

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY:  
ROOMS TO GO

# Rooms To Go provides more reliable customer services by better managing networks and systems.



## Customer Profile

Industry: Household Furnishings, Retail  
Company: Rooms To Go  
Employees: 5,000  
Revenue: approximately \$2 billion

## Business Impact Summary

### Business:

Since it was founded in 1991, Rooms To Go has become America's leading independent furniture company. It has over 150 showrooms in the southeastern United States and Puerto Rico, and approximately 5,000 employees. The company carries the largest furniture inventory in the country, housed in state-of-the-art distribution centers totaling more than five million square feet.

### Challenge:

Rooms To Go is committed to IT. Its sales and distribution personnel use almost no manual processes, relying on computers and handheld devices to conduct most operations. The company has taken a centralized approach to technology, with hardware networked directly into servers and databases at company headquarters. Maintaining maximum network and systems uptime is therefore essential to the sales and delivery processes.

### Solution:

Rooms To Go uses a complete infrastructure management solution including CA NSM, CA SPECTRUM® NFM, CA eHealth® NPM and CA Service Desk Manager. This integrated solution provides the IT staff with the ability to accurately monitor real-time performance of networks and systems down to the device level. Potential problems can be proactively identified and automatically resolved before they impact the business.

### Result:

The CA solution has made a measurable difference in company operations. Rooms To Go has been able to maintain service availability with highly reliable network and systems services to improve support of its retail and distribution outlets. Additionally, the analytical features of the CA NVM solution have helped the company consolidate telecommunications bandwidth and save \$30,000 per month.



CA Customer Alliance Program



Transforming  
IT Management

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## Business

### Bringing new convenience to furniture shopping

Rooms To Go has changed the nature of furniture retailing. By instituting a policy of combining pieces and accessories into pre-packaged, coordinated rooms, customers can furnish their homes with designer interiors while saving money, since room-size package prices are lower than buying pieces individually.

Traditionally, the time between buying furniture and its delivery is weeks or even months. With its innovative distribution network, Rooms To Go has made delivery within days the new standard, adding an element of “immediate gratification” to furniture shopping.

In fact, much of the Rooms To Go customer experience is built on the concept of faster, superior service. Whole rooms are displayed to simplify purchase choices. Prices and detailed information on each item are available on demand through store systems. Delivery dates can be promised due to real-time access to distribution center information. Links to credit card companies, credit agencies and other purchase-related third parties speed every aspect of the buying process.

*“We like CA’s integrated and automated approach to IT management. Everything we got was a building block. It all tied together.”*

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#### Jason Hall

Director of IT Systems, Rooms To Go

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## Challenge

### Maximizing uptime with a minimal staff

Rooms To Go employees rely on more than 5,000 desktops, thousands of hand-held devices and approximately 200 Microsoft Windows servers. Their main infrastructure is comprised of 24 IBM Power Systems, which support point of sale, warehousing, transaction processing and a variety of other functions. The network is mostly made up of Cisco Systems equipment. According to Jason Hall, the company’s Director of IT Systems, “I think network management challenges are constant. We have to maintain control of the devices by knowing the configurations and set-up policies to ensure that routers are configured properly. This requires accurate, real-time visibility.”

Rooms To Go showrooms and distribution centers run entirely off central systems that are at corporate headquarters. If those systems go offline, the stores essentially stop operating. “There’s no room for downtime or making unscheduled changes,” explains Hall. “The decisions we make are crucial, and we have to try to keep the company up every minute of every day.”

Cost containment is also a priority. The IT department is kept lean. With a total of three people, Hall’s IT Systems group supports everything other than Microsoft-based systems, including the SAN, WAN, LAN and AIX systems. High staff efficiency and productivity is therefore mandatory.

*“Thanks to CA eHealth NPM, we’re saving about \$30,000 a month in telecommunications costs from decommissioned circuits.”*

**Jason Hall**  
Director of IT Systems, Rooms To Go

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## Solution

### Improving IT management to improve services

The company’s relationship with CA has evolved over the years, with Rooms To Go implementing a growing number of CA IT management products and solutions over a 10-year period. “We like CA’s integrated and automated approach to IT management,” explains Hall. “Everything we have added has been a building block. We can see everything in the enterprise through one console, which is a huge advantage.”

