



Objective

Improve performance, reliability, and availability of critical software solutions serving general practitioners and pharmacies

Approach

Migrate applications from IBM, NetApp, and Cisco infrastructure to a hosted infrastructure comprised of 100% HPE technology with full disaster recovery and around-the-clock HPE support

IT Matters

- 3 times Improvement in application response time
- Increased infrastructure uptime from 99.9% to 99.995%
- Ensured application stability for reliable operations under growing workloads

Business Matters

- Meets 24/7 demands of general practitioners and pharmacies delivering vital patient care
- Provides assurance of recovering business operations within 30 minutes in the event of a site loss
- Strengthens competitive advantage for PinkRoccade Healthcare to expand its hosting business

PinkRoccade modernizes healthcare software infrastructure with HPE

HPE technology and services ensure stable performance and high availability



Challenges of a legacy IBM environment

If you interact with a care provider in the Netherlands, whether it's a hospital, mental health institution, pharmacy or general practitioner, chances are they're using software from PinkRoccade Healthcare or its sister company, PharmaPartners. Both companies are leaders in healthcare software, but PinkRoccade Healthcare also brings another core capability—infrastructure hosting.

Part of the multinational conglomerate, Constellation Software Inc. (CSI), and owned by Dutch vertical market software giant, Total Specific Solutions (TSS), PinkRoccade Healthcare acts as an IT service provider for the six software companies under the TSS umbrella. PharmaPartners is the most recent addition to PinkRoccade Healthcare's hosting clients. Here's why:

PharmaPartners had been operating an in-house data center to host its software products used by pharmacies and general practitioners across the Netherlands. However, this legacy infrastructure—comprised of IBM servers, NetApp storage, and Cisco networking—was aging. The company had maxed out capacity, and poor system performance was causing application slow-downs for customers, which disrupted critical patient services. Another problem: PharmaPartners operated out of a single data center, putting the business at high risk in the event of a site loss. With its business at stake, the company decided to look for a hosting provider to improve performance, reliability, and high availability with business continuity assurance.

Enter PinkRoccade Healthcare. An HPE Partner Ready Service Provider, PinkRoccade Healthcare has years of experience running the Pink Private Cloud built almost entirely

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— Berry Attasio, Lead Architect, PinkRoccade Healthcare

on technology from Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), making it a natural choice to host PharmaPartners. But PinkRoccade Healthcare had to compete in a public tender issued by PharmaPartners with very specific requirements for performance, uptime, and cost. PharmaPartners was also especially concerned about migrating its proprietary software assets off of IBM. While other hosters failed to submit a satisfactory offer, PinkRoccade Healthcare, in partnership with HPE, ultimately won the business.

Winning solution: standardize on HPE

PinkRoccade Healthcare organized its proposal into three components: data center infrastructure delivered by HPE, software migration services delivered by HPE Technology Services Consulting, and software hosting and data center support delivered by PinkRoccade Healthcare and HPE Technology Services Support.

Jan van Dijk, director of PinkRoccade Healthcare’s data center, recalls, “We had to execute on our offer very fast because of the short timeframe in PharmaPartners’ tender. As an HPE Partner Ready Service Provider, our relationship with HPE allowed us to respond very quickly. HPE helped us present the advantages of their technology and the proposed data center architecture, as well as the services HPE could provide for the

software migration and ongoing support. In fact, the knowledge and capabilities that HPE Technology Services brought to the solution were very key to why we won this opportunity by giving PharmaPartners confidence to put their trust in PinkRoccade Healthcare and HPE.”

PinkRoccade Healthcare’s successful track record of hosting software services for the healthcare market was also a major factor. PinkRoccade Healthcare built state-of-the-art data centers in collaboration with HPE about six years ago, designed from the beginning to scale quickly and efficiently to accommodate additional hosting customers. The company’s own software offerings serve 50% of the mental health institutions in the Netherlands, as well as 25% of care facilities for the elderly and disabled, and over 20% of hospitals in the country. So PinkRoccade Healthcare was ready to deliver on PharmaPartners’ needs.

Berry Attasio, lead architect at PinkRoccade Healthcare, explains, “PharmaPartners required an infrastructure with high availability, security, and reliable performance because that’s what the healthcare market demands today. The architecture HPE designed for us proved to scale exactly as planned. HPE services like Flexible Capacity allowed us to expand our existing data centers quickly and efficiently with the compute, storage, and networking to support a big customer like PharmaPartners. And it’s now running perfectly.”

