dedicated server environment is the best?'"

*3: SURFNAVI, an all-in-one server concentrating functions necessary for the Internet connection, was available only in Japanese market.

**Future
Prospects**

As a computer vendor to offer solutions, NEC creates a deepened partnership with Isle beyond a simple “alliance” to support their commitment to the only-one strategy to satisfy customer company needs.

Behind the process of determining the final specification of Express5800/BladeServer, Isle as an industry-leading hosting service company has provided NEC with their input on the product. The Private Server Hosting Service is also managed under the alliance between Isle, NEC and iDC (data center that executes operation and monitoring for contract users). “Alliance, in general, is just promotional partnership, but our alliance with NEC is considerably different from that alliance in a sense that customer needs come first in deciding server specification. We appreciate all the contributions that NEC made not just as a hardware manufacturer but as a solution provider with proven technologies,” says Mr. Tanaka.

Isle pursues not the top position in the hosting service industry but the position as the “only one” provider for customers. It is because of this faith that Isle has been dedicating itself to continuously developing new services, while outpacing competitors, and to delivering quality, low-price services since the beginning of their hosting business in 1997. This is however not all about their Private Server Hosting Service. “Based on our success in stimulating interest in our Windows® 2000 Server hosting, we now assumes that the customer needs for stream delivery will grow in the market, and looks for an opportunity to incorporate low-end blade servers with extended bandwidth and intentionally downsized scalability into the current private server service,” says Mr. Tanaka.

Being committed to customer-oriented services and price satisfaction, Isle always looks ahead to market future and reacts proactively to it. This style makes them become the focus of attention within the industry and raises expectations among customers. There is no doubt that Isle will further drive the entire hosting service industry in the years to come.



Isle chose NEC Express5800/BladeServer for their Private Server Hosting Service and made available Windows® 2000 Server hosting for lower than ¥70,000 per month.

**Customer's
Profile**

Company title: GMO Hosting and Technologies, Inc.
(Formerly known as Isle, Inc.)

Corporate headquarters: Cerulean Tower, 26-1 Sakuragaoka-cho, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 〒150-8512

President: Mitsuru Aoyama

Establishment: May 1997

Number of employees: 76 (as of June 30, 2002)

Business lines: * Development and management of varying Internet solutions focusing on web hosting

* Training (Internet engineer, web engineer, game creator)

GMO Hosting and Technologies, Inc. URL: <http://www.gmo-ht.com/>

Isle Private Server Hosting Service URL: <http://private.isle.jp/>

