

MORE FOR LESS

German social services group consolidates servers by 50 per cent for greater sustainability with Dell virtualized solution



Social service agencies want to minimise administration costs so that as much money as possible goes on services. With this in mind, many agencies are reviewing their IT infrastructures and asking IT solution providers to deliver technology that simplifies management while boosting performance.

SOLUTIONS:

- DATA CONSOLIDATION AND MANAGEMENT
- DATA PROTECTION
- GREEN IT
- MOBILITY
- VIRTUALIZATION



CUSTOMER PROFILE

COMPANY: Evangelische Gesellschaft Stuttgart (eva)

INDUSTRY: Local Government

COUNTRY: Germany

FOUNDED: 1830

EMPLOYEES: more than 900 personnel and more than 600 unpaid volunteers

WEBSITE: www.eva-stuttgart.de

CHALLENGE

Evangelische Gesellschaft Stuttgart (eva) wanted to consolidate and virtualize its servers because employees lacked the tools to work effectively.

SOLUTION

The company created a centralised system built on Dell PowerEdge servers running virtualization technology and connected it to a Dell/EMC storage area network. Dell OptiPlex desktops and Dell Latitude laptops were rolled out across the offices.

BENEFITS

Get IT Faster

- IT team can provision virtualized servers with operating system in 30 minutes

Run IT Better

- Centralised system consolidates servers by 50 per cent
- Remote access to desktops simplify management
- Data restores take a maximum of 30 minutes
- Greater flexible working reduces the duplication of tasks
- Energy Smart desktops reduce energy consumption by 25 per cent

Grow IT Smarter

- SAN technology delivers easily scalable storage



Evangelische Gesellschaft Stuttgart (eva), based in Stuttgart, offers a variety of social services to residents living outside the provincial capital. These services cover everything from childcare to nursing homes for the elderly, and eva staff regularly provide counselling on addiction and coping with debt.

Five of the organisation's 90 offices had their own servers, which delivered applications and held data relating to local cases. Apart from the many single points of failure, information was siloed – making it impossible for workers to track down reports unless they knew exactly where the data was saved. Besides this, maintaining a disparate IT network was far more complex and expensive than a centralised infrastructure. For instance, IT personnel had to travel regularly to remote offices to complete routine server management tasks. The expense of this left eva in a difficult position – finances were being swallowed up in administration costs, when they could be going to front-line services.

The challenges that eva faced didn't stop at servers and network design. There were too few laptops available for staff to engage in welfare work effectively in the branches.

And because they didn't have access to core applications and files on the move, they faced the time-consuming task of inputting written notes into the system after client visits.



“THE BUILD QUALITY OF DELL SOLUTIONS IS FANTASTIC AND DELL ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT AND SERVICE SUPPORT HAVE BEEN EXCELLENT OVER THE YEARS.”

Jens Heß, IT director, eva

HOW IT WORKS

HARDWARE

- Dell PowerEdge 1950, 2900, and 2950 servers using Intel® Xeon® processors
- Dell | EMC CX3-10c SAN
- Dell PowerVault™ TL2000 tape library with PowerVault MD1000 storage
- Dell OptiPlex™ 330 and Dell OptiPlex™ 755 including Intel® Core 2 Duo processors
- Dell Latitude™ D630 including Intel® Core 2 Duo processors
- Dell UltraSharp™ 1708FP monitors
- Dell Remote Access Controller (DRAC)
- APC Smart-UPS® VT 40kVa

SOFTWARE

- VMware Infrastructure 3.5
- Citrix XenApp Server 4.5
- Dell OpenManage Systems

SERVICES

- Dell Global Infrastructure Consulting Services
- Dell ProSupport for IT
 - Mission Critical
 - Basic Hardware Support

Aside from the laptops, the desktop estate of PCs was in line for a refresh.

