

ZZG Zorggroep realizes continuous IT modernization with Unica Schutte ICT's Unicloud

HPE ProLiant ensures availability, scalability, and flexibility to give patients the best care possible

Objective

Ensure continuous availability of business-critical patient care services

Approach

Leverage HPE Technology Refresh to enable Unica Schutte ICT to build a modern, highly-available cloud

IT Matters

- Ensured superior cloud service delivery with continuous modernization
- Provided 24x7x365 availability and reliability to meet SLAs
- Optimized costs with industry-standard, high-density, energy efficient platforms

Business Matters

- Delivered highly-available platform to support 24x7 patient care
- Increased business agility with costs aligned to usage
- Ensured healthcare compliance with scheduled technology refresh



With almost 3000 employees delivering 24x7 patient care, ZZG Zorggroep needed a partner who understood their business and could deliver the required availability at the best value for money. Unica Schutte ICT's Unicloud offered them modular cloud services powered by HPE ProLiant servers delivering the performance, scalability, and availability to meet SLAs.

Focus on the business

"IT is not our business. Healthcare is our business. That's why we decided to outsource our IT infrastructure to Unica Schutte ICT," says Leendert Buijtendijk, IT Manager of Stichting ZZG Zorggroep, a leading healthcare organization in The Netherlands caring for over 3000 elderly patients. "Outsourcing was the only viable option for ZZG Zorggroep,

and with their deep vertical expertise and IT capabilities and best practices around HPE infrastructure, Unica Schutte ICT is the right partner for us."

With almost 3000 employees—1250 of whom work remotely across the Nijmegen area in The Netherlands providing personal healthcare services—communication and collaboration are critical to ZZG Zorggroep's business. "It was getting harder and harder for us to acquire the right skills and expertise to maintain our systems," reflects Buijtendijk. "ZZG Zorggroep is moving towards the need for 365x24 availability of their IT systems, especially communication tools like alarm systems and telecommunication solutions that affect patient care. From an IT perspective, we were finding it difficult to guarantee that sort of availability."

“Our customers depend on the quality of our infrastructure, and HPE gives us the best value for money. Not only is the HPE equipment of the highest quality, it’s also the most affordable for what you get. That makes a huge difference to a company like ours where delivering 24x7 service at the right price is critical to our customers.”

— Ed Staal, Chief Commercial Officer at Unica Schutte ICT

As the business model evolved to include a wider range of care services, ZZG Zorggroep went from providing IT support from 8 to 5, to delivering IT services 24x7. The management team soon realized that they needed to make a change that would both support the business, and realize a better return on investment. And with a desire to focus on its core business—instead of IT support—in 2007 ZZG Zorggroep became one of the first care organizations in The Netherlands to outsource their IT environment to a service provider.

Choose a partner, not a service provider

“We weren’t just looking for a provider who could provide a 24x7 service,” says Buijtendijk. “We wanted a partner who understood both our business and our business processes; someone who knows what’s important to us and what’s not. When I call with a problem that’s critical, it’s important that the service provider understands what that means to my

business and responds accordingly. Unica Schutte ICT has that expertise and has proved to be the right partner for us.”

Unica Schutte ICT is a full-service IT provider with over 20 years’ experience in delivering IT and Telco solutions to over 300 customers across The Netherlands. With two of its own data centers and over 150 specialists, Unica Schutte ICT offers a broad portfolio of services including the delivery, implementation, management, and maintenance of traditional IT and cloud infrastructures.

“We pride ourselves in being—not just a service provider—but, more importantly, a business enabler,” relates Ed Staal, Chief Commercial Officer at Unica Schutte ICT. “In addition to our IT capabilities, we have extensive vertical expertise in healthcare and other industries that are of real value to companies like ZZG Zorggroep. And as an all-HPE shop, we’ve been able to develop the specialized technical skills that ensure the performance, availability, and scalability our customers need to run their businesses.”

Move to the cloud

Based on the deployment models available, ZZG Zorggroep initially chose to purchase their own new IT environment, but deployed it in one of Unica Schutte ICT's data centers instead of on-premise. "That allowed us to take advantage of Unica Schutte ICT's modern facilities rather than maintain our own," says Buijtendijk. "It gave us what we needed in terms of availability. And since the entire infrastructure is managed by Unica Schutte ICT specialists, we get a superior service without having to worry about acquiring or developing those skills in-house."

