



KPN Werkplek boosts storage to support organic growth

HPE 3PAR StoreServ and StoreOnce Backup help keep the Dutch railroads on track

Objective

Support business growth with the provision of more storage

Approach

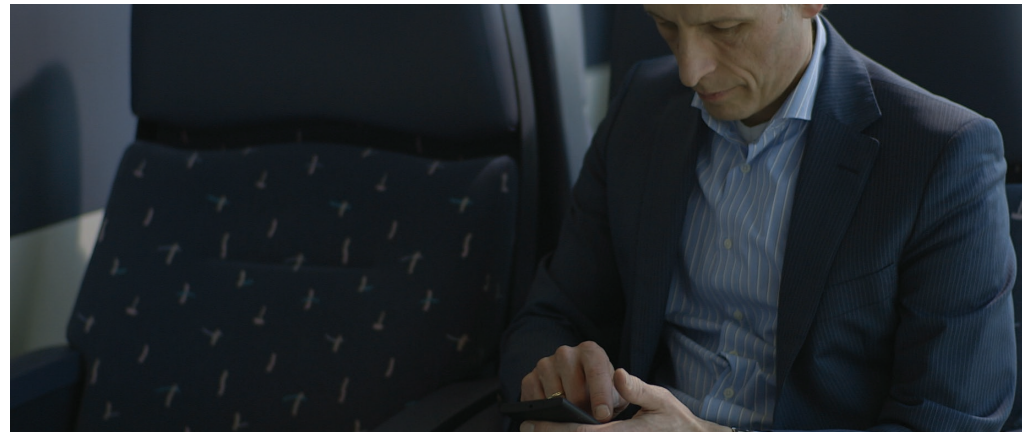
Took a standardised view to remain with technology that had performed well in the past

IT Matters

- Deduplication reduces disk space by 86 per cent and cuts disk costs
- HPE Data Protector lowers recovery time objectives by 50 per cent
- Data centre footprint has been reduced by 50 per cent, saving between €5,000 and €10,000 a month in space, power and cooling costs

Business Matters

- HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage scalability underpins 60 per cent annual business growth (2015) and flash technology will ensure efficient VDI services
- New storage solutions will deliver an ROI in less than two years
- Standardising on the common architecture of HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage combines numerous systems onto one easily managed, converged platform



Secure and scalable storage of customer data is a cornerstone of the outsourcing services offered by Dutch company KPN Werkplek. This became even more vital when the company recently won a huge outsourcing contract with the Dutch railways and the solution was to install more HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage and HPE StoreOnce Backup systems with HPE Data Protector.

Challenge

Organic business growth

Winning new business is great but when success brings exceptional growth it's vital to ensure that your IT infrastructure can keep pace. That was one of the main challenges for Dutch company KPN Werkplek when it landed a huge IT outsourcing contract for the Dutch railroads, Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS).

Based in Groningen, KPN Werkplek is a subsidiary of KPN, the largest telecom provider in the Netherlands. It offers cloud-based services to companies who do not want the worry and problems of running their own IT resources. Described as 'workplace online', the system uses Citrix Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) to provide remote workplace access with software packages delivered across the Internet and all data stored online. Founded in 2007, KPN Werkplek supports 30,000 end-users (expected to grow to 45,000 by the end of 2015), and 65,000 mailboxes.

“We needed more storage because we won a large outsourcing contract to provide a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure for the Dutch railways. This means that 12,000 more people are going to use our platform.”

— Arnoud Dijkema, director of technical operations, KPN Werkplek

A small part of the railway company had already been using KPN Werkplek services for 1,200 seats but since KPN won a company-wide outsourcing bid, that figure has dramatically increased. Some 12,000 rail employees will now be migrated onto the KPN Werkplek platform.

A reliable IT infrastructure is business critical for KPN Werkplek and it has been a satisfied Hewlett Packard Enterprise customer since its inception eight years ago. Its two data centres house 50 enclosures populated by hundreds of HPE ProLiant BL460 Server Blades and from day one, it had used HPE EVA systems for vital data storage.

“We have continued to use HPE because it’s in our business culture to keep things simple and go for one technology partner. HPE has always proved to be a very reliable partner in the past,” says Arnoud Dijkema, director of technical operations at KPN Werkplek. “We had used HPE EVAs for many years but we decided that we needed a different kind of storage and saw that HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage was the next generation that would help us increase efficiency and provide better performance and uptime.

At first the HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage systems were used just for new storage and to accommodate growth but later on they started to take over from EVAs.”

Solution

Standardised approach

Before winning the railroad deal, KPN Werkplek was running six HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage solutions – three in each data centre. It started with two HPE P10800 3PAR v800 Storage Systems but wanted to share the burden across more, smaller units so added four of the newer HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7400 Storage systems.

