

Maritz

Kelway embarked on a server consolidation exercise with HP for Maritz

Maritz

Maritz Inc is the world's largest source of integrated performance improvement, travel and market research services.

For over a century Maritz has helped companies understand, train, motivate and reward people and it is now the world's largest source of integrated performance improvement, travel and market research services with clients that include 28 of the world's 50 largest companies.

In the UK, its Marlow based IT centre serves 500 people at various sites as well as hosting Web services for clients.

With over 150 servers and direct attached storage, its IT environment had become too big and expensive to manage.

Server Proliferation

This dual role makes it doubly important to have a stable, highly available and efficient IT environment but Maritz found its infrastructure had grown to be difficult and expensive to manage. It needed to consolidate its servers and storage, and HP hardware was chosen to provide the solution.

"We previously had direct attached storage with servers meeting very individual needs so we had experienced the proliferation of a disproportionate number of servers," said Division Vice President for Infrastructure Services Europe, Enzo Zecca. "We had either one server or several servers for each customer or application with their own back-up and that approach was not sustainable. We had about 150 servers so the plan was to consolidate. The first phase was an effective consolidation project, standardising technology with fewer platforms to eliminate out-of-date hardware and upgrade applications," added Zecca.

Zecca had innovative ideas, "I introduced virtualisation and VMware to consolidate on fewer servers to fully leverage the new investment. My first aim was to leverage out costs and create an environment that would enable us to respond more quickly to our business demands. I wanted to increase the operational efficiency of the site." Zecca turned to HP Elite Storage Partner, Kelway (UK) Limited, who arranged various demonstrations by HP server, blade and storage specialists, then prepared roadmaps and specifications before completing the installation of a whole new server landscape and Storage Area Network (SAN).

"We chose Kelway on the merit of the solution they proposed as well as the quality of the equipment," said Zecca. That solution featured 11 HP ProLiant DL585 rack mounted blade servers with AMD Opteron processor technology and 20 HP ProLiant BL20 G2 servers—the performance dual-processor server blade that offers optional fibre channel support for SAN implementations and clustering capabilities. With a capacity of 14Tb, the SAN included one HP StorageWorks EVA 5000 high performance, high capability virtual RAID array and two highly flexible and scalable HP StorageWorks MSL 6030 Ultrium tape libraries. An integral part of this solution was VMware ESX virtualisation software which has been integrated with HP ProLiant servers and StorageWorks products to enable customers to maximise the efficiency, flexibility and responsiveness of their computing resources.

Virtualisation is a cornerstone of HP's adaptive enterprise strategy, reducing operational expenses and capital costs by sharing and optimising IT resources so that supply automatically meets demand.

"Thanks to this new solution our server costs are going down by 10 per cent, year on year, and the HP hardware will have paid for itself in the first 18 months."

Enza Zecca, Division VP for Infrastructure Services - Maritz

European First

Kelway was the first partner in the UK and Europe to sell VMware/HP solutions and this was the first installation of its kind.

The Maritz datacentre is now linked by Wide Area Network (WAN) to four other sites. The company is migrating from various legacy systems to standardise on Windows 2003; from Lotus Notes to Exchange and also using Citrix to introduce thin clients. The new solution has also enabled it to establish a new adaptive Web development and hosting environment. To leverage its investment, it is planned to extend services in Maritz offices in Europe in the coming months.

"The advantage of VMware is that it has allowed us to optimise the efficient use of the resources we have with the ability to add computing capacity to meet demand without increasing our costs," said Zecca. "With the consolidation and back-up system we have now implemented, we have already showed some fantastic cost savings and efficiency in the sheer number of tape drives and tapes we used to have and considerably reduced our maintenance costs. Thanks to this new solution our server costs are going down by 10 per cent year on year and the HP hardware will have paid for itself in the first 18 months."

The Results

By reducing its hardware inventory and cutting administration charges, Maritz is reducing server costs by ten per cent, year on year and the HP hardware will have paid for itself in the first 18 months.

Virtualisation has enabled it to maximise the use of its systems and extend its services into Europe.

With inbuilt scalability, this solution will enable Maritz to meet the challenges of future business change.

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