

Infrastructure Virtualisation

Case Study

The Malcolm Group

Investing for continued business success

The Malcolm Group wanted to upgrade its existing virtualised server infrastructure and invest in a new virtualised IT platform to support the continuing growth of its business. It appointed Cutter Group to provide specialist virtualisation expertise, implement the latest VMware solutions and provide ongoing support.

Challenges Faced

Ever since it was founded with a single horse and cart in the 1920s, The Malcolm Group has continually invested in new vehicles, plant and depots to help it build its reputation for excellence in the logistics and construction industries. This commitment to continual investment and business improvement continues today and extends to all parts of the business including IT infrastructure.

For more than five years, the company had been using virtualised server infrastructure in its production, disaster recovery and test environments. To ensure that this vital IT environment could continue to meet the needs of growing numbers of users, the company decided to invest in upgrading the entire platform. At the same time, the company wanted to build a brand new virtualised demilitarised zone (DMZ) to improve the resilience of several business-critical transactional systems.

Cutter made all the difference by:



Supporting the migration from legacy virtualised server infrastructure



Implementing a suite of VMware solutions



Designing and implementing a virtualised demilitarised zone



Providing peace of mind with 24/7 technical support



Services Provided

The Malcolm Group was introduced to Cutter Group by COOLSPIRiT, a well-established provider of data management solutions and network infrastructure. The three organisations then worked together to undertake the initial migration project, with Cutter providing the specialist virtualisation expertise and experience.

Working remotely, Cutter deployed a suite of best-in-class products from VMware, including vSphere and Site Recovery Manager (SRM), creating a new virtualised platform for the company's production, disaster recovery and test environments. Cutter's consultants then provided The Malcolm Group with a proven set of migration methods and tools, enabling the company's own IT team to carry out many migration tasks themselves in-house, with Cutter's support.

Subsequently, Cutter worked with the IT team at The Malcolm Group to reimagine the company's DMZ and design and implement a new DMZ, based, for the first time, on virtualised infrastructure. As a part of this project, Cutter deployed VMware's vSphere Remote Office Branch Office and VMware vSAN to reduce the overall cost of the solution.

Impressed by the depth of Cutter's experience and the professionalism of its consultants, The Malcolm Group has now entered into an ongoing support contract with Cutter. Under the terms of this agreement, Cutter will provide 24/7 technical support in the event of any issues in the future, which is very reassuring for the business.

Results Achieved

By drawing on Cutter's experience and skills, Malcolm Group completed both the migration project and the DMZ project faster than would have been possible using in-house staff alone. Consequently, the company was able to start reaping the benefits from its investment in new virtualised infrastructure more quickly.

After migrating from its legacy virtualised server infrastructure to the new virtualised platform, The Malcolm Group experienced a notable improvement in IT performance across all its virtualised business applications. Now, the company's 800 IT users have a better quality IT experience, whether they are working at its headquarters in Scotland or at any of its other locations around the UK.

The new virtualised DMZ is significantly more resilient than The Malcolm Group's previous DMZ, which helps to ensure business continuity. There is a far lower risk of critical business operations, such as order processing, order confirmations and stock management being interrupted by an IT outage, as these automated systems are no longer vulnerable to faults in single hardware appliances.

In addition, the new virtualised DMZ is far more flexible than its predecessor, making it easier for IT staff to change the way in which they deliver IT services. For example, the IT team can adapt the platform in the future to implement new disaster recovery policies and meet the changing requirements of the business in the years ahead.