

# HEALTHY BENEFITS

Growing international healthcare company consolidates infrastructure and cuts power consumption by approximately 37 per cent with virtualized Dell blade servers



The global healthcare market is expanding rapidly, due to deregulation and growing consumer demand in both established and emerging markets. Eager to pursue the increasing number of opportunities, some companies end up with a complex and disparate IT infrastructure that cannot be easily scaled and managed cost-efficiently to meet future demand.

#### SOLUTIONS:

- DATA CONSOLIDATION AND MANAGEMENT
- GREEN IT
- VIRTUALIZATION



#### CUSTOMER PROFILE

**COMPANY:** Besins Healthcare

**INDUSTRY:** Healthcare

**COUNTRY:** Belgium

**FOUNDED:** 1885

**EMPLOYEES:** 375

**WEBSITE:** [www.besins-healthcare.com](http://www.besins-healthcare.com)

#### CHALLENGE

Besins Healthcare was growing, but its disparate, complex IT infrastructure lacked capacity and could not be scaled easily to meet demand.

#### SOLUTION

The IT team reduced cost, carbon emissions and complexity with highly scalable, virtualized Dell blade servers and centralised SAN storage.

#### BENEFITS

##### Get IT Faster

- New servers launched in minutes

##### Run IT Better

- Downtime in ERP system reduced from five per cent to one per cent
- Server power consumption reduced by approximately 37 per cent
- Licensing costs reduced by nine per cent
- Same number of IT employees run bigger infrastructure

##### Grow IT Smarter

- Infrastructure can be scaled easily and cost-efficiently



Brussels-based Besins Healthcare was poised for growth with its leading ranges of hormone therapies and nutrition products. With offices in Belgium and France, the company was already selling its products through distributors in more than 90 countries, but wanted to expand further by increasing its network of subsidiaries, adding companies in Thailand, Russia, Germany and the US.

However, Besins' disparate and ageing IT infrastructure lacked the capacity and IT support to underpin an international expansion, and it was expensive and difficult to scale. With 20 servers split between three server rooms in Belgium and France, separated by hundreds of kilometres, the infrastructure was complex and expensive for the IT team to manage. Storage was decentralised, being underutilised in some areas and near to capacity in others. What's more, as there was no redundancy in the system the IT team had to conduct maintenance outside office hours, which affected their work-life balance.

Downtime due to server crashes was frequent, with three hours a fortnight lost in the enterprise resource planning (ERP) system alone. The company had two separate mail servers without redundancy, causing complexity and high licence costs, and the servers frequently broke down, which meant that employees could not send or access mail for lengthy periods.

Besins' infrastructure manager Laurent Mahy and network manager Nicolas Camus were convinced that the company needed a consolidated infrastructure, located in a single datacentre in Belgium. The environment had to be highly scalable as well as easy and inexpensive to manage. Laurent Mahy and Nicolas Camus had helped implement a Dell infrastructure for a previous employer and knew that Dell could answer the challenge Besins was facing.

Laurent Mahy, Nicolas Camus and the IT team engaged Dell Global Infrastructure Consulting Services to design a solution based on a Dell storage area network with virtualised Dell blade servers. Besins wanted to divide the project into two phases, starting with the purchase of a Dell/EMC CX3-20c storage area network (SAN), which was installed by Besins' IT team in the new datacentre in Belgium. The team chose this model because it was scalable, flexible and supported both iSCSI (internet Small Computer System Interface) and fibre channel connectivity.

Next, Besins decided to replace most of the 20 servers with a Dell™ PowerEdge™ M1000e modular blade enclosure housing two high-performing, energy efficient Dell PowerEdge M600 blades with Intel® Xeon® Quad-Core processors.



## **“WE LIKED THAT DELL DIDN'T JUST SELL US THE HARDWARE, BUT A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES, WHICH WAS TAILORED TO OUR NEEDS.”**

Laurent Mahy, infrastructure manager, Besins Healthcare

They installed VMware® ESX server software to virtualize the servers, and Dell OpenManage™ 5.0 Systems Management for simple, standards-based infrastructure control. Laurent Mahy, Nicolas Camus and the IT team implemented the solution themselves without the need for extensive training. And they saved money by purchasing all of Besins' Microsoft licences through Dell Select License Program (SLP), which offers simplified, volume price purchasing of Microsoft product licences.

They chose Dell ProSupport for IT\*, specifying Mission Critical on-site support within four hours at any of its global sites. “We liked that Dell didn't just sell us the hardware, but a comprehensive package of products and services, which was tailored to our needs,” says Laurent Mahy.

### **ERP SYSTEM DOWNTIME FALLS FROM FIVE PER CENT TO ONE**

The 375 employees at Besins have enjoyed vastly increased uptime since the company consolidated its infrastructure and moved it to a single datacentre. The benefits are particularly noticeable in the crucial ERP systems, which the company uses to manage everything from finance and HR, to production, orders and customer service. “Thanks to Dell's consolidation solution, downtime in our ERP systems alone has fallen from five per cent to approximately one per cent,” says Laurent Mahy.

Using VMware VMotion® software, the IT team can move applications dynamically between the physical servers to avoid disruption during repair work. So, a failing server does not have to result in downtime.

