

## viaVerio Partner Success Story: Net-Flow



### viaVerio Partner Net-Flow Corporation

#### Challenge

Find a scalable, reliable partner that would support Net-Flow in moving beyond commodity Web hosting to value-added services.

#### Solution

- › Verio Virtual Private Server
- › Verio Managed Private Server

#### Results

- › Dedicated support from initial migration to 24/7 ongoing needs.
- › A new revenue stream with expanded premium services.
- › More higher-caliber clients.
- › Scalability as Net-Flow's clients' needs change.
- › A customer service model that Net-Flow tries to emulate.

### Verio Helps Net-Flow Expand Beyond Commodity Web Hosting to Offer Value-Added Business Services

Successful customer experiences are ultimately the result of strong relationships. For Net-Flow, a web and e-business solutions company, that means a hosting partner that allows it to offer rich solutions to its clients, who in turn can better serve their own customers.

As Net-Flow and its customers have grown, Verio has provided the flexible foundation to expand with them.

"With Verio as our hosting platform, we created 66 products that run on top of Verio solutions," said Dean Bowen, CEO of Net-Flow. "Verio does for Net-Flow what Net-Flow does for its clients – lets us focus on business and not the tools and systems behind the scenes."

#### The Search for Quality, Scalable Hosting

As Net-Flow looked to take its business to the next level, it suffered from low-margin, commoditized web hosting services. Plus, the relationship with its previous hosting provider had started to falter.

Their prior Web hosting company underwent four acquisitions over a period of two and half years, resulting in a significant decline in quality, technical and customer support, and – most importantly – trust. The previous provider could not scale on demand to meet Net-Flow's growing business needs, which often caused strained relationships with Net-Flow's customers.

"Web hosting needs to work like a dial-tone – every time you pick up the phone, it needs to be there," Bowen said. "If the phone is off the hook for whatever reason, people don't call back. As a growing business, we could not afford this."

When technical glitches or access issues occurred, Net-Flow sometimes had to counsel its provider on how to fix them. Billing issues were also a growing concern. In some cases Net-Flow was being billed for accounts that had been closed for three years.

Bowen recalls, "We were paying them big money, but they were not providing anything that we couldn't get anywhere else. After all the acquisitions, complete with high employee turn-over, our previous provider could not even recall our name, let alone anything about our business."

Net-Flow knew it needed to find a new hosting provider if it wanted to continue providing quality services to its customers, and grow beyond the commoditized hosting business. However, migrating from one provider to another presented several major challenges:

- Lost Time – Bowen estimated it would have taken nine to twelve months to migrate all of its hosting accounts – including email accounts, UNIX commands, e-commerce shopping carts, payment gateways, etc. – to the new provider.
- Increased Costs – In the interim, Net-Flow would have had to pay for server space both at the old provider and the new provider simultaneously, which



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would have seriously depleted Net-Flow’s cash reserves and operating capital.

- **Lost Revenue** – The migration would have tied up human resources, preventing them from focusing on revenue-generating work, or providing adequate support to its existing customers.

migration team, led by a dedicated migration specialist, Net-Flow was able to transfer all of its accounts in less than three months. Because Verio did not start billing for server resources until the migration was complete, Net-Flow saved tens of thousands of dollars on redundant server costs.

### Support through Migration

That’s when Net-Flow turned to Verio. With a range of solutions and dedicated support, Verio removed the level of complexity involved in the initial migration of accounts and in the complete hosting relationship.

Verio offered an experienced team to handle the actual account migration, which enabled a faster transition. Verio also did not charge Net-Flow for hosting space until the migration was complete, which removed a “huge, potentially crippling financial burden.”

“Verio took what was surely going to be a business-traumatizing experience and turned it into a valuable one,” Bowen said. “It’s modeling leadership. None of the other providers offered anything close to what Verio was offering. The people to help us migrate, and then offsetting the financial burden, put Verio in a league of its own.”