HPE worked with the partner Axians and KPN Werkplek to design and size the required environment and, to cope with the increased demands of the railroad deal, it has now added two more HPE 3PAR 7400 systems and two HPE 3PAR 7450. Since they share the same architecture, the systems can be managed as one converged platform that is important for this company which has just 67 employees to support some very large customers.



50%

reduction in data
centre footprint

“We deliver a highly standardised platform. It’s a standardised service and all our technical components are standardised as well so choosing HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage was just a case of repeating the same technology,” explains Dijkema. “After HPE delivered the equipment, we had to do some operational tests and run everything through because we have to make a lot of connections with other services within the KPN company. After three months we are now ready for on-boarding the complete railway and providing staff with the Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI).

“Because the company is so big, we have made a silo in which all other components are dedicated to the national railway but the storage is shared. It’s purely capacity based and we can use it for all our customers.”

KPN Werkplek uses HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage to securely store 4.5PB of client data and 3PAR supports vital applications both for the Dutch railroads and for KPN Werkplek’s other customers. These include Microsoft® SQL Server relational database management systems and file storage for the Solid State Drives (SSD) that support VDI services that include Microsoft Office, Microsoft Lync, email, business applications and Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM). Future plans include moving the Citrix terminal to XenDesktop, XenMobile and XenApp reference architectures.

To ensure the security and continued availability of critical data, the company runs HPE StoreOnce 6200 and 6500 Backup. These scalable, disk-based backup solutions include sophisticated deduplication technology and are designed to reduce both financial and management burdens. The HPE StoreOnce systems are fully loaded with HPE Data Protector automated backup and recovery software and KPN Werkplek has also added a number of new HPE Networking switches to its infrastructure. Stability and availability of the company’s HPE environment are supported by HPE Proactive 24 Service (P24) - an integrated hardware and software support solution that combines technical assistance with proactive account services.

Benefits

Huge performance gains

KPN Werkplek’s long-term growth goal is to support 250,000 users and it also aims to increase its Net Promoter Score (NPS) customer loyalty metric from 94 to 100. Its stated goals are to find technology that matches its ambition, to do more with less and eliminate downtime.

HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage is playing an important role in enabling the company to achieve those ambitions. It will support an anticipated 60 per cent business growth in 2015, of which 80 per cent is due to the railroad contract that will be fully on-boarded by November.

Customer at a glance

Hardware

- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7400c-4N Storage
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7450c-4N Storage
- HPE StoreOnce 6200 Backup
- HPE StoreOnce 6500 Backup
- HPE 5900 Series Network Switches
- HPE Brocade 6500 Fibre Channel Switches

Software

- HPE Data Protector
- HPE Services
- HPE Proactive 24 Service Support

“The scalability provided by HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage system ensures that it can keep pace with our business growth which is forecast to be 60 per cent this year.”

— Arnoud Dijkema, director of technical operations, KPN Werkplek

“The main benefit that HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage has brought is stability,” says Dijkema. “We have so much confidence in the systems that leave it to do the update work after office hours. Previously we needed a complete weekend with 2x8 hours downtime so that’s a huge advantage not only for ourselves but also for our customers.”

Introducing HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage systems has reduced the physical data centre footprint by 50 per cent and it is estimated that this saves between €5,000 and €10,000 a month in space, power and cooling costs. With the latest versions of HPE Data Protector, KPN Werkplek has been able to reduce its recovery time objectives by 50 per cent and data deduplication has also cut the used disk space to just one seventh of what it was before, making this a very cost-effective solution.

Since efficient storage is such an indispensable part of the business, Return on Investment (ROI) was not a primary concern for KPN Werkplek but it is anticipated that the HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage systems will have paid for themselves in less than two years.

“HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage can grow exponentially and scalability is important to a business like ours,” adds Dijkema. “Also our engineers are very happy with the new controls and ease of management of the HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage system. Overall, we are now achieving tremendously better performance than before but in our environment we need a lot of write Input/Output (I/O) and the need for I/O is growing faster than the growth of the disk space. Flash arrays will be the solution and this is definitely on the roadmap.

“We need Flash for our VDI. That is why we decided to buy the full SSD and of course we have to cater for what we call ‘high talkers’ – the SQL Sequel servers and other servers that need higher and better performance than the standard fibre channel disks can deliver.

“Reliability is very important for us. In our kind of business it’s essential that our systems are up all the time and now we have changed to HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage and HPE StoreOnce that’s much less of a headache. It gives us a much more carefree environment and we can sleep well at night.”

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