



UNIPART DRIVES DOWN TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP



New server infrastructure will enable logistics giant to roll-out new supply chain platform and reduce IT operational overheads

INDUSTRY

Logistics service provider

ORGANISATION SIZE

Unipart Logistics employs more than 3,000 people

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Reduce the operational costs and risks linked with legacy data centre facility

SOLUTION

Deploy a cost-effective server infrastructure that can support new services and applications

RESULTS

- Lower total cost of ownership
- Increased flexibility
- Ability to launch new customer services

INTEREST AREAS

- Infrastructure integration
- ERP/SAP

KEY SERVICES

- Planning and design
- Product supply
- Installation

CORE TECHNOLOGIES

- EMC
- IBM

“We have deployed a mission-critical IT infrastructure that supports business growth and new logistics services for our customers.”

Duncan Mountjoy,
Services Integration Manager,
Unipart

“Computacenter provides us with an invaluable technical resource that we can leverage to meet the changing needs of our business. It has significant breadth and delivers real added value.”

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Customer overview

Unipart Logistics is part of the Unipart Group of Companies, and supplies products to 74 countries from its 20 worldwide warehouse locations. It specialises in delivering integrated logistics and business services to a range of customers, including Boots, Airbus and Jaguar.

Business need

Unipart has created a true business partnership with its client Jaguar Cars and is responsible for providing a market-leading global automotive aftermarket parts service that involves sourcing, storing, processing and despatching thousands of components to more than 700 dealers. To co-ordinate this complex supply chain operation, the company uses its class-leading bespoke Unipart Logistics System (ULS), which until recently was based on a legacy server and storage infrastructure.

This technical environment was not only becoming costly to maintain but was also threatening to hold back the development of the company's logistics services. As Duncan Mountjoy, Services Integration Manager for Unipart, explains: "It is essential that we not only meet Jaguar's provisioning needs but also provide a cost-effective and competitive service. Our current infrastructure was beginning to constrain the strategic development of ULS and preventing us from upgrading to an enhanced version of SAP that offered increased functionality."

With increased server maintenance costs on the horizon, Unipart decided to embark on an infrastructure upgrade that would not only offer a lower total cost of ownership but also enable the strategic migration to mySAP business suite.

Solution

Sourcing and implementing the new infrastructure, however, was a significant undertaking that needed extensive experience of multiple technologies. "We

needed a partner that could help reduce the complexity associated with both the IT decision-making process and deployment," comments Duncan. "Computacenter enabled us to leverage the true benefits of working with an outsourcer, leaving us free to concentrate on the strategic elements of the project."

How Computacenter helped

In addition to implementing a new server backend for ULS, the logistics giant also needed to expand its storage infrastructure to cope with business growth and the launch of new services.

Computacenter helped to benchmark products from a range of vendors, and went on to procure the IBM servers and EMC storage area network that were eventually selected. "As well as supporting the new application, we also needed to ensure that the environment was scalable and cost-effective to manage," adds Duncan.

By rolling out both blade and standard servers, Unipart was able to consolidate its existing estate and enhance the company's agility. These blade servers are now managed by Computacenter as part of a wider IT outsourcing agreement with Unipart.

Ensuring the deployment was completed on schedule was essential, as Simon Fisk, Enterprise Development Manager for Computacenter, explains: "Any over-run would have prevented Unipart from decommissioning its legacy server infrastructure, making it liable for considerable maintenance costs." As well as helping Unipart meet its installation deadline, Computacenter also assisted with the systems integration, which involved a number of technical challenges.

Results

Despite the complexity of the roll-out, the new environment went live according to schedule and to budget in March 2005. As a result, Unipart has been able to

commence with the development of the new mySAP business suite in preparation for its launch early in 2006. "We can now put mySAP at the core of our business, and exploit its functionality for enhancing ULS and our customer services," adds Duncan.

As well as enabling the SAP upgrade, the new infrastructure will also deliver additional business benefits. As Duncan explains: "The blade servers will allow us to set up test environments for new services more easily, which means we can quickly respond to the changing needs of the business and the demands of our customers."

As part of its commitment to continuous IT improvement, Unipart will also be looking at optimising the virtualisation potential of its new infrastructure. "Computacenter has the breadth and independence to help us across the entire IT spectrum," comments Duncan. "As a result, we are able to source and implement best-of-breed technologies from a range of vendors that help us achieve our ultimate goals of cost reduction and improved business take-on."

More resources

- Read more customer success stories at www.computacenter.com/case_studies/
- Download our guide to the benefits and challenges of server consolidations at www.computacenter.com/strategy/white_papers

