A TRANSFORMATIVE MIGRATION TO STATE-OF-THE-ART CLOUD HOSTING FOR A GLOBAL FASHION MANUFACTURER

THE BACKGROUND

Founded in Yorkshire in 1880, Dewhirst is one of the world's leading designers and manufacturers of quality clothing, with a strong reputation for technical innovation and multiple supplier contracts with the biggest names in global fashion and retail.

Agility and cost-effectiveness are of paramount importance in this industry. Dewhirst clothes are produced in multiple locations including India, Cambodia, China, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Vietnam, with more than 800 IT users based outside the UK. Managing these diverse locations is a 24/7/365 job, requiring secure and reliable remote access to all factory servers. Careful and effective management of IT costs is a key concern.

Daisy and Dewhirst have a long-standing relationship, which initially involved the managed hosting of Dewhirst's global IT infrastructure via the CloudSure UK platform. Given both companies' shared passion for innovation, it's no surprise that this collaboration has progressed significantly since then.

THE CHALLENGE

Ever on the hunt for new and effective solutions, Dewhirst was keen to explore an even more scalable hosting option. As well as a secure, virtualised environment that would deliver all IT resources including servers, storage and software licensing "as a service", the company wanted unprecedented levels of flexibility and scalability. This would enable it to "power up" and "power down" its IT requirements in line with demand cycles and the employment of seasonal workers.

Daisy, meanwhile, was aware of CloudSure's limitations in being a shared infrastructure solution to newer hosting platforms, and keen to migrate customers towards more appropriate solutions in line with their needs.

AT A GLANCE

Company: Dewhirst

Industry: Manufacturing

Sites: 12

Employees: 501-1,000

Objectives:

- Flexibility & scalability to deal with seasonal demands
- Reduce costs

Solutions:

- Cloud & Hosting

Products:

- Microsoft Azure

Results:

- Data and applications reliably hosted
- IT environment is scalable
- Total cost of ownership reduced

That's why, when Daisy proactively approached Dewhirst to discuss a changeover to Microsoft's cloud-based Azure platform, the ideas chimed closely with the client's own thinking – a clear reflection of the deep understanding that had grown between them, as well as Daisy's close familiarity with Dewhirst's IT and business needs.

THE SOLUTION

By moving to cloud-managed hosting with Microsoft Azure, Dewhirst would eliminate the labour-intensive process of applying upgrades that had rendered the previous platform less efficient. It would also be able to enjoy significant new cost benefits.

Daisy demonstrated its ability to handle the project using a range of relevant case studies, while leveraging its status as a Microsoft Gold Cloud Platform partner and a suite of references from Microsoft itself.

After agreeing a detailed design strategy and roadmap, a carefully-selected team of consultants set about coordinating, implementing and testing the new platform. The migration took place gradually, with Dewhirst's less critical servers migrating to Azure first in order to manage risk. For a brief period before full migration, both old and new environments ran in parallel while the new arrangement underwent exhaustive testing.

The entire transformation process was completed within two months of receiving the purchase order.

THE RESULT

Having migrated to Azure, Dewhirst's IT infrastructure now offers the agility the company needs to stay at the forefront of its industry.

Data and applications are all reliably and securely hosted, and fully accessible from UK headquarters. Technology upgrades are applied instantly by Microsoft, avoiding the disruption and accumulated cost of manual intervention that had characterised earlier solutions. Application testing is more efficient, allowing the easy deployment of vital new business software.

The total cost of ownership is further reduced by Azure's own pricing structure, where billing occurs on a "time used" basis. This gives Dewhirst unprecedented flexibility in adapting to its own real-time needs, including changing workloads. Seasonal staff can be accommodated easily, and the IT environment is able to grow on demand with little risk of "over-dimensioning". In effect, Dewhirst's IT strategy has moved from a capex model to an opex one.

As part of the changeover, Daisy also helped Dewhirst to halve its colocation expenses, by reducing legacy equipment and associated cooling and heating costs. This has also significantly reduced its carbon footprint.

This swift, seamless transformation project was aided by the trust and understanding that exists between client and supplier. As well as providing Dewhirst with clear business benefits right here, right now, such close cooperation allows both companies to maintain a shared, forward-looking perspective and anticipate future needs.

> "Daisy's structured approach, careful planning and professional consultants, ensured this high profile project ran smoothly, on time and under budget with no impact on the day to day running of the business."
>
> Richard Theakston, IT Manager at Dewhirst Group

NEXT STEPS

Contact Daisy today to discover more. Our team will be glad to help.

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Or if you're an existing customer, get in touch with your account manager directly.

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