



# Manufacturer drives growth with easier IT management

H+H UK increases business agility by deploying IT services in hours rather than weeks thanks to its flexible server and storage environment



## Customer profile



<b>Company</b>	H+H UK Limited
<b>Industry</b>	Manufacturing
<b>Country</b>	United Kingdom
<b>Employees</b>	200
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hhcelcon.co.uk">www.hhcelcon.co.uk</a>

## Business need

Manufacturing firm H+H UK wanted to ensure it could deliver an uninterrupted IT service to staff and customers. It decided to introduce a simplified virtualized infrastructure.

## Solution

H+H worked with Dell Partner Upgrade Options to consolidate its server infrastructure with VMware, while introducing a new backup and disaster recovery strategy based on Dell™ PowerEdge™ servers and Dell EqualLogic™ storage.

## Benefits

- Customers receive uninterrupted service with resilient infrastructure
- IT team deploys new services in hours rather than weeks
- Firm lowers costs by 20 per cent, and consolidates servers by 80 per cent
- Company reduces power and cooling in the data centre
- Responsive support service provides quick access to expertise

## Solutions featured

- [Backup and Recovery](#)
- [Data Center Virtualization](#)
- [Disaster Recovery](#)
- [Networking](#)
- [Storage](#)
- [Support Services](#)

“Setting up a virtual server is so much faster with the VMware and Dell-based infrastructure – in fact, there’s no comparison.”

*Brian Collins, IT Manager, H+H*

H+H UK is the UK's largest manufacturer of aircrete products – building materials used in walls and as infill to framed construction. The company delivers a range of aircrete products and services to every sector within the building industry.

Its customers include private housing developers and builders, social housing contractors and building contractors that work with its network of builders' merchants.

Brian Collins, IT Manager, H+H UK, says: "Things can move pretty quickly in our business. This makes IT more critical than ever before. Our technology doesn't just have to be cost-effective, it has to help us react to business needs as and when they occur. If the company sees an opportunity, we have to be able to seize it."

H+H must provide a continuous IT service to its customers and staff, but its existing technology infrastructure was proving to be inflexible. Collins says: "We used to rotate our IT hardware every five years, but with the recession, our budget simply couldn't stretch to replacing our servers all the time. We decided to look into virtualization to help us move away from our physical server infrastructure."

#### Fully redundant solution is essential for business continuity

Based at a large manufacturing site, the IT team also has to be prepared for the possibility of an interruption to its power supply, or worse. Built-in redundancy is essential to ensuring that customers and staff continue to receive mission-critical services, even in the event of failure. Collins says: "IT is fundamental to everything we do. If we lose our IT, we lose everything. Whichever system it is – call centre, sales order processing or accounting – downtime is simply unacceptable."

The IT team knew the updated IT environment needed to be reliable to provide customers with a fast and efficient service. Collins says: "The project wasn't just about cutting costs. The main areas of focus for us were ease of management, simpler backups and built-in disaster recovery. Our infrastructure supports a lot of mission-critical activities, including the day-to-day running of our call centre, so downtime cannot be tolerated."

#### Strong partnership helps business introduce a comprehensive solution

Having decided that virtualization was the best option, the H+H IT team approached two of its partners to decide on the best approach. Each partner proposed a new technology

# 80%

server consolidation  
lowers costs



Customers receive uninterrupted service thanks to resilient infrastructure

#### Technology at work

##### Services

Dell Support Services  
– Dell ProSupport™ with Next Business Day Onsite Service

##### Hardware

Dell™ EqualLogic™ PS4100X storage array

Dell PowerEdge™ R610/R710/R720 servers

Dell PowerConnect™ 6224 switches

Dell PowerVault™ LTO-5-140 tape drive

##### Software

VMware® vSphere™ 5



infrastructure – one was based on NetApp storage and Dell servers, and the second, which was put forward by Dell Partner Upgrade Options, was based on Dell storage and servers.

