

## CHALLENGE

As a start-up hosting company, Hosting.nl required a reliable and stable technology infrastructure to support the needs of its customers.

## SOLUTION

Architecture built on Dell™ PowerEdge™ Servers and Storage, combined with a leasing agreement with Dell finance, with advice from Dell Professional Services and Silver support.\*

## BENEFIT

- Customised service and support
- Easy to operate out-of-the-box
- Specialised back-up and disaster recovery
- Cost-effective and reliable technology
- Around the clock professional advice

# Playing the Perfect Host

## Hosting.nl customers increase by 50 per cent in one year thanks to the reliable performance of Dell technologies

All organisations rely on secure and stable technology. But more than any other, start-up companies need to adopt such technology early on to deliver the reliable service needed to build a good reputation.

Entering into this environment in 1999 was Dutch hosting organisation Hosting.nl. It has since become the hosting partner of choice for many customers, offering cost-effective and high-quality hosting-related services and products. The company now hosts anything from simple Web sites and e-mail to large e-commerce environments, through the leasing of servers.

In its early days, Hosting.nl needed a technology infrastructure that would support the hosting needs of a range of new and potential clients. David Hut, Co-owner, Hosting.nl, says: “We were looking specifically for a good quality brand of hardware with servers that we could rely on, at a fair price.”

As a new company, Hosting.nl couldn’t afford to work with experimental technologies. It needed to partner a well-established company with a proven reputation it could trust. “If we needed a spare part in two years time, it had to still be available,” says Hut.

### The stronger offering

Hosting.nl looked at a number of companies, including Dell, HP, Compaq and IBM. “We short-listed Dell and IBM, but IBM was quite a lot more expensive,” says Hut. “More importantly, we knew from experience that if we ordered Dell hardware, we would be able to configure it quickly and easily. We’d have our hardware

within two weeks, and IBM couldn’t guarantee anything like that. IBM had delivery times of three months in some instances.”

Dell could also provide the company with proven technology that it could rely on. “We couldn’t risk using experimental technologies,” says Hut.

This choice places Hosting.nl in a position to take advantage of Dell’s direct model – providing its customers with great value, high-quality technology, customised services and support. Rolf Stokman, Co-owner, Hosting.nl, says: “Dell gave us the best price, the best attitude and the most flexible deal. We got exactly what we wanted, without unwanted extras or hidden costs. The company also respects the fact that we have our own knowledge, which is very important.”

Using a combination of its own in-house knowledge, and Dell Professional Services, Hosting.nl built its architecture on:

- PowerEdge – 350 Servers
- PowerEdge – 6450 Servers
- PowerEdge – 1650 Servers
- PowerEdge – 6650 Servers
- PowerEdge – 2650 Servers
- PowerEdge – 1750 Servers
- PowerVault™ 220S

Dell laptops were also distributed throughout the organisation.



## Where Dell makes a difference

Dell solves a common leasing problem for the company. As a rule, Hosting.nl needs to finance new servers before taking on more customers. But financial limitations for new hardware meant the size of the leases it could offer were restricted.

A finance agreement with Dell is set to eliminate this problem as it means that Hosting.nl will no longer need to finance new servers before taking on customers. "We are working with Dell finance to resell the leasing deal. The hardware will be put in the name of the customer – who will hold the contract directly with Dell," says Hut.

"The whole package makes it an easy dynamic for us, something we can rely on, which helps us to deliver a better service to our customers"

– David Hut  
Co-owner, Hosting.nl

This agreement enables Hosting.nl to grow independently of its lease range. "The advantage is it helps us to grow faster. Because we are linked with Dell finance, we can still get the deal, but it is less likely to hurt our financial position," says Hut.

The company has indeed grown rapidly. Now with up to 2,000 customers, Hosting.nl has more than doubled its customer base in 2003 alone. Hut says: "In January 2003 we grew 26 per cent. We are in the leading position in the Netherlands and have seen a number of companies adopting our business model."

## Technology that's ready when you are

Hosting.nl has found that the orders it places are delivered quickly, fully assembled and ready for operation. "I can place an order and the box is here in under 10 days. We don't have to assemble the product, like you would with Compaq and IBM hardware," says Hut. "We just power it up and away we go. It's so straightforward and saves us time and effort."

"If you know one Dell server, you know them all," says Stokman. "They are easy to operate and we have never come across anything that doesn't work."

## Reliable, secure products

Dell's specialised backup ensures that Hosting.nl is ready for any emergency. Its servers are equipped with two power supplies, each connected to a different power unit. If one fails, the other takes over and the system remains up and running.

This system saved the company and its customers from potential disaster during a recent power cut. Stokman says: "The power went down for two minutes, but the network switched to emergency power and the servers just carried on through with no downtime at all. That's so important because customer relations are based on trust and I think that avoiding downtime is key."

## Specialised support

Dell Professional Services offers competitively priced services within the overall package, by carefully selecting partners to deliver the best services to customers. Hosting.nl also takes advantage of Dell's Silver support, which offers prompt remote and on-site service. It gives the company a single point of contact and same day basic response for hardware and software support. "This is a real bonus for us," says Hut. "If we need an engineer we will have one within hours of logging the call. With a 24-hour operation, you need that kind of service."

Hosting.nl gets expert help when needed and professionals are available for advice at any time. "If I call up my account manager with a question, I always get an answer," says Hut. "The whole package makes it an easy dynamic for us, something we can rely on, which helps us to deliver a better service to our customers."

## Helping deliver better customer service

Above all, Hosting.nl can confidently deliver a better, more reliable service to its customers. For a company like Hosting.nl, problem-free service is key. "Our high-quality hardware translates into good service. We have positive feedback about its performance from our customers, who are relaxed because problems are rare," says Hut.

"We are really happy with the choice we made three years ago. There is not a single day so far that we have doubted that decision."

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