

Case Study: NMB-Minebea (UK) Ltd

NMB-Minebea keeps the wheel spinning on precision bearing manufacturing with Recarta

Company Information

Client: NMB-Minebea (UK) Ltd

Sector: Manufacturing

Challenge: IBMi - Migrating Mission-critical IT systems with minimal business disruption.

About NMB-Minebea

With a history of innovation dating back to 1880, NMB-Minebea—the UK subsidiary of Japanese manufacturing giant Mitsubishi Minebea—manufactures aircraft landing gear bearings, aerospace tram couplings, and specialist vehicle suspension bearings. Based in Lincoln, UK, NMB-Minebea serves global aerospace and automotive industry leaders including Airbus, Irkut, Comac, Embraer, Safran, Rolls Royce, GKN, and more.

NMB-Minebea relies on a sophisticated array of IT systems, from manufacturing management applications to highly customised Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solutions. Any disruption to these key systems could potentially bring the company's manufacturing process to a grinding halt. In turn, production challenges could delay the delivery of products to customers, potentially disrupting their own expensive and time-sensitive engineering operations. To fully mitigate this risk, NMB-Minebea has invested significant resources into putting a rock-solid IT infrastructure at the heart of its business.

For many years, the company has operated core solutions on the IBM Power platform, running the IBMi operating system in a series of virtualised environments. To shield its precious data, the team ran daily backups to a dedicated, air-gapped tape library. While this approach protected against loss, it made the process of recovering from a disaster event—no matter how unlikely—complex and time consuming. What's more, if a backup failed the company ran the risk of losing up to 24-hours of vital data.

Targeting a new approach, the company looked to establish an instant failover capability with its sister company in Germany. The process would involve rearchitecting the current systems, shifting to a new generation of IBM Power servers, and upgrading the latest version of the IBMi operating system. NMB-Minebea wanted to engage with a specialist and trusted partner to provide the expertise to design, manage, and complete the transition.

Bringing in the experts

Following a recommendation from its long-term technology partner Aptean, NMB-Minebea selected Recarta as its technology vendor and implementation partner for its IBMi OS upgrade, hardware refresh cycle, and disaster recovery enhancement initiative.

Following a series of technical meetings with the NMB-Minebea team, Recarta proposed a phased approach to implementation, starting with the physical installation of a new IBM POWER9 server followed by a step-by-step upgrade of each of the company's virtualised IBMi environments. Simon Bradley continues: "Recarta's approach to implementation was very natural for us and worked well for our business. During the OS upgrade, we had to make some minor adjustments to our applications and the Recarta team walked us through every step, which helped to take the stress out of the process. Recarta then worked with us to thoroughly test the new environment and flagged up minor issues to address before go-live. With their detailed support, we were able to achieve a truly seamless migration."