Collins says: “The Upgrade Options team invited us to a ‘lunch-and-learn’ session at its offices. One of its technical specialists ended up spending a whole afternoon with me, taking me through how a potential solution would work. We were really impressed with the Upgrade Options team’s Dell expertise, and we were also won over by the idea of a solution based entirely on Dell technology. It sounded like it would be easier to manage a Dell-based environment, and we knew that there wouldn’t be any hidden costs for extra software or additional licensing.”

### **Customers receive an uninterrupted service thanks to resilient infrastructure**

H+H decided to introduce a robust new IT environment across two sites working with Upgrade Options. The solution consists of a Dell™ EqualLogic™ PS4100X storage array, featuring 10,000 rpm Serial Attached SCSI (SAS) drives, 300-gigabyte disks and 7.2 terabytes of useable storage at the primary site. This is linked to two Dell PowerEdge™ R610 servers and Dell PowerConnect™ 6224 switches. A secondary site features a Dell PowerEdge R720 server, which replicates data from the primary site, and a Dell PowerEdge R710 server, which takes a backup copy of the data before transferring it to a Dell PowerVault™ LTO-5-140 tape drive.

Collins says: “Now, we can support our staff and customers with a more reliable, resilient IT infrastructure. That means even if we lose our primary site, for example, our customers’ calls will still be processed, orders can still be made, and business can go on as usual.”

The H+H IT team was impressed with the methodical approach to the

implementation taken by the Dell Partner. Collins says: “Upgrade Options planned the deployment in stages. The team made sure we were happy before we moved on to the next stage of the implementation, so we had total confidence in managing it ourselves.”

### **IT team provides customers and staff with services in hours rather than weeks**

Customers and staff can now access new services from the IT team more quickly than before. With a virtualized server infrastructure based on VMware® vSphere™ 5 server software, IT staff can set up a virtual server in hours.

Collins says: “It used to take us at least two weeks to set up a server to support a new service or application. We had to spec and order the server, and then wait for it to be delivered, after which it would have to be unboxed, installed and commissioned. Setting up a virtual server is so much faster with the VMware and Dell-based infrastructure – in fact, there’s no comparison.”

Now that it can set up servers quickly, the IT team has more flexibility to work on innovative projects. Collins says: “Since we’ve cut out all the time it used to take to set up servers, we can dedicate more resources to application and service delivery. With better IT performance, the business will run more efficiently, supporting growth and greater levels of customer service.”

### **Business reduces costs by 20 per cent, consolidating servers by 80 per cent**

The H+H team has made significant savings as a result of the move to virtualized servers and storage. By reducing its physical infrastructure by 80 per cent, it has seen costs fall. Collins says: “We’re already cutting costs with the Dell solution. We know that we’re getting great value, and that there are no extra charges for the Dell EqualLogic storage. Thanks to Dell and VMware, we’re delivering savings of at least 20 per cent.”



**Company reduces power and cooling requirement in the data centre**

Collins has no doubts that Dell EqualLogic was the right choice for his virtualized environment. The storage provides rapid deployment, enterprise-class data protection, and solid performance and fault tolerance. It also integrates tightly with VMware environments for simplified management. In the case of H+H, the storage also ensured that the company gained more for its money because all software licences for Dell EqualLogic are included in the solution's initial price. Collins says: "We found that Dell EqualLogic was a great fit for virtualized environments. It's rated highly among many IT pros."

#### **Responsive support service provides access to the experts**

The partnership between H+H and Upgrade Options – together with the reassurance of Dell ProSupport™ with Next Business Day Onsite Service on the hardware – has given the firm continuous support before, during and after the implementation.

Collins says: "Upgrade Options has supported us throughout the project. From setting up workshops in the early stages to effective knowledge transfer during the implementation and beyond, we now have the confidence we need to make the most of our new

infrastructure. And because of our extra investment in the Dell ProSupport service, we know that there will always be someone we can get hold of if we have an issue. That means we can deliver an uninterrupted service to our staff and customers safe in the knowledge that the Dell team will be on-site if we need it."

#### **About Upgrade Options**

Independent IT reseller Upgrade Options offers high-quality sales, solutions and support services to both enterprise and public-sector customers. Based in the UK and with more than 15 years' experience, Upgrade Options is a Dell Partner that specialises in technology services, including virtualized solutions and networking installations.

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