

Case Study

Allianz Insurance
Financial services
NetApp Data Storage Infrastructure Refresh

Ricoh delivers 44% savings for Allianz Insurance UK with NetApp data storage refresh



Allianz Insurance UK, one of the largest commercial insurers in the UK, needed a more cost-efficient operation to cope with increasing volumes of business, more applications being made online and new financial regulations around data storage. A NetApp data storage solution, designed and supported by Ricoh IT Services,

has reduced the total cost of ownership by 44 percent over five years and has also achieved significant improvements in application workloads, performance and increased capacity thresholds. The platform is scalable to allow for growth.

Executive summary

Name: Allianz Insurance
Location: Guildford, Surrey
Size: 5,500 staff
Activity: Financial services

Challenges

- Meet business demand for improved TCO and ROI
- More customers, online applications and regulations putting pressure on IT operations & systems
- Old and underperforming data storage infrastructure

Solution

- NetApp Data Storage Infrastructure Refresh

Benefits

- Delivers a leading edge technology solution that enhances performance, achieves best value
- Successfully navigated a complex corporate procurement and business validation process
- Reduces IT costs by 44% over five-year term
- Increases workload and application performance
- Scalable capacity and growth requirements delivered
- Significant reduction in datacentre space and energy use

Challenges

Allianz is one of the world's leading insurance companies with operations in over 150 countries. It manages premiums of around £4 billion a year for 152,000 customers and 10,000 corporate clients. In the UK, 5,500 staff manage policies with combined premiums worth approximately £1,600 million from 20 UK locations. Allianz Managed Operational Services (AMOS) UK is the IT division of Allianz responsible for delivering IT Infrastructure Services, applications and business services. AMOS had already appointed a number of strategic technology and service providers as part of its strategy of sustaining Allianz's leading market position through exploiting internal synergies and fostering innovation.

Ricoh is one of these key AMOS partners, with a long history of providing Allianz with a range of managed support services such as print, desktop, server, network, security and data storage. As a result of this successful relationship, Allianz decided to partner with Ricoh to drive the refresh and improvement of its legacy data storage infrastructure.

Allianz's growth over recent years coupled with new compliance regulations around the way that data is managed, prompted Allianz to review its data storage infrastructure. Underpinning this was Allianz's continuing drive to improve total cost of ownership (TCO) and return on investment (ROI). This and the increasing need for performance across application and capacity workloads, with systems that were approaching End of Service (EOS) and so no longer had support or updates, was putting significant pressure on the company's existing data storage infrastructure.

The legacy NetApp infrastructure had been in operation for over seven years. At this age, it required an end-of-life custom support contract which was more expensive than



new equipment. It also had limited capacity for growth and potentially reduced reliability through age threatened to increase costs. The high demand on UK-based data services was subjecting the storage infrastructure to unprecedented workloads and, as a result, it was starting to underperform with utilisation levels a major cause for concern.

The challenge then was to find a solution that was the best fit for UK operations from a technical perspective, while also delivering best value for money. Any solution worthy of consideration would also need to meet the complex commercial requirements of Allianz's Munich headquarters and the Technical Blueprint in operation.

Solution

Through its longstanding, strategic partner role, Ricoh had become recognised by Allianz as a trusted and impartial adviser and had played a key role on many occasions in helping the business to find the best solution.

Doug Morey, Contracts & Commercial Manger at Allianz UK, says, "From the outset it became apparent that Ricoh possessed an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the Allianz UK business model. This enabled a tailored approach which delivered a technical solution that also fitted Allianz's business model parameters. Understanding Allianz's internal business processes produced a clear advantage in winning business and in this area Ricoh excelled."

A key part of Ricoh's successful sales and consultation approach is Ricoh's partnership with NetApp, a global provider of software, systems and services for data management and storage. Ricoh and NetApp worked with Allianz to determine business, operational and technical requirements, as well as ensuring that Allianz's TCO and ROI needs were factored into the decision-making process.

The use of existing NetApp technology at Allianz helped to make it the preferred choice for the replacement storage, but it was not a foregone conclusion. Late in the selection process and, because of global procurement guidelines, Allianz UK was presented with a very competitive offer from another leading data storage technology provider which Ricoh was able to help Allianz evaluate objectively. Ricoh also collaborated with Allianz and NetApp to deliver a more cost effective solution built around the preferred NetApp technology.

Allianz finally decided to deploy a new data storage infrastructure solution from NetApp and Ricoh which provides 270TB of storage across production and disaster recovery (DR) sites, with integrated backup and a separate managed virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI). In addition, there is a bundled five-year agreement for maintenance and

continued overleaf

Case Study Allianz Insurance

support. All Professional Services were delivered by the Ricoh and NetApp teams ensuring a robust data migration strategy was planned and executed.

Benefits

Not only has the Ricoh-recommended NetApp solution improved storage capacity thresholds and performance, but it is also meeting Allianz's business objective for delivering best value. From the business case that Allianz prepared, the company estimates that the solution will reduce IT costs by as much as 44 per cent over the five-year contract period, compared to the existing legacy infrastructure. This is being achieved by the new infrastructure utilising NetApp's leading Data ONTap operating system – its 'universal data platform' for cloud - providing a highly efficient solution and a more cost-effective service agreement.

"Ricoh's professional approach in delivering a high level technical and commercial model that supported Allianz's board level requirements was a decisive factor in the success of the data storage refresh project," says Morey.

Allianz also expects to see other cost and environmental benefits from the Ricoh and NetApp solution resulting from a reduced hardware footprint and a need for less energy usage associated with power and cooling across both production and Disaster Recovery environments.

One of the important advantages of the Ricoh and NetApp solution is flexibility. It has been designed to cope with Allianz's data storage and performance requirements putting greater demand put on the core storage platform. The storage solution can scale up quickly and easily, with zero associated downtime and without the need for significant additional capital expenditure.

Commenting on Ricoh's and NetApp's approach to advising on and planning the data storage refresh solution, Adrian Lowe, Head of IT Operations for Allianz UK, said, "Can I just say 'well done' for being so persistent and patient. This is the right decision and I'm looking forward to seeing our new environment in action."

Ricoh Solution/Products

- Ricoh consultancy
- NetApp FAS6000/3200 Systems
- NetApp Data OnTap management software
- Ricoh managed NetApp Maintenance and support services
- Ricoh / NetApp Professional Project & Implementation Services

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