“Verio’s approach was ‘how can we help you?’ rather than ‘how much money can we make from you?’ Bowen added. “Verio removed all of the financial and technical issues, and reduced the complexity and anxiety of migrating between Web providers. This level of service and delivery of promise, you just don’t see from other providers today.”

Working with Verio’s highly experienced

### The Foundation for Business Growth

Net-Flow has been able to expand its business to provide premium services. In addition to generating added long-term revenue, these new capabilities allowed Net-Flow to attract a higher caliber of customers, such as Web design firms, ad agencies and brand managers.

Net-Flow’s business is now extremely scalable as well. Based on fluctuating demand, Net-Flow can tap into a vast array of shared, virtual private servers and dedicated managed private servers. Because Verio offers Net-Flow extensive capacity, Net-Flow’s customers will never outgrow its services. If customers need more resources, Net-Flow can create a virtual server within minutes, or easily and seamlessly upgrade to another Verio solution behind the scenes, which reduces complexity for Net-Flow and its customers.

In addition, as Net-Flow’s business grows along with its customers’ needs, the company is looking into expanding into value-added services such as Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity – all utilizing Verio’s shared, Virtual Private Servers (VPS) and Managed Private Servers (MPS), backed by Verio’s outstanding customer and technical support.

Now, Net-Flow facilitates online

# VERIO

An NTT Communications Company

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programs for prestigious national brands and advertising agencies such as Bounty Hunter Rare Wines ([www.bountyhunterwine.com](http://www.bountyhunterwine.com)), Scrapbook Trends Magazine ([www.scrapbooktrends.com](http://www.scrapbooktrends.com)), Desperado Marketing ([www.desperadomarketing.com](http://www.desperadomarketing.com)), Far Niente Winery ([www.farniente.com](http://www.farniente.com)) and Walkenhorst’s ([www.walkenhorsts.com](http://www.walkenhorsts.com)).

Walkenhorst’s began with Net-Flow with just one store. Now it has 150 stores. Bowen attributes that scalability – and much of its own success – to Verio solutions.

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### An Example of Dedicated Service

As the relationship continues, Bowen has found that Verio’s sales reps are always responsive, and he has 24/7 access to customer support managers who know his business intimately. Whenever Net-Flow or one of its customers has an issue, Verio’s technical support staff works closely with Net-Flow to own the issue and resolve it.

Perhaps the biggest and most unforeseen change to Net-Flow’s business is in the way the firm interacts with its own hosted customers. Based on positive customer service and technical experiences with Verio, Net-Flow tries to follow in Verio’s footsteps. Net-Flow knows its customers’ business needs and challenges and strives to provide

superior customer and technical support.

“We often reflect on what Verio has done and is doing for us,” Bowen said. “When issues come up, we ask ourselves, ‘what would we want our vendor to do for us and what, in turn, can we do for our customers?’”

Bowen concludes, “Verio truly helped us push the envelope regarding what we can do for our customers, and greatly accelerated our business beyond where we would have been had we stayed with a commodity Web host. Verio is a trusted partner with a vested interest in our success because as our business grows, so does theirs. We’re proud to have Verio as part of our team because they give us the platform, the expertise, the resources and support we need to succeed. For Verio, us and our clients, it’s win, win, win.”

### About Net-Flow

Net-Flow offers the power of NOW, a scalable suite of customizable, turnkey tools that help businesses make the most of real-time Web site, customer and financial data. Net-Flow hosted solutions are for businesses that don’t want to worry about technology or programming. Through Net-Flow’s architecture hosted on secure world-class servers, Net-Flow puts the NOW power into managing daily operations for: Web site administration - Content-NOW; eMarketing - Communicate-NOW; customer relations - Contacts-NOW; online commerce – Commerce-NOW. Founded in 1995, Net-Flow is headquartered in Napa, California.

- For more information, visit: [www.net-flow.com](http://www.net-flow.com) or call 707-259-1233.



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