



Objective

Replace legacy applications and servers with new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software and more reliable hardware

Approach

Issued a highly detailed Request for Proposal, saw demonstrations and made reference visits to existing users & OEM Center of Excellence

IT Matters

- Speeds up access to real-time data by 50 per cent
- Improves operational efficiency by 60 per cent and releases IT staff for more constructive work
- Reduces unplanned system downtime from 24 hours a month to zero

Business Matters

- Saves 12 million Rupees (US\$178,000) a month in staff inactivity caused by system downtime
- Replaces months of work with real-time delivery for financial year-end closures
- Eliminates crippling overtime costs and boosts staff productivity

Vectus Industries safeguards the efficient operation of its business

HPE ConvergedSystem 500 for SAP HANA delivers reliability and reduces cost



When India's leading water storage and transportation company, Vectus Industries, replaced its inefficient business systems with SAP S/4HANA it also needed to replace old untrustworthy servers with a more reliable platform. The solution was to implement two HPE ConvergedSystem 500 for SAP HANA appliances which have ensured the high availability of business-critical systems and also saved considerable cost.

Challenge

Application on verge of collapse

Access to safe drinking water can be a problem in many areas of India so it's no surprise that water storage and water transportation solutions are important growth sectors. Established in 2004, Vectus Industries is the country's fastest growing producer of water tanks, pipes and fittings.

Vectus introduced blow-molding technology and anti-bacterial four layer tanks to India and was the world pioneer of high capacity rotational molded water storage tanks. It is now one of very few Indian companies processing all polymers such as PVC, Polyethylene and Polypropylene using extrusion, injection molding, blow molding and roto-molding processes. Highly regarded as an innovator in this market, Vectus processes 30,000 metric tonnes (MT) of polymers a year.

“If SAP HANA goes down our business stops, so it’s vital that we have reliable hardware platforms. HPE ConvergedSystem 500 for SAP HANA appliances deliver that reliability, safeguarding the efficient operation of the company and saving considerable cost.”

— Manish Sinha, chief information officer, Vectus Industries

Headquartered in Noida, New Delhi, Vectus has 13 manufacturing plants, 13 depots and two marketing offices located across India. It employs 1,300 people and serves a network of 3,500 dealers.

Supporting this large environment is a vital job for the five-member IT team but the company’s legacy hardware infrastructure and applications made it very difficult.

“Previously, the servers were down for at least four hours a day; printing an invoice would take 15 minutes and because of legacy application failures, it was taking staff 14 to 16 hours a day to complete their work. They were constantly having to work overtime and that was costing a lot of money,” says Manish Sinha, chief information officer with Vectus Industries. “Our legacy business application was on the verge of collapse and was not properly supported by the OEM.

“Also, the infrastructure was not good. The network was full of vulnerabilities and the email server was blacklisted by spamming by corporate mail servers. Even management used their personal email IDs for sending emails so company data was floating around in personal email inboxes. We needed to focus on both the infrastructure and applications so users could do their work and management would have a product that was reliable for auditors, investors and compliance requirements.

“Our vision was to have a world-class Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) infrastructure that would ensure robust control over financial reporting and build the confidence of all stakeholders through better asset monitoring, optimum utilisation of resources and complete adherence to compliance.”

Solution

Implementing a reliable platform

Vectus Industries issued a highly detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) to decide which ERP solution it would choose and which platform it would run on. Objectives were segregated into areas such as sizing, solution architecture, clustering, applications and virtualisation. These were incorporated in the RFP along with bidder pre-requisites, terms and conditions.

After seeing demonstrations and making reference visits to other users, meeting Hewlett Packard Enterprise support teams and senior management and visiting the HPE Centre of Excellence in Bangalore, the company decided that its future vision would be best supported by SAP S/4HANA, the suite of business programs that is built on an in-memory platform to support digitisation and deliver speedy performance. It also decided that the best platform would be HPE ConvergedSystem 500 for SAP HANA appliances and purchased two systems – one to run in its main production data centre and the second node for failover data replication, development and quality assurance at its Disaster Recovery (DR) location.



