

Top motivators cut costs with virtualised servers and blade technology



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

Enzo Zecca, division vice president for infrastructure services, Maritz





People are the most valuable asset of any business and the ability to release their full potential is the key to increasing productivity and maximising business returns.

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.

With nearly 4,100 employees worldwide, Maritz is headquartered in St Louis, Missouri and has key offices throughout the United States, as well as in Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Spain.

Marlow is the base for the UK arm of Maritz Global Technology Services (MGTS) which provides IT services for 500 employees, and also offers Web-based solutions including hosting services for a number of Maritz clients.

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 storage and own back-up and that approach was not sustainable. We had about 150 servers so the plan was to consolidate."

The first phase was to drive an effective consolidation project, standardising technology with fewer platforms to eliminate out-of-date hardware and upgrade applications," added Zecca.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 our 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, Panacea Services, 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 choose HP 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 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 Storage Area Network (SAN) included one HP StorageWorks EVA 5000 high performance, high capacity 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.

European first

Panacea Services was the first partner in the UK and

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

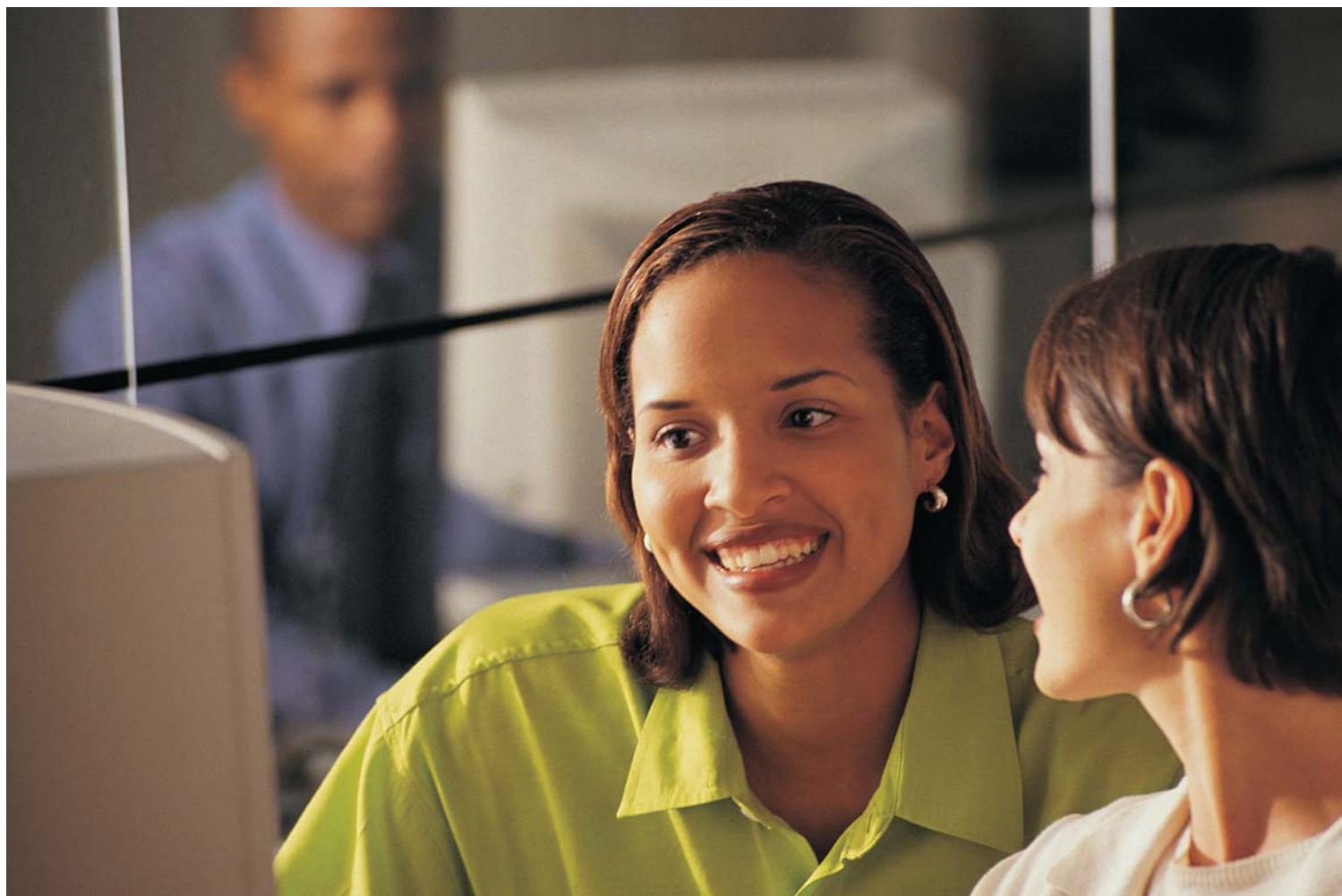
The Maritz datacentre is now linked by Wide Area Network (WAN) to four other sites. The company is migrating from various legacy systems to standardise on Windows 2003; from Lotus Notes to Exchange and is also using Citrix to introduce thin clients.

The new solution has also enabled it to establish a new adaptive Web development and hosting environment and 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."



Customer at a glance

- **Industry sector:** Integrated performance improvement
- **Company:** Maritz
- **Headquarters:** Marlow, UK
- **Founded:** 1975
- **Telephone:** +44 (0)1628 486011
- **Number of employees:** 500
- **URL:** www.maritz.co.uk

Partner at a glance

- **Company:** Panacea Services
- **Headquarters:** London, UK
- **Telephone:** +44 (0)207 375 3757
- **Number of employees:** 80
- **URL:** www.panacea-services.co.uk
- **Business:** IT Solutions Provider
- **Products:** Various leading-edge infrastructure solutions

Why HP?

- Maritz believed the total solution offered by HP had more merit and that along with Panacea, HP showed great teamwork.
- HP had by far the best technology offering, particularly in the multi-processor and Blade Systems area.
- The HP solution closely met the needs of the Maritz IT infrastructure.

Hardware

- 11 x HP ProLiant DL585 rack servers with four-way AMD Opteron 2200, 1Mb processor boxes.
- 20 x HP ProLiant BL20 G2 P class servers, each with two-way Xeon DP 3060-1Mb processors boxes.
- 1 x HP StorageWorks EVA 5000 (32Gb capacity).
- 2 x HP StorageWorks MSL 6030 rack mounted tape libraries.

Software

- VMware virtualisation software

Challenge

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

Solution

- Maritz embarked on a server and storage consolidation exercise with HP through its partner Panacea Services.
- This created a solution combining HP ProLiant multi-processor and Blade System servers with a SAN of rack mounted HP storage arrays.
- To increase efficiency and cut costs, VMware virtual machine technology was an integral part of the solution.

Results

- By reducing its hardware inventory and cutting administration charges, Maritz is reducing server costs by ten per cent, year on year.
- Virtualisation has enabled it to maximise the use of its systems and possibly extend its services into Europe.
- With inbuilt scalability, this solution will enable Maritz to meet the challenges of future business change.

For more information on how working with HP can benefit you, please contact your local HP sales representative or reseller, or visit www.hp.com.

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