ONLINE SERVICE PROVIDER SIMPLIFIES MANAGEMENT WITH VIRTUAL SOLUTION

Italian online services provider simplifies management of its server infrastructure

Italy-based company 7Pixel provides a range of online services, including price comparison engines TrovaPrezzi and ShoppyDoo. The company's customer base has grown quickly over the last few years, as has overall demand for its services.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

COMPANY: 7Pixel

INDUSTRY: Media, Entertainment and Communications

COUNTRY: Italy

FOUNDED: 2002

EMPLOYEES: 30

WEBSITE: www.7pixel.it

CHALLENGE

Italian online services provider 7Pixel wanted to simplify the management of its server infrastructure. It wanted to reduce the time employees spent on maintenance and minimise any interruption to its business-critical activities.

SOLUTION

7Pixel realised that a virtualization solution was the best fit for its needs. Dell™ and strategic partner Assyrus worked together to implement a new infrastructure based on VMware® software, Dell PowerEdge™ 2950 servers and a Dell | EMC CX320 storage area network (SAN).

BENEFITS

- Virtual solution simplifies server management and reduces maintenance time
- Server infrastructure improves performance and optimises use of resources
- High availability minimises interruption to mission-critical services
- New solution can scale in line with future requirements and support company growth

Nicola Lamberti, CEO at 7Pixel, says: "We used to be guests in a web farm and had no servers ourselves. We later switched to a new web farm with our servers that grew to twelve."

7Pixel wanted to manage its server infrastructure more efficiently and decided to approach existing service provider Dell™. Nicola Lamberti says: "Even when we were a small company, Dell took very good care of us so we knew we could trust it."

Dell and strategic partner Assyrus assessed the infrastructure requirements of 7Pixel and realised that virtualization could be the right solution to meet its needs.

With a virtualization solution, 7Pixel wanted to optimise its infrastructure. The company needed to cut hardware-related costs and reduce time spent on maintenance and repair. It also wanted to enhance the availability of equipment and minimise any interruption to business-critical activities.

VIRTUAL SOLUTION SIMPLIFIES INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT

7Pixel began a project to migrate physical machines on to a virtual environment. As a result, the company now has 12 virtual servers that co-exist on three physical Dell PowerEdge™ 2950 servers.

"WE HAD A SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT WHO WAS INVOLVED IN CONFIGURING, PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE SOLUTION. HE COMMUNICATED WITH US ALONG WITH ALL THIRD PARTIES SO THAT WE DIDN'T HAVE TO"

Nicola Lamberti, CEO, 7Pixel

HOW IT WORKS

HARDWARE
- Dell™ PowerEdge™ 2950 servers
- Dell PowerVault™ 124T LTO3 tape library
- Dell | EMC CX320 storage area network (SAN)
- Dell 1815N printer

SOFTWARE
- VMware® 13

SERVICES
- Infrastructure Consulting Services (ICS)
- Training
- Gold Enterprise support

During the planning phase of the project, Dell ensured that Assyrus provided the 7Pixel IT team with VMware® virtualization software training to help them manage the infrastructure as soon as the solution was in place.

7Pixel can now manage their server infrastructure remotely. The IT team can access any machine via IP and turn it off or on as if they were in front of the real machine. This has dramatically reduced the time staff spend on server maintenance and improved the overall efficiency of the team.

SCALABLE TECHNOLOGY CAN GROW WITH THE COMPANY

Along with the new PowerEdge™ servers and VMware® software, Assyrus also introduced a Dell | EMC CX320 storage area network (SAN). This combination of technology ensures that the new infrastructure can scale to cope with the company's future requirements. They can add new disks to the SAN or more RAM for the servers as and when it is needed.

In addition, 7Pixel can introduce new services more easily. Nicola Lamberti, says: "We wanted to be able to create virtual servers on which we could run smaller services. And we wanted these services to be on different servers. It would have been expensive to have a physical server for each small project. With a virtual environment, we can incorporate these new services quickly and at no additional cost."

Essentially, the virtual technology will help the company use its existing environment to the full and introduce new services to its portfolio without having to invest further in physical servers.

ENHANCED AVAILABILITY ENSURES BUSINESS CONTINUITY

The new infrastructure will not be affected in the event of a hardware failure. If a server, disk, fibre board or cable breaks down, it will become redundant so the company's business-critical systems remain undisturbed.

When a breakdown occurs, the technical support centre gets alerted. They replace the faulty component and take the system back to maximum availability. The client's machines never stop.

The VMware® solution also ensures that if a physical server hosting 10 virtual machines breaks down, the virtual machines will be moved automatically onto another available physical server.

SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT ENSURES SMOOTH-RUNNING PROJECT

7Pixel attributes the success of the project to the commitment and high-quality service provided by Dell™ and strategic partner

Assyrus. Nicola Lamberti says: "We did our research and even if another company had offered us a solution at a lower price, we would have chosen Dell because of the experience we had already had with them. We trusted Dell and our trust was confirmed by the results. We let Dell plan our project, which was neither small nor easy, and she planned and organised it well.

"We had a single point of contact throughout the project who was involved in configuring, planning and implementing the solution. She communicated with us along with all third parties so that we didn't have to. Overall, working with Dell was a very positive experience and proved to be the right decision."

For more information on this case study or to read additional case studies, go to www.dell.com/casestudies/emea or www.dell.it/casestudies

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