

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Financial services organisation simplifies management, reduces consultancy fees and improves performance with Dell Managed Services for Small Business



For small businesses, the challenge in achieving maximum IT performance is often less about hardware than finding the resources to identify and maintain optimal IT management. External consultancy can be ad-hoc and costly, without delivering the consistent analysis and support needed to minimise the burden of routine tasks.

SOLUTIONS:
• MANAGEMENT

HÖEGH CAPITAL PARTNERS

CUSTOMER PROFILE

COMPANY: Höegh Capital Partners

INDUSTRY: Finance

COUNTRY: United Kingdom

FOUNDED: 1927

EMPLOYEES: 45

WEBSITES: www.hoegh.co.uk

CHALLENGE

Financial organisation Höegh Capital Partners (HCP) wanted to make the most of its IT investments by increasing system availability, while enhancing and refining routine processes such as patching.

SOLUTION

With Dell Managed Services for Small Business, the company now has a complete, independent view of its infrastructure, with monthly reports and regular alerts to highlight potential issues and ensure optimum performance. Dell engineers resolve issues in coordination with HCP's in-house IT support team.

BENEFITS

Run IT Better

- Continuous support simplifies management and reduces consultancy costs
- Comprehensive patch management improves computer and network security
- Proactive issue resolution improves availability and reduces 'firefighting'
- Helpdesk provides consistent, cost-effective end user support

Grow IT Smarter

- Improved visibility into IT environment supports effective capacity planning
- Warranty reporting enables better budgetary and purchase planning



Höegh Capital Partners (HCP) is the financial advisor to the Höegh family, a prominent name in the international shipping industry. HCP advises on investment strategies for a number of Höegh-related companies across a number of asset classes, from real estate to hedge funds. Headquartered in London, the company has offices in Guernsey, New York and Oslo, Norway.

A recent infrastructure overhaul means that the London headquarters is served by a large, sophisticated datacentre consisting of 90 per cent Dell™ technology. Used by 45 employees, this includes six Dell PowerEdge™ 2950 servers virtualized with VMware® ESX server software. These run a total of 45 virtual machines, providing capacity for all core applications used by the London office. HCP also has a Dell/EMC CX3-20 storage area network (SAN) and a PowerVault™ MD3000i Networked Storage Array for expandable, IP-based replicated storage. The improvement in the IT services provided by the datacentre means that, in the future, the New York and Guernsey offices will also utilise the London datacentre facilities.

Bruce Leigh, IT manager, HCP, says: "We were happy with the technology, and particularly with our move towards Dell as a sole supplier, but we were still discovering how to manage it to maximum effect. It was difficult using internal resources to objectively gauge the effectiveness of our processes and build a

clear picture of our systems." With an increase in the number of end users and the volume of data on the horizon, optimising use of the infrastructure was crucial.

So, when HCP's Dell account team suggested Managed Services for Small Business (MSSB), Leigh and his colleagues saw an opportunity to gain an independent perspective that would help fine tune and simplify management.



“WITH DELL MANAGED SERVICES, WE DON'T HAVE TO STOP WHAT WE'RE DOING TO FIX PROBLEMS. WE KNOW HOW EACH DEVICE IS PERFORMING, AND WE GET VALUABLE MONTHLY METRICS ON UPTIME, PERFORMANCE AND CAPACITY. THAT WILL CUT THE TIME WE SPEND ON ROUTINE, LOW VALUE TASKS.”

Bruce Leigh, IT manager, Höegh Capital Partners

HOW IT WORKS

HARDWARE

- Dell™ PowerEdge™ 2950 server with Intel Xeon processor
- Dell PowerVault™ MD3000i Networked Storage Array
- Dell/EMC CX3-20 Storage Area Network (SAN)

SOFTWARE

- VMware® ESX server software
- Microsoft® System Center Configuration Manager

SERVICES

- Managed Services for Small Business (MSSB)

Leigh says: "We wanted to validate our approach, adjust it according to feedback, and ultimately ensure that we were making the most of our technology and the best use of our time."

MSSB is a three-tiered offering designed to meet the specific challenges and budgetary needs of small business. That is, to provide a single, cost-effective resource for support combining the broad capability of a global IT organisation with dedicated local expertise. With employees travelling extensively, HCP found Dell's worldwide presence particularly appealing.

Customers can choose from:

- **Alerts:** Providing infrastructure insight through Dell remote manager (DRM) software installed on the customer's servers and analysis conducted at the Dell Network Operating Centre.

- **Resolution:** Providing support for the IT team with both remote and on-site troubleshooting.
- **Managed:** Adopting full responsibility for system management, removing the time and cost associations of laborious routine tasks.

With a monthly payment option and no upfront investment, financial outlay is manageable and flexible. Both payment arrangements and service levels can be altered at any time.

By opting for the Managed option, HCP received a number of services, including continuous infrastructure monitoring and alerts to flag issues, monthly status reports, a named resource at the Dell MSSB helpdesk available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and two hours' on-site support per month.



“DELL MANAGED SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESS HAS HELPED US CREATE A COMPLETE PICTURE OF OUR SYSTEMS, WITHOUT HOURS OF COMPLEX SET-UP AND ADMINISTRATION.”