HPE ConvergedSystem 500 for SAP HANA is one of HPE's scalable, performance-optimised systems for SAP HANA. It's a pre-engineered SAP HANA-optimised system that can be configured, quoted and installed in as little as 15 days. Built on the HPE ProLiant DL580 Gen8 platform, it offers a range of scale-up and scale-out configurations. The Vectus Industries appliances feature Intel®Haswell E7 8880v3 CPUs, 512GB memory, SUSE Linux operating systems and 10x 12000GB SAS drives.

"I decided on the appliance approach rather than a Tailored Datacenter Integration (TDI) model because at that time, the TDI solutions offered by various vendors were not certified," explains Sinha. "We did detailed planning of all functions we needed and gave them to HPE so they could prepare the systems in the factory and this meant that implementation went very smoothly. If I had gone for TDI we would have been looking at assembling, configuring and trouble-shooting. With appliances, we avoided all these areas and saved a lot of time by getting them integrated at the factory and received in plug & play mode."

Vectus also purchased three additional application servers and network switching along with HPE Serviceguard, the high-availability, disaster-recovery solution that provides business continuity for critical applications. Before going into production it completed all 19 Serviceguard test scenarios to ensure problem-free operation. It also protects the appliances with three-year, 24x7 Proactive Care

contracts including four-hour response. HPE Proactive Care enables customers to improve the return on their investment in a converged infrastructure. It provides faster problem solving from specially trained, solution-oriented specialists who manage the incident from start to finish. It can also provide recommendations on firmware versions and software patching on supported products to help prevent problems.

Risks and issues are identified through regular device-based proactive scans that help ensure that configurations are consistent with HPE best practices and customers also have access to a remote HPE Technical Account Manager, who can provide advice and guidance.

Benefit

Increased efficiency at reduced cost

When Vectus went into this project it had four Key Performance Indicators (KPI). It has already speeded up access to real-time data and visibility by 50 per cent; has improved operational efficiency by 60 per cent and is on the way to reducing operational costs by 15 per cent. Critical book closure times for the financial year-end have also been reduced from months to real-time.

Customer at a glance

Application

Enterprise Resource Planning

Hardware

- HPE ConvergedSystem 500 for SAP HANA

Software

- HPE Serviceguard
- SAP S/4HANA
- SUSE Linux Enterprise Server 11 SP4 for SAP

HPE services

- HPE Proactive Care

“I now have a system that I can rely on. Previously, we had so many vendors we always had to chase for answers and solutions and that represented a huge loss. Hewlett Packard Enterprise now provides single support window for hardware, software or application issues and I have complete confidence in it.”

— Manish Sinha, chief information officer, Vectus Industries

Eliminating crippling system downtime has also brought considerable financial and operational advantages, as Sinha explains: “Whenever you are reducing downtime, you are saving man hours and that is a huge cost saving. Our servers used to be down for up to four hours at a time and a total of 24 hours downtime was the minimum we experienced every month. That meant that 250 staff were sitting idle for those periods and at an average man-hour cost of 2,000 Rupees (US\$178,000) a month. Due to downtime, people had to stay at night and wait for the systems which also meant that we had to pay extra overtime and this was particularly damaging at the end of the month when we had to do maximum billing. The downtime represented a huge cost and that was recovered immediately when we implemented the robust new HPE solutions.”

The new appliances have also brought significant advantages for the IT team. Previously, two members of the team spent many hours managing and trouble-shooting the legacy applications and servers but now that need has gone away. This has saved 20 man days and leaves them free to work more constructively for the business. High system performance has also boosted general staff productivity, eliminating helpdesk calls about applications running slowly.

Overall system management has also been simplified. The company previously had to deal with multiple vendors, some in different time zones and this was a waste of time and money. Now HPE provides a single support window for hardware, software or application issues.

However, the most important benefit is that HPE appliances safeguard the efficient operation of business-critical SAP HANA.

“If HANA goes down, our business stops,” says Sinha. “If we cannot plan our vehicle movements goods are not dispatched and if dispatch is stopped everything else is re-shuffled. Stock lies in the inventories so production stops and if we are not producing goods, then purchasing does not buy any materials. The complete cycle is affected if these applications go down but with HPE ConvergedSystem appliances, I have systems that can be relied on to keep HANA running. I also have complete confidence in HPE’s support which means a lot to the business.”

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