As their business requirements evolved, ZZG Zorggroep began to transition to the cloud in 2010. Aging and amortized infrastructure was retired, and all IT services migrated step-by-step to Unica Schutte ICT's UnicCloud—a suite of full-service cloud solutions spanning private, public, and hybrid cloud models—running on the latest HPE infrastructure.

"We've been offering cloud services on HPE equipment for over 10 years," states Staal. "Our customers depend on the quality of our infrastructure, and HPE gives us the best value for money. Not only is the HPE equipment of the highest quality, it's also the most affordable for what you get. That makes a huge difference to a company like ours where delivering 24x7 service at the right price is critical to our customers."

Make it simple

"The move from owning our own equipment and software licenses to renting from Unica Schutte ICT really made a difference to our business," adds Buijtendijk. "Equipment which we bought ourselves was usually only replaced after more than five years. But by using the rental model, we benefit from Unica Schutte ICT's technology refresh schedule. And since they replace their infrastructure frequently, we take advantage of the lower TCO reduction of the new equipment. With Unica Schutte ICT owning the infrastructure, we know that the technology refresh is always going to be done on time. It assures us of continuous modernization of our IT platform without requiring an additional investment."

"HPE Technology Refresh makes it easier and more affordable for us to keep up-to-date with the latest technology," says Staal. "And our customers benefit from ever-increasing performance, availability, and scalability that allows them to meet their SLAs with confidence."

Powering UnicCloud, HPE ProLiant Gen9 servers deliver more compute and storage capacity in a smaller footprint with lower energy consumption—all critical considerations for a service provider. Faster compute, memory, and I/O performance, coupled with increased storage and networking performance—including lower latency—translates to accelerated business results for end users. And the built-in platform redundancy together with Unica Schutte ICT's best practices and backup data center assures customers of 24x7 availability.

Customer at a glance

Application

HPE ProLiant servers power Unica Schutte ICT's UnicCloud, enabling them to offer their customers quality services with 24x7 availability at the right price

Hardware

- HPE ProLiant Gen8 Servers
- HPE ProLiant Gen9 Servers

HPE Services

- HPE Technology Refresh

Create a better customer experience

Taking everything into consideration, using most of the services offered in the UnicCloud catalogue makes good business sense for ZZG Zorggroep. As an end-to-end, modular solution, UnicCloud offers virtual desktop services; unified communications; backup, security, and disaster recovery to protect sensitive patient and employee information; proactive systems and network monitoring; and 24x7 support; all in one easy, pay-as-you-go package for maximum scalability.

"The building blocks offered by Unica Schutte ICT's UnicCloud provide a stable platform for in-patient care and support services. This robust foundation makes it easier for our staff to improve the healthcare experience for our customers," explains Buijtendijk.

"UnicCloud's pay-as-you-go financial model is a real benefit for our customers. They can save up to 40 percent compared to having to maintain their own data centers and IT systems," adds Staal. "But the real value it provides is flexibility. They can scale up or down as their business dictates. Costs are always aligned to usage. It's like getting a luxury car for the price of a standard one. The quality of our service is what makes the difference."

UnicCloud Hosted IT provides ZZG Zorggroep access to the required level of IT for the business paired with an optimal financial model. Costs are significantly lower than managing an in-house solution, while the functionality, availability, and robustness of the architecture and infrastructure is far superior. The flexibility of upscaling or downscaling as required ensures that costs are kept in line with business growth or contraction.

Realize the vision

Buijtendijk agrees: "We could never have achieved what we have if it wasn't for our move to Unica Schutte ICT. We currently have two FTEs to manage our desktops and devices, but if we still had all of our systems in-house, we would need at least 8 to 10. That's a considerable savings by itself. But on top of that, we benefit from the technical and industry expertise of Unica Schutte ICT's specialists for faster problem resolution, as well as their proactive management capabilities that often notify us of potential issues before they arise."

Does the fact that UnicCloud runs on HPE technology make a difference? "The business case which Unica Schutte ICT achieved for us with HPE equipment is definitely attractive," states Buijtendijk. "They realize the performance, scalability, and availability that ZZG Zorggroep depends upon. When you combine that with Unica Schutte ICT's services, we don't have to worry about things like security and compliance. It's all taken care of."

Buijtendijk sums it up: "Using Unica Schutte ICT's UnicCloud running on HPE infrastructure enables us to do what we want to do—focus on the provision of care and make optimal use of our software applications without being distracted by IT. Together, they give us the availability, scalability, and flexibility we need to give our patients the best care possible. That fits perfectly into our vision for ZZG Zorggroep."

Our solution partners

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