



CASE STUDY

Frontier's Data Centre Migration project for Investec Wealth & Investment

Organisation Profile:

Investec Wealth & Investment is a London based division of South African financial services group Investec, specialising in bespoke investing on behalf of private clients, charities, trusts and clients of professional advisers.

Business Situation:

The business had decided to relocate several offices which meant that the existing on-premise data centre would be shut down. At the same time, it was decided to relocate the DR data centre to a new facility. As a result, the IT team at Investec Wealth and Investment needed to deliver a data centre migration project.

The Solution:

- Expansion of VMware vSphere server estate
- Migration to active/active DataCore storage platform
- Hardware refresh of HPE blade servers and Quantum hybrid storage arrays
- Frontier Technology professional services



Investec

Wealth & Investment

Investec Wealth & Investment (IWI) are a City of London based Wealth and Investment organisation, that can trace its roots back to the 1870's. For the past fifteen years, IWI have used DataCore SANsymphony storage virtualisation technologies as a core storage strategy, having during that time refreshed the underlying hardware on four occasions, whilst continuing to extract value from the original storage software licence investment.


Background

In 2014, a modest VMware vSphere deployment was expanded to become the standard application platform and in early 2016, Frontier Technology was approached to help plan a relocation of the datacentres to two co-located facilities.

As part of this project, the business had stipulated a desire to introduce an active-active, 24x7 datacentre design, to support the operational requirements of the business. Both VMware and DataCore technologies had been successfully used for several years and a decision was taken at an early stage to continue to leverage the investment in these vendors solutions. This was especially pertinent to the DataCore storage platform, as its core architecture is designed from the ground up to support active-active use.

Key Benefits:

- Reduced risk by staying with proven VMware and DataCore Technologies
- Improved SLAs to the business with active-active datacentre



"I've been very impressed with the pragmatic way Frontier Technology approached the solution design and deployment, plus helping us overcome a few hurdles along the way. I'd be happy to recommend Frontier to similar organisations."

George O'Reilly, Infrastructure Manager, IWI

Project Deployment

The Frontier Technology team, lead by virtualisation lead consultant Maciek Kozanka and account manager Dale Hyde, engaged with key technology vendors VMware, DataCore and IWI's preferred server vendor Hewlett Packard Enterprise. They produced a high level design, which demonstrated how the active-active datacentre would operate in both "business as usual" and various failure scenarios, which were presented to the business, to ensure the design fitted the operational requirements.

A concurrent sub project looked at the application access requirements of IWI users, which extended the existing use of Citrix XenApp (on XenServer) to fit the active-active solution, scaled to support the expanding user base of approaching 1,500 users.

Solution

The final solution design comprises, per site, of three HPE ProLiant blade chassis (hosting the vSphere and XenServer hosts) and two Fibre Channel connected DataCore storage controllers, these provision storage to the vSphere hosts and replicate synchronously to the partner site. As the

DataCore software defined storage platform provides advanced storage management capabilities (including auto-tiering), the storage hardware used is an industry standard ProLiant server plus low cost, commodity hybrid storage array with performance SSD and capacity HDD tiers.

Applications and data, several of which were substantial datasets comprising millions of files and terabytes of data, were migrated and tested without user impact using standard VMware tools. During the migration the old and new DataCore storage controllers were able to co-exist, another benefit of the software defined nature of DataCore technology.

The DataCore architecture is particularly well suited to an active/active design, as each controller (unlike a traditional storage array) is physically independent whilst functioning in a similar manner to a pair of controllers contained within a traditional array when connected to a peer controller. As long as the round-trip latency for storage writes is within acceptable application tolerance, the controllers can be physically separated by considerable distance.

About Frontier Technology

Frontier Technology is a premier systems integrator and cloud computing provider, delivering business continuity, data management and compliance, application delivery and infrastructure solutions.

We focus on solutions that deliver true competitive advantage and allow your business to work smarter. Our success is fuelled by a commitment to deliver on time, to specification and to budget in order to meet our customers' requirements.



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