

CLARKE TRANSPORT CUSTOMERS DEMAND A SMOOTH, EFFICIENT SERVICE RE CARTA DELIVERED IT



“

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BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Improved customer satisfaction
- Faster response times
- Backup window **was 8 hours now 30 mins**
- Disaster recovery **was days now less than one hour**

CLIENT PROFILE

Clarke Transport is one of the leading privately owned multi-service transport organisations in the UK. As a rapidly expanding family business with more than 80 years' experience, their success is a result of delivering excellent customer service combined with using the best technology, machinery and vehicles to provide industry leading services.

With over 400 employees and 200 vehicles based at seven depots across the UK, Clarke Transport offer a wide range of delivery and logistics solutions to their many satisfied customers.

THE CHALLENGE

Clarke Transport operate a powerful web-based order entry system providing customers with complete visibility of

their orders, with the ability to track their deliveries, print manifests, labels and delivery notes. The systems also allow them to monitor their performance in real-time and produce reports to enable the management team to continually work on service improvements.

Logistics is a complex 24/7 operation. Clarke Transport knew the operating system and the servers needed replacing – providing excellent customer service – providing excellent customer service was essential if they were going to retain existing customers and expand the business to win new clients. Their business critical application ran on three previous generation IBM AIX servers with an out of maintenance version of AIX, and the servers frequently needed rebooting at key times. It was taking over eight hours to backup their systems, which was negatively affecting customers logging on to their accounts.

THE STRATEGY

Clarke Transport approached several IT suppliers but it was an IBM Business Partner, Recarta, whose proposal most impressed with its proven track record in migration projects, IBM technology and company size.

"We felt Recarta were the perfect match for us. Their proposal was impressive, they promised to take away the pain of designing the right solution and ensuring a seamless migration to the new infrastructure. We also felt they were the right size for us, big enough to manage the project but small enough to care. We were right."

Recarta worked with the IT team to fully understand their requirements and to design a solution to ensure their customers received an excellent user experience. The business case was straightforward, to significantly improve customer satisfaction.

With limited resources on-site, it was critical that a clear strategy should be in place to ensure the coherent management of storage and backups on an ongoing basis. The current back up window was causing problems, and in the event of a disaster it would take days to recover and restore operations.

Recarta performed an assessment which included:

- PICK database migration to the new version of AIX
- Data migration
- Full system backup design to reduce the current 8 hour window
- Significantly reduce time to recover operations following a disaster
- Design system resilience
- Assessment of power requirements
- Security assessment

THE RECARTA SOLUTION

Clarke Transport needed a system to help them become more responsive to their customers, improve productivity, operate without interruption and be highly secure – all without making large upfront investments in time, skills or money.

The IBM Power 720 is designed with capabilities to deliver leading-edge application availability and enable more work to be processed with less operational disruption for key customer applications. It also provides proven reliability and security for a midsized company like Clarke Transport.

"We want our information flows to be as fast and seamless as our transport services. Our investment in this IBM solution helps us manage our entire logistics operation efficiently and effectively and enables us to integrate our business operations with our customers' processes."

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

Recarta performed an assessment which included:

- 2 x IBM Power 720s running AIX 7.1 with replication
- 1 x IBM Power 710 deployed in another location as the disaster recovery site, adding further resilience to the solution
- IBM Tape and Media
- IBM D3 AIX product, services and consultancy
- IBM D3 AIX token based support
- Consultancy services for install planning, project management and go live support

"There were a few challenges moving the PICK/D3 database to the new version of AIX but Recarta were able to quickly locate the right skills and resolve any issues."

THE RESULT

The Recarta team designed the solution, provisioned the hardware and managed the migration through to completion. Recarta's engineers were on-site throughout the project to ensure everything ran smoothly and the installation of the new solution was completed on time and on budget.

The highly resilient solution was designed and implemented to exceed Clarke's requirements, providing near real-time failover between servers to guarantee uninterrupted availability of mission-critical applications. Clarke Transport now has a high performance infrastructure that can grow with their business.

The key benefits are:

- Enhanced user experience due to improved availability, reliability and speed
- Full system backup performed in less than 30 minutes – previously it was over 8 hours
- Backups can now be scheduled for 30 minutes at 4am, the quietest time of the day ensuring minimal disruption and around the clock access for customers
- Significant reduction in disaster recovery from days to less than an hour

"The performance of the new solution has been excellent. We have been very impressed with Recarta throughout the process. They understood our needs, proposed the right solution and delivered a seamless migration. It is clear they really care about customer service."

Jason Westwood, IT Network Manager, Clarke Transport Ltd

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