Complete stack of HPE technology and services

The HPE infrastructure that PinkRoccade Healthcare hosts for PharmaPartners includes HPE ProLiant BL460 Gen9 Server Blades and HPE ProLiant DL360 Gen9 Servers, HPE 3PAR StoreServ 8440 All Flash and StoreOnce 5100 storage, and HPE 5900 networking. PinkRoccade Healthcare uses HPE OneView for automated provisioning and management across the infrastructure. The entire infrastructure is replicated to a second data center for disaster recovery using a variety of HPE technologies, including 3PAR Peer Persistence. For backup PinkRoccade Healthcare uses HPE StoreOnce Recovery Manager Central, along with Veeam backup software for its VMware virtualized environment.

The HPE infrastructure runs PharmaPartners custom-developed applications for general practitioners, like Medicom, as well as pharmacy information management solutions such as Pharmacom, among others. All PharmaPartners applications run in the SUSE Linux Enterprise operating environment.

HPE Technology Services Consulting worked with PinkRoccade Healthcare to plan and design the data center expansion for PharmaPartners. In addition, HPE Technology Services Support deployed the HPE infrastructure and provides ongoing 24/7 coverage of infrastructure maintenance, management, and problem resolution with its Datacenter Care Service.

Attasio remarks, "With HPE we have a completely integrated infrastructure stack and a partner that we can count on to support it. That's a great value to us and to our hosted customers. If we had a mix of vendors, you always get finger pointing. But by standardizing on HPE infrastructure with

Datacenter Care, we know if there's ever a problem whether it's at the server, storage, networking or software level we have only one number to call and HPE will quickly take care of us. That's important because healthcare is a 24/7 business. Patients can't wait, so any problems have to be resolved quickly."

Dramatic performance boost

While the migration of PharmaPartners applications is ongoing, the company has already realized significant benefits from moving off its legacy IBM/NetApp/Cisco infrastructure onto a modernized and integrated HPE infrastructure. For example, performance has improved dramatically, with application response time now three times faster than before.

"HPE's Gen9 server blades provide a big step forward in processing power," says Attasio. "We're also using the newest HPE 3PAR storage with all solid-state drives, which deliver much higher performance than traditional spinning disks. This really helps the pharmacies and general practitioners because their applications respond much faster and allow them to serve patients more efficiently. We spoke with a number of pharmacies and they are all very happy with the performance. They really notice a difference."

Improved application performance is especially important today as more and more general practitioners work collaboratively with pharmacies. That means larger groups of users and heavier workloads. Previously, large concentrations of general practitioners and pharmacies in big cities regularly overloaded PharmaPartners' legacy infrastructure.

van Dijk points out, "The performance problems before not only affected speed and responsiveness but also application

Case study

PinkRoccade
Healthcare

Industry

Healthcare/Cloud
Services

Customer at a glance

Application

- Proprietary software applications serving pharmacies and general practitioners

Hardware

- HPE ProLiant BL460 Gen9 Server Blades
- HPE ProLiant DL360 Gen9 Servers
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 8440 All Flash Storage
- HPE StoreOnce 5100
- HPE 5900 networking

Software

- SUSE Linux
- VMware vSphere
- HPE 3PAR Replication Suite
- HPE StoreOnce Recovery Manager Central
- Veeam Backup

Services

- HPE Cloud Consulting Services
- HPE Network & Mobility Consulting
- HPE Education Services
- HPE Datacenter Care
- HPE Flexible Capacity

stability. The applications would often stop multiple times a week, which is a big problem when you're trying to treat a patient or fill a prescription. Now the applications are much more stable. They no longer stop and disrupt healthcare services."

Assured stability and availability

System reliability and availability have also greatly improved. PharmaPartners' aging IBM equipment and other infrastructure components were prone to frequent failures. On average, the HPE infrastructure runs at 99.995% uptime compared to just 99.9% uptime with the old infrastructure.

Another major improvement for PharmaPartners is having dual data centers, which minimizes any risk of unplanned business downtime.

Attasio explains, "We maintain 100% infrastructure capacity at both our data centers. In the event of a disaster at our main site, we can have all applications up and running in the DR site within half an hour. That's such an advantage over their old single data center because it's more important than ever that PharmaPartners have their applications up and running 24/7."

An added advantage is that PinkRoccade Healthcare can also minimize any planned downtime for PharmaPartners. With full system capacity at both data centers, IT can perform system maintenance without downtime by simply moving virtual machines and applications over to the remote site, then move them back when the maintenance is complete without disrupting business operations.

In addition to the benefits PharmaPartners has realized, PinkRoccade Healthcare has also gained a valuable competitive advantage.

van Dijk concludes, "The ability of the HPE infrastructure to scale, combined with our dual data center architecture, enables PinkRoccade Healthcare to stand out from other service providers and will help us continue to expand our business. Other software companies in the healthcare market recognize the need for 24/7 availability and high performance for their applications, and they are turning to PinkRoccade Healthcare to host their environments. With HPE as our partner, we are ready to take them on."

Learn more at
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