Rooms To Go uses CA NSM to manage events across their infrastructure. “We do everything from CA NSM,” says Hall. “The other CA solutions send alerts and events, and then we create email notifications and prioritized CA Service Desk Manager tickets. CA NSM acts as the central event console.”

With fast time to value, Rooms to Go was able to implement CA SPECTRUM NFM in a week. “The CA Services folks worked step by step with my engineer and really taught him how to install it and configure it. There was a real knowledge transfer as they did the work,” continues Hall.

CA SPECTRUM allows Hall and his staff to proactively identify and remediate most faults before they affect service. Using it, the staff has identified switch failures, mismatched ports, frame relay errors and other issues before they could have a major effect on service.

In one instance, performance issues affecting 162 WAN links were detected with the CA SPECTRUM NFM MPLS VPN Manager module. Troubleshooting determined an encryption entry in the ACLs for all 162 routers was the root cause. Using the CA SPECTRUM NFM Network Configuration Manager module, a staff member was able to re-configure all 162 ACLs in less than 30 minutes. “On four occasions now, I’ve made a global router change that would probably have taken me a week before, but now I roll it out in minutes,” states Hall.

IT staff productivity has increased noticeably. File system management is one example where automation has proven useful. “We used to have a remote person on a laptop, implementing a one-line command that adds five percent space to a file system,” says Hall. “Now, that’s all automated. The CA management software knows when the file system needs more space using the performance thresholds we set, and takes care of it. Nobody physically has to do anything.”

The CA management solution has had a direct affect on their bottom line. For example, Rooms To Go has used CA eHealth NPM to consolidate bandwidth assigned to each store. Reports Hall, “We’re saving about \$30,000 a month in telecommunications costs from decommissioned circuits.”

*“On four occasions now, I’ve made a global router change that would probably have taken me a week before, but now I roll it out in 15 minutes.”*

**Jason Hall**  
Director of IT Systems, Rooms To Go

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## Results

### Ensuring a better, more consistent customer experience

Thanks to the integrated CA products and solutions, the IT Systems staff of Rooms To Go has been able to:

- Increase the availability of customer-facing networks and systems
- Dramatically reduce the time needed to make system changes
- Save \$30,000 per month in telecom costs
- Ensure the customer buying experience.

Hall is convinced that his group would simply not be able to handle its responsibilities without the integrated CA solutions. “The company doesn’t really have anything that’s a manual process,” says Hall. “Furniture doesn’t come in or go out without being scanned, so every lift operator has got a hand-held device. We’ve got a huge wireless infrastructure. Everything that the business does is completely automated. But thanks to CA, we can handle it. We keep it all up and running, and everybody is happy.”

Hall sees his staff as having moved from a reactive to a proactive approach to their duties. He provides an example. “There’s a device in all of our routers that has a hard drive,” he says. “The hard drive’s not 100 percent crucial for every aspect of what a store does, but when it goes down, they do see degraded performance. CA SPECTRUM NFM actually tells us when this hard drive has failed, and then we can get someone out there to replace it before it becomes a major issue. We’re much more proactive than we used to be.”

Rooms To Go views CA as partner in their success. “The partnership with CA is a very good one, and has been for the past 10-plus years,” Hall explains. “It’s really great to see that they’re constantly working to build the next technology, the next piece that helps bring everything together. They’re not just sitting back and saying they’re good. They’re always trying to prove it.”

Rooms To Go plans to add to its CA IT management arsenal moving forward. “There are definitely some purchases we want to do, especially expanding Service Desk,” Hall reports. “We want to look at CA CMDB. There are a couple of things on the CA SPECTRUM NFM side that we’re interested in. We’re making very strategic choices at this point, to keep spending down and get the highest value. CA has consistently delivered value for us.”

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To learn more and see how CA software solutions enable other organizations to unify and simplify IT management for better business results, visit [ca.com/success](http://ca.com/success).