

HAVL Kantoor en ICT

HAVL builds best-of-breed managed cloud solution

HPE ConvergedSystem 700x supports a vital new business venture for Dutch office and IT solutions provider

Objective

Meet customer demand and ensure future business by offering managed cloud services

Approach

HAVL already had HPE product experience and a good relationship with HPE after many years as an HPE reseller. It only considered HPE solutions and chose HPE ConvergedSystem 700x after seeing product demonstrations

IT Matters

- Uses virtualisation to roll out new servers in minutes rather than weeks, providing flexible capacity planning for this new business strand
- Provides a turn-key, converged combination of HPE servers, storage, networking and management software
- Supplies vital high availability with backup data capable of being restored in 15 minutes

Business Matters

- Reduces cost due to real-time capacity planning, thin provisioning and tiered storage
- Delivers Proactive Support and ease of management which are vital as HAVL launches this new service
- Provides the company with a scalable new business strand to support growth and future success



To meet growing customer demands and grow its business, Dutch office solutions company HAVL decided to launch a managed cloud computing service. Since this was a new and important development for the business, it needed a world-class solution to reduce risk and ensure excellence. It chose to implement the HPE ConvergedSystem 700x converged platform and is already seeing the technical and business benefits.

Challenge

Customer demand

Eighty years ago, Netherlands-based HAVL was launched to sell basic office supplies, but it has come a long way since those days of paperclips and desks. Thirty years ago it branched out into IT solutions and now it sells a whole work concept. Het Nieuwe Werken (The New Work) is a total solution designed to make working life better for employees. It includes everything a company needs from interior design and training to office equipment and, of course, IT.

Located in the town of Tilburg, HAVL's first venture into IT was with Compaq, later acquired by HPE. As an HPE reseller, it has a long record of delivering HPE equipment to a wide range of customers. HAVL's prolonged success relies on listening to its customers, and recently they voiced some strong messages.

“Meeting customer demands by creating our own cloud with HPE ConvergedSystem 700x was important to the future of the company. If we hadn’t done this, it’s possible that HAVL would not exist in ten years time.”

— Sander van Dijk, IT engineer and consultant, HAVL

“We got a lot of requests from customers who wanted to compare the costs of buying new equipment against moving to cloud computing,” says Sander van Dijk, IT engineer and consultant with HAVL. “Once they had examined the difference in costs, a lot of businesses decided that a managed cloud solution was good for them.”

HAVL director, Ard Smulders adds: “The delivery of managed cloud services is a natural extension of HAVL’s ICT portfolio, but we needed a world-class solution to reduce risk and ensure excellence.”

Solution

Proactive support

HAVL decided to implement an HPE ConvergedSystem 700x solution to support its HPE CloudSystem environment. This consists of an HPE ProLiant BladeSystem c7000 Platinum Enclosure with seven HPE ProLiant BL460c Gen8 server blades running the HPE Matrix Operating Environment. A scalable HPE FlexFabric 10GB/24 port module is centrally managed using HPE Intelligent Management Center software to support its HPE CloudSystem environment.”

HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage 7200/7000 provides 48 disks, each with 450GB capacity, thin provisioning and tiered storage. HAVL uses RAID 5 storage technology to deliver a total networked storage capacity of 14TB.

“We looked only at Hewlett Packard Enterprise because as a reseller, we have always had a good experience with them,” explains van Dijk. “HPE gave us a demonstration and we already had some experience of HPE solutions. We had a good feeling about HPE and our past experience had been good, so why change it?”

Since HAVL is not a highly specialised IT company, good product support for the converged infrastructure was important so it chose a three-year Proactive Care Service.

The resources in its cloud are virtualised using the Microsoft® Hyper-V 2012 core hypervisor with HPE Virtual Machine Manager, HPE Data Protection Manager and HPE Operations Manager. The minimum operations environment for new virtual machines is Windows® 2008 R2 or higher but when customers are migrating from their own environments to the HAVL cloud then it’s possible to migrate to virtual machines running Windows 2003 or higher.



