

Server Virtualisation – NHS Case Study



The Challenge

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the first in the county to be awarded 'Teaching Hospitals' status, operates over 100 servers, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. The technical infrastructure depended upon legacy technologies which were reaching the end of their useful life and the Trust was facing increasing demand for the expansion of existing services and the introduction of new facilities. This combined with the need to implement a cross-site disaster recovery capability, lead the Trust's IT Project Manager, Saeed Umar, to evaluate solutions that had been successfully adopted by neighbouring NHS Trusts. "We were running out of space," explained Saeed. "Power consumption was high and the infrastructure generated a lot of heat and required constant attention. I met with colleagues from other NHS Trusts to understand how they had overcome these issues and delivered a powerful, flexible and robust service."

Saeed discovered that other healthcare providers had successfully implemented solutions based around server virtualisation. Following detailed analysis and adhering to its policy of adopting best-of-breed technologies, the

Trust decided to deploy a VMware based solution. "The VMware host servers would be deployed across 2 independent data centres and data synchronised through EMC array-based replication. Failover would be managed natively by VMware Site Recovery Manager (SRM) to provide a simplified and reliable disaster recovery capability" continued Saeed. "The ability to replace physical servers with virtual equivalents would allow us to refresh hardware economically whilst providing capacity for expansion and enabling business continuity."

The Trusted Partner

For over a decade, Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust had partnered with BDS Solutions during a wide range of server and desktop infrastructure projects. "We regarded BDS as an extension of our internal IT function," continued Saeed. "They have worked closely with us and in addition to their deep technical knowledge and healthcare expertise, had considerable experience working in partnership with major hardware and software vendors. As our trusted technology partner, we had no hesitation in asking BDS Solutions to design the service, project manage the delivery, and deploy the new infrastructure."

The Benefits

The virtualised servers have allowed Saeed's team to substantially enhance service delivery as well as bring additional systems online. "Thanks to the close relationship between BDS and our internal IT teams, this major project proceeded smoothly, on time and to budget," concluded Saeed. "We now have an extremely flexible and powerful enterprise-wide infrastructure that meets our on-going requirements and provides the capacity to grow to meet our ever increasing demands. When it comes to projects of this magnitude, it makes sense to trust the experts."



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