While there were many IT challenges to face, eva was in a great position to turn the situation around. The performance and reliability of its IT solutions from Dell had always been excellent and the support services had been first class. With support from Dell, eva could create a more modern infrastructure featuring centralised data storage and archiving to maximise data protection and improve accessibility. Besides, Dell had a range of PCs and laptops to completely refresh the old desktop environment and boost flexible working with a range of laptops.

Crucially for eva, this same new-look environment would not only support staff better at work each day, but also reduce energy consumption – as well as reduce costs while supporting eva's commitment to sustainability. eva like a large number of organisations in Germany, is committed to protecting the environment, so any new technology needed to support a lower carbon footprint.

Jens Heß, IT director at eva talks about the reasons behind selecting Dell: “As a business in the public sector, we are obliged to go to market and assess a range of solutions. We chose Dell based on our experience of the hardware and the services. The quality of Dell solutions is fantastic and Dell account management has been excellent over the years.”

Heß presented Dell with a basic outline of his business and technology requirements, which included the requirement for virtualization technology. By virtualizing servers, eva could create a consolidated centralised server infrastructure, running multiple operating systems and applications on a single machine. Likewise, management would be simpler and the whole set up more flexible to scale with demand. Dell consultants which visited eva to discuss possible solutions with the IT team, organised a planning workshop and helped finalise the new network's design.



“DELL'S PROACTIVE REMOTE MONITORING SOLUTIONS ARE OUTSTANDING AND SIMPLIFY MANAGEMENT. WE FEEL VERY SECURE IN THE HANDS OF DELL'S MONITORING EXPERTS.”

Jens Heß, IT director, eva

At the heart of the datacentre are Dell™ PowerEdge™ 2900 servers, including Intel® Xeon® processors, running eva's main business applications on a virtualized platform featuring VMware Infrastructure 3.5. The servers are connected to a Dell/EMC CX3-10c storage area network (SAN) via two FlexPort fibre-channel switches. Data archiving is supported by a Dell PowerVault™ TL2000 tape library, which is connected to a Dell PowerVault MD1000 storage array and Dell PowerEdge 2950 server, including Intel® Xeon® processors. As part of the design, eva installed an APC Smart-UPS® VT 40kVa uninterruptible power supply to avoid downtime in the case of an electricity failure.

In addition, a Dell PowerEdge 1950 server, running Citrix virtualization software was installed at each EVA office. Dell UltraSharp™ 1708FP monitors, Dell OptiPlex™ 755 and 330 desktops and Dell Latitude™ D630 laptops, all featuring Intel® Core 2 Duo processors were also rolled out across the offices. eva's IT team implemented the servers, desktops, laptops and monitors themselves, with Dell Deployment Services on hand in case of any issues. Dell helped eva's IT team build the server racks and interconnect the servers with the SAN.

REDUCTION OF SERVER NUMBERS BY 50 PER CENT DUE TO VIRTUALISATION

With half the number of physical servers that it had before, eva has simplified operations and reduced the need for IT real estate.

Importantly, 50 per cent fewer servers also deliver a healthy reduction in power usage across the organisation. While the cost reductions will help boost funds for front-line services, the saving will be key for eva in terms of meeting its commitment to green IT. “We have saved an enormous amount of energy already due to the new virtualized and centralised infrastructure built on Dell solutions,” says Heß. “Dell technology is helping us simplify IT and meet our sustainability goals by consolidating our server environment by 50 per cent.”

The job of server management is simplified further by rolling out VMware virtualization technology. Heß says: “We can scale our server environment rapidly and more easily in the future thanks to virtualization technology. Our Dell environment is also more energy efficient, helping us reduce IT power consumption and simplify IT.”

LESS TRAVEL TO REMOTE OFFICES FOR SERVER MAINTENANCE BOOSTS GREEN CREDENTIALS

Importantly, members of the IT team no longer have to travel to remote offices to administer servers because all the equipment is in a single location at headquarters. “The centralised server environment from Dell is helping us reduce our carbon footprint. IT personnel can work from a single location instead of travelling to our offices around Stuttgart. The time they save by not travelling can now be used more productively on higher-value tasks,” comments Heß.