The customer environments are accessed through a Citrix Cloud Gateway powered by XenApp 6.5 and XenDesktop 7 apps and desktops.

HAVL is creating two different cloud environments, which are managed by an IT team of 15 people with some project engineers and a helpdesk team of ten. One is a multi-tenanted cloud that will be used by smaller companies, and the other is for larger companies who want a private cloud. Private cloud users can have a choice of security authentication levels but with the multi-tenant cloud, authentication is fixed at two-factor.

HAVL is using the enterprise mobility management solution, Citrix CloudGateway, and its customers have two ways of connecting with the cloud. They can use a site-to-site Virtual Private Network (VPN) from their office or can enjoy mobile connectivity by choosing the Cloud Gateway portal.

“With HPE ConvergedSystem 700x, we have a redundant platform on one site but we also have fibre connections to a second data centre,” says van Dijk. “A customer can choose to have a highly available environment, and can choose to replicate data to that other data centre. If one fails we can have everything up and running in 15 minutes.”

With the backup, customers can choose to opt for a high availability solution or not but the backup is made in the main data centre and always replicated to the second data centre. In addition, it is also written to tape which goes to a third location.”

Benefits

Flexibility and scalability

Implementing HPE ConvergedSystem 700x has enabled HAVL to meet customer demands as well as keep abreast of latest trends, creating a new business strand that will help with future growth and stability.

Since this is a new venture for HAVL, the flexibility and easy management of the HPE CloudSystem software running on the HPE ConvergedSystem 700x are vitally important. The HPE CloudSystem software allows entire environments to be automatically provisioned in just minutes.

“Virtualisation means that we can now roll out new servers and build an environment for a new customer in less than one day, ready for data migration,” says van Dijk. “This supports efficient capacity planning because we create just enough virtual servers for our existing customers and when they become full, we will just add more. At present we have created 20 virtual machines but will soon make this 50 to accommodate customers who have signed up for the service.”

Customer at a glance

Hardware

- HPE ConvergedSystem 700x
- HPE ProLiant BladeSystem c7000 Platinum Enclosure
- HPE ProLiant BL460c Gen 8 server blades
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage 7020/7000
- HPE FlexFabric 10GB/24 port module
- Citrix CloudGateway portal

Software

- HPE CloudSystem software (HPE Matrix Operating Environment)
- HPE Intelligent Management Center

HPE services

- HPE Proactive Care Service

“We selected HPE ConvergedSystem 700x because it gives us a complete, future-ready solution that allows our customers to benefit from scalable, affordable, best-of-breed managed cloud services.”

— Ard Smulders, director, HAVL

This kind of lean provisioning keeps costs down and further economies come from the tiered storage in HPE 3PAR StoreServ Storage 7000. Although HAVL has not yet started to use this feature, it will mean that the most active data can be stored on rapidly accessible media while data that is used less often is automatically moved to lower, less expensive tiers. The HPE 3PAR thin provisioning software also reduces costs because HAVL only needs to purchase the disk storage capacity it needs today, eliminating the expense of buying for the future.

The cloud offering is already creating potential business growth for HAVL with enquiries coming from companies it has not dealt with before, and it was a safe business decision as van Dijk explains: “Before we agreed to buy this system from HPE we had our first contract in, and that contract was equal to half of the investment that we made. We made some calculations based on the costs and these indicated that this was the new way to continue our business in future years.”

Ease of management and efficient support have also smoothed HAVL’s entry into this new market.

“We are using HPE Intelligent Management software for the monitoring of our network content. It gives us detailed information about the status of the infrastructure in a single pane of glass. When there is a problem it’s easy to identify,” says van Dijk. “Since we do not have highly technical specialists we realised if we did not have the knowledge, we would have to buy it so we signed a three-year HPE Proactive Care Service agreement. This includes remote monitoring of our systems so when there is a problem, HPE will proactively call and inform us about it and will fix it for us. There is a four hour call-out and it’s good to have the extra knowledge, support and management. That’s why we chose HPE.”

Learn more at hpe.com/go/convergedsystem/virtualization



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