ONE PLATFORM – GLOBAL ACCESS: GALLUS GROUP INTRODUCES FLEXIBLE, INNOVATIVE WORKFLOWS SUPPORTED BY BUSINESS IT AND VMWARE

gallus

CUSTOMER NAME
GALLUS GROUP

WEBSITE
WWW.GALLUS-GROUP.COM

INDUSTRY
MACHINERY

LOCATION
ST. GALLEN, SWITZERLAND

CHALLENGES
- Global high availability of data throughout the Gallus Group
- Provision of IT capabilities for new employees within one day
- Data security

SOLUTION
The Gallus Group decided to eliminate its decentralised IT by implementing VMware in order to optimise IT management, increase high availability and to save costs.

BENEFITS
- A secure, flexible and highly available IT environment
- Fast processing of customer requests
- Low support effort combined with savings in time and costs

Flexibility, efficiency and reliability – environments for companies operating around the globe can change quickly. IT tools accordingly need to meet the requirements that arise as a result because it is essential for business processes to be organised in the best possible way. This makes a significant contribution towards ensuring business continuity and is a mainstay of a company's growth. As a solution provider for label printers, the Gallus Group decided to work with BUSINESS IT AG to redesign the way it provides its desktop computer infrastructure. This allowed requirements from the business units to be implemented in a continuous process using VMware's portfolio of end-user computing solutions.

Company profile

The Gallus Group is headquartered in St. Gallen and, as a member of Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG, is responsible for providing solutions to suppliers of self-adhesive labels. Its portfolio includes hardware, services and consumables in order to address all the needs of its customers. The company was founded in 1923 and has a global sales and service organisation supported by the head office. Gallus employs 450 people and generates annual revenues of around CHF 200 million.

The challenge

The question for the IT department at Gallus was how to allow employees access to company resources – as far as possible independent of time and location. Furthermore, the solution had to offer the flexibility and speed necessary to respond to organisational changes and new requirements, because there is often the need to enable external staff to work on projects for a limited period. These requirements needed to be met by an efficient, small but highly skilled IT team, which is why the solution had to be as simple as possible to manage. In addition, Gallus replaces IT infrastructure as and when required owing to the global scope of the company. End-user equipment is procured in those regions where need arises. An infrastructure was necessary that allowed exactly this high degree of flexibility.

"We often face the challenge of having to enable staff to work in places where we have no local infrastructure. There is generally no time for planning and implementing a custom solution in such situations. We then need a concept that can be quickly implemented," explains Jörg Thalau, Head of IT at the Gallus Group.

A further challenge was how to handle company data. Gallus wanted to prevent any critical data leaving the company. IT tools had therefore had to be provided that support these requirements.

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CIO
GALLUS-GROUP

VMWARE IN USE
- VMware vSphere
- VMware Horizon
- VMware Horizon Mirage
- VMware AppVolumes
- VMware ThinApp
- VMware vRealize Operations for Horizon
- AirWatch (OnPremise)

APPLICATIONS VIRTUALISED
- Various CAD applications
- SAP Client
- Windows 7 and Windows 10 (virtual desktops)
- Office 2010
- SAGE (ERP)
- Skype for Business

The solution

"In order to best meet the needs of the business units we decided to concentrate on a high degree of standardisation and centralisation on the client side. This meets the demands for flexibility and mobility to a large extent. Furthermore, it allows repetitive work to be minimised and significantly increases IT efficiency," Jörg Thalau summarises.

Gallus Group had already opted to implement 300 virtual desktops based on solutions from VMware back in 2012. This number has been steadily increased in the last few years. There are currently a good 400 virtual workplaces available based on VMware Horizon and VMware Horizon Mirage. In order to keep IT complexity to a minimum, further requirements were evaluated to see whether they could be put into practice with the help of VMware. This process was supported by the licensing model Gallus Group had agreed upon with VMware. It allowed further projects to be realised without the need to purchase additional new licenses.

Since the utilisation of the virtual platform had been increasing continuously over the years, the Gallus Group decided in 2016 to overhaul its virtual infrastructure. In an initial joint workshop, BUSINESS IT and the Gallus Group defined the technical and functional requirements. BUSINESS IT was then commissioned to prepare plans for a technical solution. Based on this proposal, Gallus decided at the end of the first quarter of 2016 to upgrade its virtual desktop structure and strengthen its server infrastructure with a significantly more powerful platform. In addition, all end-user devices were either upgraded or replaced. This project was also used to get rid of legacy systems such as computers running Windows XP. "Our goal was to satisfy the needs of the business units for the long term. In particular, the demands placed on server resources that had increased over time can today be met. We succeeded in eliminating additional outdated systems and replacing them with state-of-the-art standardised solutions. This enables us to support the company in shaping the future successfully, and we no longer need to deal with the past," Jörg Thalau explains.

A special team of two to three people were involved in the implementation at BUSINESS IT – and additional experts were brought in whenever needed. The Professional Services Team led by Michael Steg was tasked with preparing detailed plans, implementing the technical solution and testing. The team was also called in to assist with migrating the old environment. As Gallus Group's partner for the client side, BUSINESS IT is involved in all strategic decisions. Since the conclusion of the project, the service provider has also provided proactive support for all operational processes and is on site once a week to ensure the IT environment is up to date and to maintain performance. Moreover, the team supports Gallus IT with the implementation of new requirements from the business units.

BUSINESS IT is also well-equipped for emergencies. "Our team is on standby 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If IT were to actually experience an outage, we are in a position to get it up and running again within a few minutes so that all employees around the world can continue working," explains Michael Steg, Solutions Architect at BUSINESS IT AG.

The result

"We were able to achieve various benefits through centralising our IT. First, we established a secure, flexible and highly available IT environment, enabling us to satisfy the company's requirements with a high standard of quality. Second, we were able to turn the IT department from a simple service provider into a partner for our internal customers. The reduction of repetitive work means that

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PLATFORM
- NetApp All-Flash Storage
- HPE rack-mounted servers
- VMware vSphere 6.5
- VMware Horizon 7
- Windows Server 2012 R2
- Dual-site stretched cluster
- Teradici APEX2800 accelerator boards

PARTNER
BUSINESS IT AG

BUSINESS IT
Supporting Your Business

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The Gallus Group's centralised client infrastructure gives the company the opportunity to allow for changing workplace requirements. Topics such as home office, bring your own device or free choice of user equipment are already a technical possibility and are realised as and when the case arises.

Looking to the future
IT at Gallus Group is never standing still. A rollout of tablets with Window 10 is planned for 2017. "By extending our mobile working options we plan to provide the best possible support for our future goals," says Jörg Thalau in conclusion.

About VMware
VMware, a global leader in cloud infrastructure and business mobility, helps customers accelerate their digital transformation. VMware enables enterprises to master a software-defined approach to business and IT with its Cross-Cloud Architecture™ and solutions for the data center, mobility, and security. With 2016 revenue of $7.09 billion, VMware is headquartered in Palo Alto, CA and has over 500,000 customers and 75,000 partners worldwide.

About BUSINESS IT AG
BUSINESS IT AG is a Swiss IT company with over 15 years of expertise as a consultant, solution provider and integrator for a powerful, highly available and scalable IT environment. More than 50 employees work at the three locations Basel, Berne and Zurich. They combine their skills in IT infrastructure, business and cloud solutions to produce integrated and high-quality services – fulfilling the customer requirements true to their mission statement «Supporting Your Business».

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