

Case Study: Smith Flow Control

Datacentre Virtualisation

March 2011



Call us on: 0115 983 6200
Visit us on-line at: www.quantix-uk.com
E-mail us at : enquiries@quantix-uk.com

THE BUSINESS NEEDS

Smith Flow Control, part of Halma, the UK-based hazard detection and life protection products group, needed an easy-to-manage IT infrastructure to replace its disparate systems. It chose Windows Server 2008 R2 with Hyper-V over VMware virtualisation technology. Now, instead of eight physical servers, the company uses a three-node Hyper-V cluster with five virtual machines. This has increased productivity, reliability, and disaster recovery options.

With 55 employees, Smith Flow Control needed a more resilient IT infrastructure, but lacked specialist IT resources in-house to manage the migration. The firm had its own standalone systems and didn't use the Halma Group IT resources or a third-party company for advice.

Mark Van Drunick, Finance Director at Smith Flow Control, says: "By 2009, we had a complex web of disparate hardware and software, with different versions of data management technology. The servers and clients had reached the end of their life cycles and the whole infrastructure needed to be reviewed urgently."

Performance was also suffering. The company was experiencing 30 per cent capacity spikes at the end of each month, which caused delay to critical business processes, even with eight physical servers. "We were struggling to support the network given our staffing constraints and shortage of in-house technical skills," says Van Drunick.

Smith Flow Control, with 40 users of its business management systems, decided to turn the IT challenge into an opportunity to conduct an infrastructure optimisation exercise. Van Drunick adds: "We required an easy-to-manage system that would take up less time for our high performing team. With the previous system, instead of working on revenue-generating projects, some of our key people were engaged in fixing issues with our IT system."

THE SOLUTION

Smith Flow Control turned to Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Quantix, which specialises in virtualisation, database solutions, business application support services, high performance networking, and security and remote managed services.

Andrew Slater, Sales Manager High Performance and Networking at Quantix, says: "Smith Flow Control initially needed a capacity planning exercise to size the deployment and check the suitability of its environment for virtualisation. The benefits of virtualisation were compelling—flexibility, lowered management overheads, and improved resilience."

INDUSTRY: Manufacturing
SERVICES: Datacentre
Virtualisation

Smith Flow Control specialises in electronic, safety, and environmental technologies. The Halma subsidiary manufactures products that are often deployed in hazardous conditions.



Quantix proposed an infrastructure rebuild with the Windows Server 2008 R2 operating system on Hyper-V virtualisation software instead of VMware, to deliver increased performance, resilience, and security. The proposal also involved replacing Citrix with Terminal Services RemoteApp.

Quantix deployed this new system, giving Smith Flow Control five virtualised servers instead of eight physical servers. The company also implemented Microsoft Exchange Server 2007 to replace Exchange Server 2000, and migrated the previous database management software to Microsoft SQL Server 2008, as well as some specialist line-of-business applications. “The Resource Adaptive Programming build we undertook cleared out existing issues with the infrastructure, resulting in a much more resilient system,” says Slater. “Previously, there were no automatic backup or recovery options.”

Smith Flow Control experienced a smooth transition to the new infrastructure due to support from Quantix, with the project taking just three months to complete. Van Drunick says: “It’s been an almost flawless process, and our users didn’t notice any lapse in service during the transition.”

THE BENEFITS

Smith Flow Control has acquired a more reliable infrastructure that better supports the business, with five virtualised servers instead of eight physical servers. The system is easier to manage, which frees key employees to focus on strategic work rather than troubleshooting IT issues. Van Drunick says: “Live recovery of data—which used to take up to eight hours with the previous system—now takes less than five minutes.

Knowledge transfer benefits the business: While total cost of ownership has risen since the migration, Smith Flow Control considers that this has been balanced by the knowledge transfer from the partner *“We had no expertise of this kind within the company before”* says Van Drunick

Resilient system tackles issues before they become problems: Smith Flow Control is now in control of its infrastructure. *“The most impressive benefit of the solution is that it just works,”* says Van Drunick. *“And without taking up hours and hours of technical time”*

Scalable infrastructure supports future needs: With a highly scalable architecture, Van Drunick sees no obstacles to increasing storage space on the system

Virtualisation helps consolidate workloads: The adoption of virtualisation in the enterprise as increase flexibility in deployment and life-cycle management of applications. *“We’re using virtualisation to consolidate workloads and reduce server sprawl.”* says Van Drunick

Partner provides ongoing technical support: By working with Quantix, Smith Flow Control is ensuring continued technical support and an escalation path to Microsoft in the event of a serious issues.



WHO ARE QUANTIX?

Quantix is one of the UK's premier providers of Managed Cloud Services, Application Managed Services and Hosted Infrastructure Solutions for Enterprises and Independent Software Vendors – a true managed Cloud Services Provider.

Our secure, dependable platform and proven application expertise allows us to provision a wide portfolio of both hosted and on-premise application management services that can deliver considerable IT cost savings and de-risk technology investments. Through production-ready services such as Managed Application Hosting, Cloud-based Disaster Recovery, SaaS Enablement and Managed Messaging we are already delivering demonstrable competitive advantage to our clients.

Capitalising on experience gained through supporting over 250 managed services clients, as well as our top-tier relationships with best of breed vendors such as Oracle, Microsoft, Juniper and VMware, Quantix has created an enterprise grade Virtual Private Cloud platform that offers compelling SLAs and flexibility.

WHAT WE SUPPORT:

- Oracle Database 8i, 9i, 10g and 11g
- Oracle RAC
- Oracle Application Server
- Oracle E-Business Suite 10x, 11x, Oracle R12
- Microsoft SQL Server 6.5, 2000, 2005, 2008
- MySQL

CONTACT QUANTIX:

Call us on: 0115 983 6200

Visit us on-line at: www.quantix-uk.com

E-mail us at: enquiries@quantix-uk.com

Nottingham Office:

Quantix House
Chetwynd Business Park
Nottingham
NG9 6RZ

London Office:

23 Austin Friars
London
EC2N 2QP