Bruce Leigh, IT manager, Höegh Capital Partners

To begin the process of assessing the infrastructure and creating a foundation for future reports and alerts, Dell™ installed its DRM software on a company server. This took just a few minutes, with no disruption to end users. Technical experts at the Network Operating Centre then began a discovery process that involved pulling information from IP addresses across the network. After a one week assessment period to validate the data, HCP received the first of its monthly reports. Alongside this process, Dell assigned HCP a named relationship manager at the helpdesk.

SYSTEM STABILITY RISES

Since adopting the service, HCP has stabilised its environment significantly. This is largely due to a general increase in visibility, which allows preventative maintenance. Leigh says: “Dell Managed Services for Small Business gave us metrics showing the effectiveness of our maintenance processes. As a result, we discovered areas for improvement and made changes, particularly to some of the IT management applications that had an immediate impact on service stability.” In addition, early identification of issues has maximised uptime and minimised interruptions to services, by allowing Dell MSSB to carry out planned maintenance activity out of hours.

Says Leigh: “It was clear from the outset that Dell’s Managed Services for Small Business was all about giving us insight and support to simplify and complement our own processes. It has allowed our relatively small IT team to

focus its efforts on adding value to our services rather than addressing minor but frequent support issues.

Leigh and his colleagues meet Dell to review each monthly report. This is an opportunity to evaluate performance, prioritise areas of concern and find solutions. “The objective perspective that we now have has given us a detailed understanding of what our systems are doing, how effectively we are detecting and addressing faults, and how to optimise performance,” Leigh says.

HCP uses several internal systems to monitor its infrastructure, but the difficulty lies in coordinating them. Leigh explains: “Dell Managed Services for Small Business has helped us create a complete picture of our systems, without hours of complex set-up and administration.”

ENHANCED SECURITY BRINGS PEACE OF MIND

HCP used the Windows Software Update Service but wanted to change to Microsoft® System Center Configuration Manager, another Windows service, in order to increase control and develop a more complete maintenance service. However, the transition meant a three to four week gap in coverage. “We faced a potential risk in the changeover from our old patching service to the new, but with Dell Managed Services for Small Business, we had backup. Dell did our scans for us and allayed our concerns about security.”

The company continues to rely on Dell for comprehensive scans. “Our security levels are independently verified with Dell Managed Services for Small Business. That gives us peace of mind,” confirms Leigh.

Since subscribing to the service, HCP has addressed the root causes of an anti-virus issue. “We had a Microsoft SQL Server that appeared to be working but was in fact rejecting anti-virus updates because the disk was full,” says Leigh. “Dell identified the issue remotely, researched solutions and resolved it within a few days.”

FIXED PRICE SERVICE REDUCES NEED FOR ONE-OFF CONSULTANCY FEES

In the past, HCP used external consultants with daily rates of up to £700. Now, with continuous support, 365 days a year, consultancy is more focused, only being used where it really adds value.

“Any system comes with a cost consideration in terms of maintenance. The challenge is to minimise that cost without compromising on performance. We don’t need to employ someone full time for this, but one-off consultancy fees are high. With Dell, we have a wide pool of expertise on-demand at a fixed price, which helps us reduce our total cost of ownership,” Leigh says.

“DELL MANAGED SERVICES FOR SMALL BUSINESS GIVES US A STRONG SENSE OF PARTNERSHIP, WITH REGULAR FACE-TO-FACE CONTACT AND A COLLABORATIVE, PERSONALISED APPROACH. THIS EXPERIENCE HAS DEFINITELY ENHANCED MY PERCEPTION OF DELL.”

Bruce Leigh, IT manager, Höegh Capital Partners

REPORTING SIMPLIFIES MANAGEMENT

The IT team at HCP can work more easily now that Dell™ is flagging and resolving issues.

“With Dell Managed Services, we don’t have to stop what we’re doing to fix problems.

What’s more, the monitoring and resolution process has helped us to further stabilise the infrastructure, enhance performance and simplify management. We can be confident that each device is performing within agreed parameters, and we get valuable monthly metrics on uptime, performance and capacity. That will cut the time we spend on routine, low value tasks,” Leigh explains. In addition, issues are detected more often and sooner. This considerably reduces end user impact, and avoids ongoing repercussions that place a burden on the IT team.

COST-EFFECTIVE HELPDESK PROVIDES PEACE OF MIND

HCP’s end users have only logged one helpdesk request so far, which Leigh attributes to increased uptime since the move to managed services. Nevertheless, it’s a valued resource. “We have used an external helpdesk in the past but for a number of reasons chose not to continue. Having access to a helpdesk through Dell MSSB offering increases reliability, reduces costs and gives us a resource that’s available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Round-the-clock availability is

also a major benefit for our mobile employees who travel globally.”

MUTUAL INSIGHT HELPS DRIVE PLANS FOR EXPANSION AND IMPROVEMENT

The HCP network is set to expand, so it’s important that routine tasks are as simple as possible. Informed choices based on the existing set-up are crucial too. Dell now has a detailed knowledge of the environment, shared by Leigh and his team.

HCP can request a next-business-day, on-site visit to discuss business requirements at any time. Leigh says: “Our Managed Services team has immense insight into our infrastructure, and they’re vendor neutral, so we know that we still have complete freedom of choice.

“Dell Managed Dell Managed Services for Small Business gives us a strong sense of partnership, with regular face-to-face contact and a collaborative, personalised approach. This experience has definitely enhanced my perception of Dell.”

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

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HÖEGH CAPITAL PARTNERS



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