Hewlett Packard Enterprise

UNIX-to-Linux server migration from IBM to HPE helps VIVACOM optimize telecom services

HPE Integrity Superdome X reliability and efficiency saves €100,000 per year

Objective
Reduce costs and improve flexibility for mission-critical billing and other core business applications

Approach
Replace IBM Power systems with HPE Integrity Superdome X to gain mission-critical performance and reliability in an industry-standard architecture

IT Matters
- Gained higher performance than expected for mission-critical applications
- Increased IT agility to deploy virtual machines in minutes
- Achieved robustness of UNIX in more versatile and efficient x86 platform

Business Matters
- Saved €1 million in CAPEX and reduced OPEX by €100,000 per year
- Accelerated service expansion due to increased scalability and high reliability
- Exceeded system availability requirement of 99.995% uptime

Need for efficient agility prompts IBM server migration

The world of telecommunications is in constant motion. For example, a never-ending flow of technology innovations continually spurs new service offerings, competitive dynamics can force providers to quickly shift their strategies, and keeping up with changing customer demands and market trends is always an ongoing challenge. VIVACOM, the leading telecommunications operator in Bulgaria, understands this well.

Formerly the national Bulgarian telecom provider, VIVACOM had to become more nimble and competitive after major worldwide players entered the market. In fact, without a flexible IT infrastructure, the company would not be able to efficiently deliver new, enhanced services such as mobile wireless data services, IP-based and satellite TV services, and public cloud offerings like infrastructure as a service. That's why VIVACOM replaced its aging IBM Power systems with the industry's most reliable standard x86 platform: HPE Integrity Superdome X built on the Intel® Xeon® Processor E7 Family.

"We view HPE as much more than a technology vendor; they are a true partner. The support we receive from HPE Pointnext has been excellent, and we will continue to rely on their guidance as we evolve our infrastructure to meet the growing range of communication needs across Bulgaria."

— Svetoslav Nanchev, Senior Manager for Infrastructure, VIVACOM

HPE Superdome X proves the smart choice for VIVACOM

VIVACOM previously ran its core business applications on a mix of IBM Power 6 and Power 7 systems running IBM AIX. As these systems aged, support costs skyrocketed, and the outdated Power architecture prevented VIVACOM from adopting newer technologies that would help the company grow and compete.

Svetoslav Nanchev, VIVACOM's senior manager for infrastructure, remarks, "Our biggest concerns were reducing costs and gaining more flexibility. Moving to an x86 architecture was the smart choice, but we needed a platform that will meet our mission-critical performance requirements with uptime of at least 99.995%."

IBM was deeply entrenched in VIVACOM´s core infrastructure, but that changed when HPE introduced Superdome X with the powerful Intel Xeon Processor E7 Family. This would allow VIVACOM to move its core business applications to cost-efficient Linux® while ensuring the highest reliability, availability and serviceability (RAS).

"We were impressed that the Superdome X could deliver the high RAS of UNIX®, but on an industry-standard x86 architecture," says Nanchev.

Today, VIVACOM runs its mission-critical billing, CRM, and Oracle and MS SQL applications on Superdome X in a Linux and Windows® operating environment, virtualized with VMware® and protected with HPE StoreOnce backup appliances.

HPE Pointnext provided installation and start-up services for Superdome X along with support during VIVACOM's in-house server migration. This was crucial since Superdome X was new technology for the company. Nanchev and his team wanted service assistance that went beyond simply deploying equipment, but also included knowledge transfer to enable VIVACOM IT staff to fully understand the technology and gain the skills to operate it independently following the migration.

"HPE Pointnext specialists were very helpful in designing the solution and integrating it into our environment so that we could take over operations," Nanchev reports. "One of the most valuable aspects of working with HPE Pointnext was how quickly they resolved any issues that came up so the installation completed on schedule."

Customer at a glance

Application/Solution
- Telecommunications billing, customer relationship management, and other core business applications

Hardware
- HPE Integrity Superdome X
- HPE ProLiant DL380 Servers
- HPE StoreOnce backup

Software
- Oracle Database
- HPE Data Protector
- VMware vSphere®

HPE Pointnext services
- HPE Installation and Deployment Services
- HPE Datacenter Care

Mission-critical performance at dramatically lower cost

Since migrating to the HPE Superdome X, VIVACOM has gained even more performance over IBM Power systems than originally expected while exceeding its uptime objectives. This is helping the company accelerate its service expansion with confidence that the infrastructure can efficiently handle growing workload demands.

Moreover, by avoiding the capital expense of upgrading its old IBM Power systems, VIVACOM saved approximately €1 million. And thanks to a reliable, cost-efficient x86 architecture, the company has reduced operating expenses by about €100,000 per year.

In addition, the mission-critical performance and high RAS of Superdome X enable the company to run multiple virtual machines (VMs) on a single server and deploy new VMs in minutes. So, the company can quickly roll out advanced services such as 4G wireless, improve the BSS and OSS landscape and have more predictable internal and external services.

Ensuring optimal efficiency across the infrastructure

In addition to the performance and efficiency improvements provided by Superdome X, VIVACOM also increased the performance and efficiency of its data protection infrastructure, thanks to HPE StoreOnce.

Since adopting StoreOnce, backups complete on average approximately 10% faster than before. Moreover, due to a 6:1 data deduplication ratio, the company reduced the amount of backup data, freeing substantial capacity to extend the life of the solution.

Standing behind the entire HPE solution is HPE Pointnext, providing HPE Datacenter Care. With their proactive assessments and recommendations, HPE Pointnext helps VIVACOM stay up to date to ensure optimal performance and consistency across the infrastructure.

Nanchev points out, HPE Datacenter Care also saves us time in planning and executing needed changes. So, it brings real confidence that we will achieve our SLAs and no disruption will affect our services."

As VIVACOM continues to grow and expand its portfolio of service offerings, the company has entrusted HPE as a long-term partner to support its evolving technology requirements.

Nanchev concludes, "We view HPE as much more than a technology vendor; they are a true partner. The support we receive from HPE Pointnext has been excellent, and we will continue to rely on their guidance as we evolve our infrastructure to meet the growing range of communication needs across Bulgaria."

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