

RE CARTA SERVES UP EFFICIENCY AND COST SAVINGS AT DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL



“

The performance of our new server system installed by Recarta IT is exemplary. It has cut processing times in half.

”

Richard Tuckett,
Devon County Council.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

software licensing fees managed more effectively, processing time cut in half, server resilience enhanced, no compromise on security, council able to respond more quickly and efficiently

CLIENT PROFILE

Employing in excess of 16,000 staff, Devon County Council is responsible for providing an extensive range of local authority services - from library and emergency services to National Park and highway management - to the county's 750,000 residents (excluding the unitary authorities of Plymouth and Torbay).

THE CHALLENGE

Recarta IT was contracted by Devon County Council to replace a server system as the Council's requirements had outgrown the server's capabilities and it was burdened with a complicated Oracle licensing system. The incumbent server was initially installed to manage the payroll system, however, it was suffering from performance issues due to the increasing demands placed on it and the business-critical back-up strategy was also complex and difficult.

As IT budgets had recently been reduced, there was no margin for error or cost over-runs in the purchase and installation of the new

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server system. The timeframe for ordering and installation was just four weeks from start to finish, so any proposed solution needed to be sourced and up and running within a very tight timeframe.

THE STRATEGY

Recarta IT undertook a thorough assessment and performance analysis of the incumbent server system to understand its current pressure points, as well as what the council expected of its new server system, the pressure it would be placed under and the budget available to invest in this new system.

The assessment included:

- current operational levels
- server performance issues
- licensing arrangement and costs
- integration of SAN and virtual networks
- back up strategies

Recarta IT then called on its extensive experience of working with public sector clients to draw up a comprehensive solution that would enable the council to both meet its current demands and plan for future growth and capacity needs.

THE RECARTA SOLUTION

To provide the council with maximum productivity, scalability and versatility, Recarta IT installed a two-server solution using IBM Multi Core 8204 8EA servers (incorporating IBM's new POWER6™ processor technology) at the council's Exeter head office in April 2009. Installing a two server solution means the

council can dedicate one server solely to its Oracle Database licenses and activities while the other can be licensed for Oracle Application Server.

As part of the installation process, Recarta IT:

- uploaded all software
- created partitions
- configured VIOS
- secured network connections
- configured the new servers to the HP San
- created LUNS for storage
- provided comprehensive on-site consultancy to guide the in-house IT team through the hardware and software setup

Recarta also integrated virtualisation technology via a VIOS – virtual IO server – into the council's network, which is now enabling multiple use of a single application across the system. Three separate partitions were built into the applications server, with users able to share the network cards in each partition to maintain operational flexibility.

Key benefits:

- Oracle licensing fees contained
- successful split into licensing and applications servers
- virtual IO server
- doubling of server performance levels
- maximum versatility offered by two servers
- three years' inclusive hardware and operating system support
- secure and resilient network highly flexible and scalable robust fail-over protection

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Hardware

2 x 8204 8EA servers incorporating POWER6™ processor technology

Services

Design, planning, supply and installation of all hardware and software

Three-year hardware support

THE RESULT

Devon County Council is now able to easily manage peak workloads and handle concurrent changes to workload far more effectively than before, and, importantly, allocate workloads to different partitions on the fly. Support costs for three years have also been rolled into the initial cost structure ensuring the council benefits from minimal ongoing costs related to the server solution investment.

"The new IBM server system has greatly enhanced both the resilience and the overall performance of this application. Recarta provided us with a first class service right through the sales and installation process and delivered the system on time despite a very tight timeframe. They are reliable, very helpful and made the whole migration process as smooth and straightforward as possible."

Richard Tuckett, Devon County Council.