

# Filling the Void When Your VMS System Manager Retires

Don't make the same mistake by waiting until your systems are down.

## Summary

**Industry:** Multi-media company

**Challenge:** Finding replacement staff trained to properly maintain and manage their business critical OpenVMS systems - the void leaving the systems vulnerable.

**Solution:** Faced with a system down situation and internal resources exhausted the OpenVMS experts at Software Concepts International (SCI) were called on to assist with the restoration of their business critical OpenVMS systems.

**Results:** Impressed with SCI's OpenVMS technician's ability to quickly identify the point of failure and rapidly implement a solution, SCI was hired as the full-time VMS system manager. Utilizing a consistent management methodology, SCI's Remote Managed Services for OpenVMS is a comprehensive, proactive solution maintaining and monitoring the systems 24x7.

## The challenge

A large multimedia company in New England providing news, events, advice and information to tens of thousands of readers each day relies heavily on their DEC Alpha Servers utilizing HP OpenVMS to run their day to day business operations. However, as staff retired, they were not replaced with people trained in properly maintaining and managing OpenVMS servers – leaving the company vulnerable. A network failure in the data center one Sunday afternoon led to a crash of their improperly configured OpenVMS Cluster. Their lack of OpenVMS expertise resulted in failed attempts to reboot and reestablish the cluster. The systems were down, and they did not have the expertise to restore availability. However, these systems are critical to their business, and they needed them to be up and running before the start of business on Monday morning.

## The solution

Fortunately for the company, the director of IT was familiar with SCI from their participation in HP OpenVMS Advanced Technical Bootcamps and similar events and he had recently been in discussions with Software Concepts International (SCI) to take on the management of the DEC Alpha/OpenVMS systems. With internal options exhausted and nowhere else to turn, a phone call was placed to SCI and a real live OpenVMS technician was on the other end to answer the call. The technician listened to the problem they were experiencing, assured the client that SCI could help, and made arrangements to engage SCI's services.

After being granted access to the systems, the SCI technician began to work. It was discovered that there was a problem with the cluster configuration that required an unusual boot sequence to successfully boot the cluster. SCI also discovered corruption in the queue database, apparently caused by the errors made during attempts to provide some level of OpenVMS system availability. Working closely with the onsite staff, SCI was able to quickly resolve both issues and restore system and application availability within a few hours of the initial contact.

## The results

When put to the test Software Concepts International was able to come through. SCI quickly identified the points of failure and rapidly implemented a solution to get the production systems back up and running with minimal down time.

Recognizing their gap in internal OpenVMS expertise and impressed with Software Concepts' ability to work quickly and efficiently with onsite staff to resolve issues the customer was confident that Software Concepts International's Remote Managed Services for OpenVMS was a perfect fit to fill the void in their IT support staff. On Monday morning SCI was hired as their full time OpenVMS system managers taking over full responsibility for the day to day maintenance and monitoring of their OpenVMS systems.

Over the subsequent weeks, SCI performed a thorough analysis of the operation of their OpenVMS systems, making numerous recommendations for improvement. Many of those recommendations have been implemented, while others await to be scheduled.

Today, the customer enjoys the benefits of SCI's 24x7 monitoring and management of their systems. The overall stability of the systems and availability of the OpenVMS cluster has increased dramatically thanks to the continuous system monitoring and implementation of numerous best practices. Most importantly, the customer has peace of mind that should this system experience problems again, SCI will be there to make sure the problems are resolved as expeditiously as possible.

## About Software Concepts International

Software Concepts International (SCI) is a leading provider of remote OpenVMS management and database administration services, worldwide. We specialize in providing system management, database administration, consulting, software utilities, and training for mission-critical systems and databases running on the OpenVMS platform.

Founded in 1987, as a consulting firm specializing in a niche database market, Software Concepts International quickly gained an international reputation for its database expertise. Building on this expertise and international reputation, Software Concepts International now supports a global installed base of OpenVMS mission critical systems.

Our unprecedented balance of strengths – technological innovation, leadership, outstanding people and a proven track record of delivering exceptional service – allows us to provide our customers with world-class system management and database support. For more information, please visit [www.sciinc.com](http://www.sciinc.com).

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