ORANGE
INFORMATION SYSTEMS GROUP

SERVICE IS EVERYTHING

NIIT Insurance Technologies

NIIT Insurance Technologies Saves Millions with Orange Information Systems Group

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

AT A GLANCE:

Challenges:

- Ageing storage infrastructure under increasing strain
- 10 terabytes of unusable space spread across the infrastructure
- DR Recovery Time Objective (RTO) unacceptable
- Ongoing support and maintenance costs

Solution:

- OISG solution with detailed rollout plan to meet objectives
- VMware virtualised IT infrastructure to reduce costs
- Dell EqualLogic centralised storage to reduce costs and use free space
- Redesigned DR solution to improve recovery times

Benefits:

- £2.1 million in running costs saved over three years
- Production server estate reduced from 60 to 12 blade servers
- Centralised management and faster deployment of new services
- Existing storage investment leveraged to maximum effect

NIIT Insurance Technologies

NIIT Insurance Technologies Ltd.

NIIT Insurance Technologies is a global software and services partner to some of the world's leading non-life commercial insurers. It also provides Managed Services, Hosting and Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) messaging services. The Managed Services and Hosting services help companies by simplifying their operational IT and investment challenges.

The company shares an IT infrastructure with NIIT Technologies, a solutions company that provides services to the transport, logistics, finance, insurance, media and government verticals. Major clients include Channel 4, British Airways, Eurostar and others.

Both companies are part of the NIIT Group, NIIT is one of the top 5 training companies in the world. Each year NIIT trains more than 5 million students in more than 40 different countries.

Challenges

02

Like many successful companies, organisational growth had outstripped IT infrastructure. NIIT Insurance Technologies had reached the stage where its physical server model with direct attached storage was beginning to cause problems. The cost of maintaining more than 60 ageing servers had become excessive, especially as energy prices have rocketed so dramatically over the last few years.

Storage was a further problem. The company had pockets of disk space across more than 60 servers that it could not use. The individual pockets were too small to use for anything in isolation but together came to around 10 terabytes of unusable space.

Critically, it would take days rather than hours to complete the company's disaster recovery process. In today's fast moving world this was too long, and loss of IT over such a period would be hard on the business.

Richard Cheetham, Head of Technical Services, decided that a new hosted data centre with full virtualisation would provide the framework to solve the problems. Using a capacity planning report undertaken by Orange Information Systems Group (OISG) he did the figures and presented them to the Board. It wasn't easy to persuade senior executives that he could save £2.1 million over three years, while simultaneously solving the IT problems and improving its service. It sounded too good to be true.

"Primary objectives were server consolidation, reduce costs and overheads, reduce server maintenance overheads, reduce disaster recovery costs, reduce DR time, improve the business continuity, get better use of our storage, and make better use of our existing investment in blade and technology using VMware."

- Richard Cheetham
Head of Technical Services
NIIT Insurance Technology Ltd

Solution

03

Richard Cheetham was certain that virtualisation was the answer. What he didn't have was in-house expertise in the technology. He approached several organisations for their proposals. One of these was Orange Information Systems Group (OISG), which he selected. "We were a good fit with OISG," says Cheetham. "Not only in terms of their interpretation of what we needed to achieve, but also the people involved."

The OISG team worked closely with Cheetham's team. They produced a profile with documentation and recommendations on what was needed to meet his required objectives: a new virtualised infrastructure with an integrated disaster recovery capability.

The project involved finding a new data centre host at Telecity's Powergate site. This involved relocating the systems and virtualising them under VMware. This takes the server farm down from 60 to just 12 blade servers for production and 8 for DR.

Centralised Storage was introduced to maximise disk use and eliminate wasted space. It also improves administrative ease and makes the proper management of data far simpler. Finally, OISG designed and installed a new disaster recovery system.

"It oils the wheels to have like minded people that you get along with when you're working on projects."

- Richard Cheetham
Head of Technical Services
NIIT Insurance Technology Ltd

Benefits

04

The expected saving of £2.1 million in running costs over three years has been achieved. And disaster recovery timescales have come down from four days to one – if not just hours.

It doesn't stop there. "There are savings and benefits everywhere," says Cheetham. The £2.1 million is just what NIIT Insurance Technologies used to pay to third parties and is no longer paying. We now have availability of systems and business continuity, a central point of administration, more efficient data management, remote re-boots when necessary, fast deployment of new systems... "And that's before we even get down to the positive impact on our workforce," he adds.

"We are now back to being a leading edge technology company where we are able to demonstrate our products and solutions on this new infrastructure. We can demonstrate to our customers that we are forward-thinking and able to match the technology that their £multi-million IT budgets provide."

- Richard Cheetham
Head of Technical Services
NIIT Insurance Technology Ltd

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Orange Information Systems Group

Formed in 2004, Orange Information Systems Group has grown year on year into the UK's foremost technology partner. We specialise in the complete service, from initial procurement of IT to the design, implementation and optimisation of cutting edge solutions to all requirements. Working closely with both vendors and clients, we bring unparalleled experience to all of our solutions – product knowledge and expertise are our keywords, service is everything is our ethos.

What we do:

Infrastructure Solutions // Support Services // Managed Services // Security Solutions
Data Center Services // IT Procurement // Financial Services // Disposal

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