CASE STUDY

APPLIED TECHNOLOGIES AND ST CLEMENTS

Applied Technologies helps St Clements achieve a scalable solution

Background

St Clements is a specialist supplier of software products and development services to the GB Utilities industry. It also provides bespoke systems analysis, application development, data migration, implementation and training services. The company relies on the latest IT resources to give them unmatched capability within their specialist field.

For the past three years, Applied Technologies has supported St Clements, implementing the latest IBM solutions and innovations into the workplace to meet the demand for a flexible and highly available infrastructure.

Challenge

St Clements approached Applied Technologies for advice on upgrading their existing server farm. The company's demands were exceeding the capacity of the current setup which was looking increasingly outdated in terms of reliability, speed, cost, energy consumption, and ease of management.

Like most companies, the need for fast, reliable storage is ongoing. With restricted budgets, St Clements required a modulised solution which would provide them with future expansion capability and ultimately, grow organically with the demands of their clients.

The solution

Sizing a storage solution to adequately meet the client's requirements, but without restricting future scalability, is a vital facet of solution design. The first step was for Applied Technologies to conduct a thorough audit of St Clements' current environment and projected growth, and then provide a prototype environment as a 'proof of concept'.

Applied Technologies specified the IBM Storwize V7000 Storage, and this was "on loan" to St Clements for two weeks, free of charge. This allowed St Clements to not only test the suitability of the storage solution but to experience the advances in storage solutions technology since their last investment five years ago.

The IBM Storwize V7000 is a virtualized storage system to complement virtualized server environments. It consolidates block and file workloads into a single storage system for simplicity of management and reduced cost. Storage capacity can also be added incrementally, in response to demand.

In addition, Applied Technologies supplied an IBM BladeCenter® PS700 blade server, a state-of-the art high density chassis which would form the 'workhorse' of St Clements' virtualised platform. This would be tailored to the different types of applications, environments and performance requirements in the day-to-day running of the business, allowing St Clements to run a significant chunk of its diverse workloads within a single solution.

Benefits

Since it was installed in 2010, the IBM BladeCenter® PS700 has improved the management of the infrastructure, increased energy efficiency and reduced the cost of ownership.

As planned, the IBM Storwize V7000 storage system has grown in parallel with customers' needs. St Clements has made a number of subsequent purchases, increasing its capacity from 4 terabytes to 22 terabytes.

Building a relationship

UNIX Development Manager, Gerry Scott, has overseen the partnership since it began and speaks highly of the service St Clements has received.

"Applied Technologies has proved itself a highly valuable link to IBM, acquiring very competitive prices on fast, up to date equipment which is vital to the functioning of our company. It's very much a full service they provide, from opening the boxes containing the equipment to supporting the systems afterwards.

"Between us, we have built a great working relationship; there is always a familiar person to answer my call or email and deliver a quick response, usually that same day. At St Clements, our reputation is our priority and therefore customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of this business. Our partnership with Applied Technologies has contributed to our ability to drive standards higher still and enabled us to improve operational flexibility. We aim to continue working together for the foreseeable future."