### **HOW IT WORKS**

#### **HARDWARE**

- Dell™ PowerEdge™ M600 blades with Intel® Xeon® Quad-Core processors
- Dell PowerEdge M1000e modular blade enclosure
- Dell/EMC CX3-20c storage area network (SAN)

#### **SOFTWARE**

- Dell OpenManage™ 5.0 Systems Management
- Microsoft® Windows Server® 2008
- Microsoft Exchange Server® 2007
- VMware® ESX server software
- Dell Select License Program (SLP)

#### **SERVICES**

- Dell Global Infrastructure Consulting Services (GICS)
  - Assessment and Design
- Dell ProSupport for IT\*
  - Mission Critical

**“DELL PROVIDES STANDARDISED GLOBAL SUPPORT, WITH ON-SITE REPAIRS GUARANTEED WITHIN FOUR HOURS. THIS IS EXTREMELY VALUABLE TO US. WE CAN RELY ON DELL TO BE THERE, NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS.”**

Nicolas Camus, network manager, Besins Healthcare



The team has also used the blade solution to simplify its mail system through consolidation onto a single server, which has resulted in faster response times and improved user experience. Because the system is much more reliable and secure, employees rarely experience problems accessing or sending emails, which means they can be more productive. “Our employees can start new projects without delay because the IT team can deploy new virtual servers in minutes, providing extra capacity when it’s needed, not days or weeks later,” says Laurent Mahy.

#### **BLADE SOLUTION GIVES APPROXIMATELY 37 PER CENT POWER SAVING**

Besins has also reduced its power consumption and carbon emissions. With just two physical servers, the company uses less energy to power and cool the datacentre. In addition, Dell blades are built with Energy Smart technology, which makes them highly energy-efficient. To minimise cooling costs, the M1000e enclosure contains dynamic-flow, low-power fans, while highly efficient power supplies secure optimal performance and energy efficiency. “Our Dell blade server solution consumes approximately 5,000 watts – approximately 37 per cent less than our previous rack server solution. That saves us money and reduces our carbon footprint,” says Nicolas Camus.

#### **SNAP-IN SCALABILITY SUPPORTS RAPID EXPANSION**

The Dell solution is easy and inexpensive to scale. With just two Dell M600 blades, virtualized with VMware and capable of running a large number of virtual servers, Besins has plenty of spare capacity at present. New virtual servers can be launched in minutes, giving the company a high degree of flexibility. And the IT team uses a Microsoft® Windows Server® 2008 template stored on the SAN to launch new servers even faster.

In future, more blade servers can be added very quickly and cost-efficiently. Dell PowerEdge blade servers come pre-built and factory-tested, which means the IT team can snap them straight into the M1000e enclosure and have them up and running much faster than traditional rack servers. And with their compact design, they require less space than conventional servers. “The Dell blade solution is highly scalable and will grow with our business. It is extremely simple for us to add new servers – we just plug them in and go. What’s more, they are so compact that we avoid having to expand our server room in the foreseeable future,” says Laurent Mahy.

With its Dell/EMC CX3-20c SAN, Besins has plenty of storage to support its needs, and the SAN can be scaled easily to meet increased demand. Its versatility is another main benefit

for Besins. “The fact that our Dell/EMC SAN has both iSCSI and fibre channel connectivity gives us the flexibility to choose the best performing and most cost-efficient technology to suit our need at any one time,” says Nicolas Camus.

It also meant that the IT team could use the SAN during the transition from the previous rack servers, which were iSCSI only, to the blades. Moreover, by switching to centralised storage, the company has reduced downtime in case of technical problems. “Because I have central storage, I can bring up a new server very quickly, if a server crashes – and still have my data. This means that downtime is significantly reduced,” says Laurent Mahy.

#### **LICENCE COSTS FALL BY APPROXIMATELY NINE PER CENT**

Because the company has consolidated its mail system onto just one server, running Windows Server® 2008, it needs only one mail server licence, as opposed to two in the past. And by buying all its Microsoft software licences at volume prices via the Dell Select License Program (SLP), the company secured a further reduction in costs. “By purchasing all our Microsoft licences through Dell, we saved approximately nine per cent on licence costs,” says Laurent Mahy.

## **SAME NUMBER OF IT EMPLOYEES RUN BIGGER INFRASTRUCTURE**

Because its infrastructure is more reliable and Besins has access to global Dell ProSupport for IT\*, the six IT employees no longer have to spend much of their time fixing problems. And management is simplified with Dell OpenManage systems management, which reduces complexity by allowing IT staff to monitor and manage the environment through one interface. "Dell OpenManage gives us control of the entire infrastructure from a single console. This brings down the time we spend on system maintenance and frees up resources for strategic work," says Nicolas Camus.

The IT team now runs an infrastructure spanning six countries, as opposed to two, without the need for more staff. "Our Dell solution means we can run a much bigger, international infrastructure without increasing our IT staff headcount," says Mahy.

## **GLOBAL DELL SUPPORT PAVES THE WAY FOR INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION**

With its Dell ProSupport for IT package with Mission Critical on-site support within four hours, the IT team can rest assured that any

technical problems are dealt with quickly. Because of its worldwide presence, Dell can offer global support, encompassing all of Besins' offices and subsidiaries in Belgium, France, Germany, Thailand, Russia and the US. Laurent Mahy and the IT team, who are based in Brussels, no longer have to travel to a site that is experiencing technical problems, or engage expensive contractors to carry out repairs, which saves time and money. "Dell provides standardised global support, with on-site repairs guaranteed within four hours. This is extremely valuable to us. We can rely on Dell to be there, no matter what happens," says Nicolas Camus.

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