



PROACT

CASE STUDY

Liseberg



Modernised infrastructure delivers streamlined IT operations, improved protection against cyberthreats, and room to grow.

Summary

Challenge

Liseberg had a need to modernise its IT infrastructure to address new business requirements, support growth and to streamline operations. New demands on capacity, performance and security also called for a new backup solution.

Solution

Proact proposed a new design for Liseberg's on-premises data centre, with a hyperconverged infrastructure and a backup function which provides higher performance and enhanced security.

At Liseberg, Sweden's largest amusement park, preparations are well underway for the park's 100th anniversary. The all-new Oceana water park and a family hotel will open in time for the 2023 celebrations. Liseberg has long ranked as Sweden's top tourist destination and, before the Covid-19 pandemic, steadily counted more than three million visitors annually.

Liseberg runs its own IT department independent of the owner, the city of Gothenburg. Operations and service delivery are mainly on-premises.

"We have numerous applications and many integrations between these. We have come to the conclusion that we benefit from having our own IT team with user support, operations and development in-house," says Martin Olesen, IT operations manager at Liseberg.

When Liseberg sought to update its IT infrastructure, the project started with a procurement. The main objectives for the investment were to simplify operations and management and get a scalable environment where it is easy to add more capacity. Liseberg currently handles about 60 terabytes of data, with a 10 percent growth in volume each year. Proact's proposal for the new data centre solution and associated services received the highest marks for each part of the tender requirements.



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Martin Olesen
IT operations manager
Liseberg

Solution components:

Hyperconverged infrastructure at 3 sites:

- NetApp HCI Compute nodes
- NetApp HCI Storage nodes
- NetApp Mellanox switches
- ExaGrid EX40000E backup appliance
- Veeam Backup & Replication
- Local 7/24 support from Proact

"We were truly impressed by Proact's solution. In addition to their technology, we also value their local presence with a highly certified staff for supporting the products that comprise our solution. Another plus is that Proact has tight partnerships with involved vendors," says Martin Olesen.

New efficiencies from hyperconvergence

Liseberg's new solution builds on hyperconverged infrastructure, which brings together servers, storage and networking – the key elements in the data centre – into a single, integrated unit. To meet strict availability requirements, infrastructure is mirrored using interconnected sites that can take over each other's tasks.

While the new hardware obviously takes up less space and saves energy, for Liseberg, unified management is the greatest benefit with the hyperconverged solution.

"Systems management is now more efficient, which means our staff save time. With separate devices, there was more overhead. We also have support from Proact with maintenance and updates," says Martin Olesen.

Well-prepared migration

The transition to the new environment was planned in detail. Part of the product delivery was delayed, but this never affected business as Liseberg's pandemic-induced closure was prolonged. The park reopened in June 2021, initially only for a limited number of guests who were required to book in advance. The migration of all of Liseberg's virtual servers (about a hundred) to the new environment was conducted over five days, with practically no downtime.

"The migration went very well. Proact had assured us that it would be possible to transfer all servers while they were up and running. They've done this before, while we have not, and there were no disruptions to speak of," says Martin Olesen.

Ever-increasing volumes of data and workloads also meant that Liseberg had outgrown its backup solution. An updated and more efficient backup solution was therefore an essential part of its data centre modernisation.

The new backup function uses a combination of storage snapshots and an integrated backup appliance (ExaGrid). This provides faster backups and shorter backup windows, enables fast local restores and direct restores of virtual machines. Thanks to highly efficient deduplication, the amount of backup data that needs to be managed is significantly reduced. Backups are managed through Veeam software, which Liseberg had previously used.

"Now we know that we can restore business-critical applications from backup within an adequate time frame, and in practice, the performance requirements we set in the procurement were exceeded. The solution also performs well in daily operations, when it comes to taking regular backups," says Martin Olesen.



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Last-line ransomware protection

Liseberg's new backup function adds protection against cyber attacks, including ransomware, where attackers try to lock all data through encryption and then demand a ransom. Such attacks are counteracted by an immutable backup copy, which becomes a reliable last line of defence even in the case of an actual security breach.

“Not even our own team can delete a backup copy during the period when it is locked. Data is available for reading but cannot be altered or destroyed,” says Martin Olesen.

To follow up on daily IT operations, Liseberg has scheduled meetings with Proact. Strategic meetings are also held to address future plans and needs. Currently, Liseberg runs most of its enterprise applications on-premise, and with the new data centre environment, this is also a viable long-term strategy.

Liseberg expects that the latest investments in new attractions and accommodations will require adding further capacity to the infrastructure. That's why Liseberg has an option to add another data centre site, also using the same Proact-designed concept they already have.

Benefits:



Simplified management with hyperconverged infrastructure saves time



Faster backup with shorter backup windows



Enhanced protection against cyberthreats



Scalability – easy to add data centre capacity within the concept



Local support services from certified professionals



Seamless migration to new infrastructure

About Liseberg

Liseberg is one of the leading amusement parks in Europe, offering entertainment, rides and attractions, restaurants and accommodation. Every year, the park welcomes some three million guests, which makes Liseberg Sweden's most popular tourist destination. www.liseberg.se

About Proact

Proact is Europe's leading independent data centre and cloud services provider. By delivering flexible, accessible and IT solutions and services, we help companies and authorities reduce risk and costs, whilst increasing agility, productivity and efficiency.

We've completed over 5,000 successful projects around the world, have more than 3,500 customers and currently manage in excess of 100 petabytes of information in the cloud. We employ over 800 people in 13 countries across Europe and North America. Founded in 1994, our parent company, Proact IT Group AB (publ), was listed on Nasdaq Stockholm in 1999 (under the symbol PACT).

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