

**Objective**

Replace IT infrastructure to improve performance for end customers

Approach

Issued RFP and reviewed responses from three vendors

IT Matters

- Increased performance, thus improving customer satisfaction
- Simplified support and management
- Improved reliability and resilience, with zero downtime
- Saved time with HPE OneView management software, including reducing time to add a server by up to 50 percent

Business Matters

- Reduced overall costs by 10 to 20 percent and enabled expenditure to be matched to income, due to Flexible Capacity financing model
- Increased competitiveness, because HPE solutions mean ITS Nordic can deliver better services for the same investment

ITS Nordic upgrades infrastructure to improve Desktop-as-a-Service

HPE ConvergedSystem 700 boosts performance to help customers



Swedish HPE Service Provider, ITS Nordic needed to replace its IT infrastructure to handle growth and address performance issues. It chose a HPE ConvergedSystem 700, including servers, storage, networking and technology services. HPE Flexible Capacity has also given ITS Nordic the flexibility to match its expenditure to income.

Challenge**Managing growth**

ITS Nordic is a fast-growing company based in Sweden, which provides IT services for around 500 customers. It recently joined the HPE Service Provider Program with all its benefits and as it expanded, ITS Nordic found that its existing infrastructure was struggling to cope with customer demands.

“The main problem was poor performance,” says Hampus Dellenstedt, CTO at ITS Nordic. “We also found that we had issues with support, because our storage and our servers came from two different vendors – we were sometimes stuck in the middle.

“That is when we started looking for a complete solution from one supplier,” says Dellenstedt. “We wanted a system that had been tested together, with one vendor supporting everything and taking responsibility for the entire solution.”

“Overall, I estimate Flexible Capacity has enabled us to decrease our costs by between 10 and 20 percent.”

— Hampus Dellenstedt, CTO, ITS Nordic

Solution

Complete solution

“We chose Hewlett Packard Enterprise for several reasons,” says Dellenstedt. “We felt HPE had a more complete solution than the other vendors who responded to our RFP, rather than assembling a system from different companies that they had acquired.

“We had also worked with HPE for many years, and felt we had a better understanding of their products,” says Dellenstedt. “We felt the HPE 3PAR Storage had a more modern architecture than some of the competitor offerings, and that it suited us well as a service provider.

“Finally, we saw that the HPE Flexible Capacity service matched our customer offering, and would mean we could align expenditure with income, rather than having to invest up front,” says Dellenstedt.

The solution is based on HPE ConvergedSystem 700. ITS Nordic uses dual redundant systems, which each include 20 HPE ProLiant BL460 server blades powered by Intel® Xeon® E5-2600 processors managed with HPE OneView software. These are housed in two HPE BladeSystem c7000 enclosures, with an HPE Virtual Connect FlexFabric module that simplifies connecting the server blades to their network.

Storage is provided by two HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7400 Storage in each of the two systems, with networking from four HPE 5900 Switch Series and four HPE SN6000B Fiber Channel Switches. As well as the ConvergedSystem 700, ITS Nordic also uses five HPE ProLiant DL360 servers and HPE StoreOnce 4700 backup.

Desktop-as-a-Service

“We told HPE what we needed in terms of performance, storage capacity and uptime, and they delivered a complete solution based on that,” says Dellenstedt. “That was a key factor for us – there are a lot of aspects to consider including servers, storage, networking, cabling and the compatibility of all components, and we felt HPE’s proposal was better than the other vendors in demonstrating how it could handle the entire solution.”

ITS Nordic uses the HPE system to provide a broad range of services for its customers, focused around delivering Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS). The company creates Citrix XenApp servers that its customers use to gain access to ITS Nordic’s data center, which they then use to run many applications and services, including Microsoft® Exchange and SQL Server.



All of these services run as virtual machines in a VMware vSphere 5.5 platform hosted on the HPE ConvergedSystem 700. ITS Nordic also delivers Voice-over-IP (VoIP) services running on the HPE ConvergedSystem 700 in virtual machines.

Benefit

Reliable and flexible

ITS Nordic provides its DaaS customers with unlimited storage, and bills them on a simple cost-per-user basis each month. Dellenstedt says, "It's easier for our customers when we invoice them like this, and it's been easier for us to budget and see our expenses with the new HPE solution – and 3PAR gives us the flexibility to expand capacity as needed."

