

Growing Internet Service Provider (ISP) is able to boast their usage of HP BladeSystem to gain new clients

opus:interactive utilizes its HP data center to entice new clients



“Like many companies, the success that we’ve had as an ISP is largely credited to the vendors we work with—the ProLiant server experts at HP have been essential to our business growth.”

– Jeremy Sherwood, opus:interactive

Objective:

opus:interactive’s client base is growing at a rapid rate. The company needed an IT partner that would not only provide reliable equipment and service, but also provide flexibility, scalability, and rapid deployment when adding additional hardware and memory.

Approach:

opus:interactive provides Managed Internet Solutions to businesses who need online services such as Web Hosting, Managed Servers, Email Hosting, and High-Speed Internet access. To better serve their clients, the company decided to upgrade their data center from a mix of white boxes built from scratch to HP ProLiant servers.

IT Improvements:

- Implemented 52 HP ProLiant servers within their growing 1,000 square foot data center
- Utilize VMware on the HP BL460c server blades to offer virtual dedicated managed servers for their clients and to run many of their internal business applications without having to purchase additional servers

Business Benefits:

- Having a data center that standardizes on HP ProLiant servers adds credibility and dependability as a managed and collocation service provider
- HP warranties provide an economic benefit by decreasing payouts for service level issues with customers
- Helped the company to upgrade and expand on their hosting and technology services for their clients
- The company’s position as an HP reseller enables them to offer their technology services at a more competitive price
- opus:interactive utilizes VMware to turn a one or two day deployment time to less than 15 mins from start to finish

A growing customer base presents the need for a data center upgrade

opus:interactive provides Managed Internet Solutions to businesses who need online services such as Web Hosting, Managed Servers, Email Hosting, and High-Speed Internet access. All these solutions are provided through our fully redundant, state-of-the-art Data Center in NW Portland. opus:interactive services small to large sized companies from a variety of industries, ranging from textiles to food service, since its inception in 1994.

A few years back, opus:interactive’s sister company, opus:creative, began to experience rapid growth. opus:creative offers its clients web development, brand design and identity creation services. “As opus:creative started building more and more clients, it seemed like a natural fit for us to start hosting for their clients. The technicians and system admins we already had on staff had experience working in ISP data centers,” says Jeremy Sherwood.

opus:interactive’s data center makes the transition to HP

In 2005, opus:interactive decided to upgrade its present 1,000 square foot data center which consisted of white boxes built from scratch to industry standard servers. Today, their HP standardized IT infrastructure is comprised of HP ProLiant servers.

“We wanted to form a relationship with an IT partner that would stand behind their products in terms of warranties. HP provided prompt responses to our call repair needs and were very reliable in helping us to get things in working order,” says Jeremy. “We wanted to be ahead of the curve since we offer service level agreements to our customers with payouts for failures. With downtime, not only do our clients lose money from the halt in their business, but we lose money as well. So, we selected HP in an attempt to avoid this as much as possible.”

Solution at a glance

Hardware

- HP ProLiant DL145, DL360, DL380 and DL385 servers
- HP ProLiant BL35p, BL25p, BL30p, BL45p and BL460c server blades

Software

- VMware ESX
- Microsoft SQL Server
- Microsoft Virtual Server 2005
- RedHat Enterprise Linux
- Windows 2003 Web
- Windows 2003 Standard
- Windows 2003 Enterprise
- OpenBSD
- FreeBSD

HP Services

- HP service and support

Presently, opus:interactive is running RedHat Enterprise Linux, FreeBSD, OpenBSD, Windows 2003 Server on their HP BL35p, HP BL25p and HP BL460c server blades. Some applications running on the server blades include a point of sale application and Microsoft SQL Server 2005. opus:interactive generally runs a variety of web applications on the HP ProLiant DL Series servers, but on the BL460c server blades, they utilize VMware to create virtual machines (VMs) to run many of their internal applications and offer virtual dedicated managed servers to their clients. Since timing is a big part of success in the business world, opus:interactive utilizes VMware to turn a one or two day deployment time to less than 15 mins from start to finish and HP Rapid Deployment Pack (RDP) as an additional competitive advantage to get the servers up and running quickly.

Together, opus:interactive and HP provide a reliable IT environment

opus:interactive has been able to leverage their position as an authorized HP reseller when providing their technology services to clients.

When determining which services and products are best suited for each client, Jeremy consults with the clients on their present needs and growth expectations. He then recommends a scalable IT solution that can not only meet those present needs, but also cater to the customer's future plans. "One of the main reasons why we strongly recommend the HP ProLiant DL360 is because of the flexibility to add additional software, additional memory, and additional hot swappable hard drives as our customers' businesses continue to grow without having to replace the server itself," Jeremy confirms. "This helps our client to stay within their IT budget."

Customers of opus:interactive seek the following key features: security, stability, reliability, and zero tolerance up time. And with warranty and service contracts in place, opus:interactive's clients feel confident that their IT environment is going to be up and running when needed. "On the hardware side of things, our customers are looking for us to provide an Internet connection with fully redundant Internet pipes, proper cooling to keep their equipment safe, battery back up, data recovery back up systems—things of that nature," says Jeremy. "Once the client communicates their needs to me, I feel I can sell why opus:interactive is the best solution and why we use HP."

More recently, opus:interactive won a bid war on a server blades deal. "It came down to HP and another vendor. We recommended the customer go with the HP BladeSystem because we feel it is a better solution and is more robust. In the end, it came down to price for our client."

opus:interactive was able to beat the price the customer received from the other vendor. Jeremy partially credits the win to the HP representatives who were able to help negotiate the best deal and IT environment for the client.

"Many times clients will know how they want their environment to behave, but they do not have the technological expertise to ensure their solution is configured properly," says Jeremy. "There is always a learning curve to help them understand which components they need. HP helps us verify that the solution we recommend to our customers actually work, and that it is exactly what they want."

opus:interactive continues to achieve growth and productivity

In the last 12 months opus:interactive has made a significant change to focus on being a more efficient Managed Service Provider (MSP) through automation, energy conservation, efficient cooling technologies, extensible platforms and scalable solutions. In order to minimize operations staff and continue to provision servers and applications for customers on a same-day basis, opus:interactive standardized on HP ProLiant-based servers utilizing HP automation software such as Remote Deployment Pack (RDP) and Insight Control Datacenter Edition (ICDCE). In Q3, opus:interactive made a concerted effort to become an eco-aware datacenter facility with the implementation of HP p-Class and c-Class server blades. Using the new server blades by HP has allowed us to scale faster, use power efficiently, provision servers faster, and ultimately, close more deals. We recently implemented a full 18-server solution complete with redundant firewalls, redundant load-balancers, dedicated redundant SAN and full automation. The HP BladeSystem utilizes a little more than 15Amps of power, whereas normal non-blade servers would have used around 40Amps.

"The use of HP c-Class blade enclosures stays true to our customer-first initiative by providing the best-of-breed hardware that truly is "Always On," easy to manage, extensible, scalable, reliable and eco-aware. This shift in IT is our push for Business Innovation in all that we do. In 2007, we plan to replace our entire infrastructure with the HP c-Class BladeSystem," said Eric Hulbert, CIO.

To learn more, visit www.hp.com

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