Using Dell Remote Access Controller (DRAC) technology coupled with Dell OpenManage Systems, IT administrators can control the centralised servers from wherever they are working over a simple web browser.

The big advantage of DRAC is that it gives administrators the power to monitor, troubleshoot, repair and upgrade servers even when the server is powered down. Heß says: “Dell's proactive remote monitoring solutions are outstanding and simplify management. We feel very secure in the hands of Dell's remote maintenance experts.”

BACKING UP DATA TAKES HALF THE TIME

Backing up data with the SAN takes half the time it used to under the disparate network when data was stored locally on dedicated servers. This is helping to reduce power consumption still further and making management simpler. By deploying a Dell/EMC CX3-10c SAN, eva also gains a system that keeps data safe and can scale easily with business growth. Heß says: “Our Dell/EMC CX3-10c SAN will help meet our data storage needs now and in the future, thanks to its scalability.”

Administrators can restore files in 15 to 30 minutes from the Dell PowerVault LT2000 tape library, when in the past recovering files sometimes took considerably more time because administrators had to retrieve tapes stored in the company's safe before they were able to start searching for files. Being able to restore data in no more than 30 minutes is helping eva personnel deliver a better service to clients.

“DELL PROSUPPORT FOR IT IS A FIRST-RATE SERVICE. IT’S JUST AS WE EXPECTED IT TO BE.”

Jens Heß, IT director, eva

REMOTE ACCESS TOOLS FOR DESKTOPS SIMPLIFY MANAGEMENT

IT personnel can manage the organisation’s Dell OptiPlex 755 desktops, featuring Intel® Core 2 Duo processors, remotely, completing upgrades and basic repair work from a central location. This is thanks to the Intel vPro™ processor technology that ships with the machines. vPro delivers remote management through an IT console. Administrators can turn machines on and off remotely, so employees don’t have to leave their machines running for IT personnel. The great news for eva is that the OptiPlex desktops are also Energy Smart. They include an energy calculator so the IT team can choose a configuration in line with the organisation’s commitments. Comments Heß: “The extraordinary Energy Smart technology in our Dell OptiPlex 755 machines is helping us reduce our energy consumption.”

The entry-level Dell OptiPlex 330 desktops, which like the 755s are connected to Dell UltraSharp 1708FP monitors, offer manageability, Energy Smart technology and processing performance.

BETTER FLEXIBLE WORKING HELPING ELIMINATE DUPLICATION

eva personnel can access core applications while on the move using the Dell Latitude D630s that have universal mobile telecommunications system (UMTS) cards built in. It means they access files and update records while visiting clients and avoid the time-consuming task of entering written notes into the system when they return to the office. All the Latitude notebooks come with HyperConnect™, giving them Wi-Fi and mobile broadband connectivity on the move.

This, coupled with the machines’ RoadReady™ design, ensures the laptops can cope with the knocks, which are a feature of mobile working.

Says Heß: “All our Dell laptops come with CompleteCare Accidental Damage Services, so we are protected against a range of typical problems such as liquid spills, drops or electrical surges.”

DELL PROSUPPORT FOR IT MAXIMISES AVAILABILITY

eva has ProSupport for IT Mission Critical on the Dell servers and SAN. If standard troubleshooting processes fail to resolve an issue, engineers will arrive on site within four hours. The service also includes storage fault monitoring, which identifies potential issues before they occur. The company also has Dell ProSupport for IT Basic Hardware Support for PCs and laptops. As part of the service, eva is covered by Next-Day Business, which ensures new or replacements parts arrive on-site within 24 hours. Jochen Schussmann, IT administrator at eva, says: “Dell ProSupport for IT is a first-rate service. It’s just as we expected it to be.”

For more information on this case study or to read additional case studies, go to www.dell.com/casestudies and www.dell.de

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