

# Data about town?

How do you ensure security, availability and reliability of your data when your CEO is on the move?

By Fawn Fitter

**W**hen Michelle Madhok founded White Cat Media in 2004, she had a specific goal in mind: reviewing clothes, cosmetics, baby gear and other products so busy professional women could shop faster and easier. The company currently runs two Websites—SheFinds.com and MomFinds.com—that draw high traffic and a loyal audience with their combination of succinct opinion, distinct style and easy access to great buys.

Madhok, a hands-on CEO, crisscrosses New York City every day with her laptop in tow, building and promoting her fast-growing business. The quintessential mobile worker, she spends most of her productive time outside White Cat Media's crowded midtown office. She works anywhere she can find a Wi-Fi hotspot and a place to sit. While her work style helps make the company operate more nimbly and responsively, it poses significant challenges for the IT leadership.

With a CEO constantly on the go, White Cat Media's president and COO, Michael Palka, worried constantly about the security, availability and reliability of the company's data. The company was too big to run off a laptop alone. Its data grew more complex and critical by the day. What if Madhok used an insecure wireless network, or someone stole her laptop? How could the company better manage its ever-growing amounts of data about its readers, customers and advertisers?

## Locking down

Security was a top concern for Palka on several levels. Because Madhok spent so much time on the road, he wanted to make sure she was working in a secure environment and he wanted the ability to manage her mobile device over his network. His selection of the Dell Latitude E4200 laptop helped resolve some of his concerns.

### Three critical business essentials for mobile data.

- 1 Giving mobile employees secure, reliable access to company data, from advertising rate cards to customer email, no matter where they are working.
- 2 Storing that data in a central and regularly updated location to guarantee that all employees always have the most current, accurate version.
- 3 Protecting the data against loss, theft, and corruption.

The laptop is packed with advanced endpoint security features such as secure credential management, multifactor authentication and data protection services that can lock down or even erase the hard drive remotely. It also includes Intel vPro technology, which makes it easier for Palka to monitor, manage and maintain the laptop over the network.

As the business flourished and the amount of data produced grew, Palka needed technology that was powerful and kept his data secure. The Dell PowerEdge T100 server fit these requirements: Compact and quiet, it offers plenty of

power thanks to its Intel Xeon Processor. The Dell PowerEdge T100 server comes preloaded with Microsoft Windows Small Business Server 2008, which incorporates best-of-breed technologies for better security and productivity.

White Cat Media is also using a Dell PowerVault RD 1000 removable disk drive that can be disconnected from the server and taken off-site for data protection and backups. The drive includes security features that restrict unauthorized access and alerts the IT staff if anyone tries to access the internal system components.

Another area of concern in terms of security was that employees were exchanging financial records and other important documents using email or even by sending external drives via overnight delivery or courier. By deploying Microsoft Small Business Server 2008, which includes Microsoft SharePoint Services 2003, employees now share documents over a Web-based intranet. This process saves time and money while safeguarding the security and integrity of White Cat Media's business-critical files.

"What keeps me up at night is worrying about the security of our data," Palka says. "Thanks to Dell, I don't have to worry anymore, and I can concentrate on strategizing for the future."



Dell Latitude E6410 displays Michelle Madhok's popular SheFinds.com

## Lightening up

The laptop Madhok used weighed 6 pounds and had an insatiable appetite for batteries. Lugging the computer, a spare battery and a charger over miles of streets and subways was an exhausting daily workout. Adding insult to injury, her burden was too big for a chic tote; instead, the head of a company establishing itself as a style leader had to haul around her hardware in a decidedly unfashionable backpack. Over time, Madhok found herself leaving the laptop behind more and more often, sacrificing her productivity to save her back.

The solution for Madhok was the Dell Latitude E4200 laptop. Sleek in its blue magnesium alloy case, it weighs less than 2.5 pounds and has a battery life of up to 16 hours. "I can just pop it in my purse, and I'm good to go," she marvels. "I don't get tired carrying it around, and I don't have to bring the battery pack because it stays charged."

The Dell laptop also came preloaded with the Windows Vista Business edition operating system and Microsoft Office 2007 productivity software, so Madhok did not need to purchase an additional copy of the software she uses most.

## Powerful solutions for a growing business

Freed from both the literal and figurative burdens of managing a highly mobile workforce, White Cat Media is poised for future growth—possibly including new sites at BrideFinds and MaternityFinds, both domains the company owns.

Madhok can now work anywhere, stylishly and securely. Palka no longer worries about data loss or exposure. The entire company shares data more easily, ensuring that vital files are always complete, available and up-to-date. And as a result of managing mobility wisely, White Cat Media is predicting at least a 10% increase in productivity and thousands of dollars in annual savings.

"We're growing to be a million-dollar enterprise and beyond," says Madhok. "The Dell business solution is really going to help simplify our business, improve profitability and allow us to deploy human resources better."

San Francisco-based freelancer Fawn Fitter writes frequently about business, technology, and the spot where they intersect.

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