For maximum reliability, the two HPE systems are located in different data centers – the main site, and a disaster recovery facility. Dellenstedt comments, "Since we got the system fully implemented and running, we have not had any downtime at all."

Support is provided under HPE Datacenter Care with Business Continuity Plan, which provides a four-hour call-to-response time.

"The HPE support people are good, and have helped us when we've had issues," says Dellenstedt. "They're possibly even too proactive, such as calling at night when a disk is performing badly, but it's good to know that level of support is there."

HPE Technology Services has provided a range of services, including installing the hardware and helping with the installation of the VMware software. ITS Nordic has also purchased training from HPE to ensure it gets the best out of its ConvergedSystem.

Flexible Capacity reduces costs

With HPE Flexible Capacity, ITS Nordic simply pays for the capacity of the HPE system it uses, rather than having to estimate up front exactly how much it should invest in hardware. This means it can match its spending with its income, and minimize capital expenditure.

"We don't know how many customers we're on-boarding each month, so previously we had to account for that in our investment strategy," says Dellenstedt. "Our management is much happier now that we can grow and take the expense when we have the business."

According to Dellenstedt, Flexible Capacity helps reduce ITS Nordic's total costs. He says, "Before, we had to invest heavily and buy hardware at the beginning of the year as we didn't know when customers would be on-boarded within the year, which meant we had to pay for unused hardware for several months before we could invoice customers for it – overall, I estimate Flexible Capacity has enabled us to decrease our costs by between 10 and 20 percent."

Customer at a glance

Application

Citrix XenApp

Microsoft Exchange

Microsoft SQL Server

Hardware

- HPE ConvergedSystem 700
- HPE ProLiant BL460 server blades
- HPE BladeSystem c7000 enclosures
- HPE Virtual Connect FlexFabric
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7400 Storage
- HPE 5900 Switch Series
- HPE SN6000B Fiber Channel switches
- HPE ProLiant DL360 servers
- HPE StoreOnce 4700 Backup

Software

- HPE OneView
- VMware vSphere 5.5

HPE services

- HPE Flexible Capacity
- Datacenter Care with Business Continuity
- Technology Services consulting
- VMware installation and startup
- Business Continuity services
- ConvergedSystem Installation and Startup
- Education Services



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— Hampus Dellenstedt, CTO, ITS Nordic

“Another good point about Flexible Capacity is that we can actually decrease our costs if we lose a customer or we need to reduce our expenditure,” says Dellenstedt. “That wasn’t possible before, when we had already bought all the hardware.”

Management software saves time

ITS Nordic uses HPE OneView software to simplify its server management. Dellenstedt comments, “With OneView we have a much better understanding of all the servers in the system, and we can be sure they are set up correctly.

“OneView saves us a lot of time whenever we add a new server – before it took one or two people up to a day to install the new blade and update all the firmware, but now that time is cut by up to 50 percent,” says Dellenstedt. “Using OneView also means that when we add a blade, almost anyone in our office can do it – so I don’t have to use my best people, which saves us money.”

ITS Nordic also finds it quicker and easier to replace a server, when needed, because all the configuration information is saved in OneView. This means it can put in the new blade without having to reconfigure the entire VMware solution and the layers above it – the new hardware simply starts up with the same profile and name as the server it has replaced.

For the future, ITS Nordic is planning to manage its entire system with the HPE OneView software, including servers, storage and networking. Dellenstedt comments, “Having the complete solution managed in one place will be great.”

Competitiveness boosted

“Looking forward, we see that HPE has a lot of interesting new technology coming out, and what’s good with the HPE ConvergedSystem 700 is that we know that have a dedicated team at HPE that can help us if we want to implement something new,” says Dellenstedt. “We feel safe, because we know that once HPE put their stamp on the solution, it will definitely work in our system.

“Overall, we are more than pleased with the solution, and it means we no longer get any complaints from customers about slow systems,” says Dellenstedt. “If we need more capacity on the storage system, it’s really easy to just call HPE, and they figure it out and order what is needed.

“We see great potential in the future to add new technology and more HPE services to the solution,” concludes Dellenstedt. “Our customers will gain from that because we can work more efficiently and can provide more services to them, for the same price as we do today – helping us to become more competitive in the marketplace.”

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