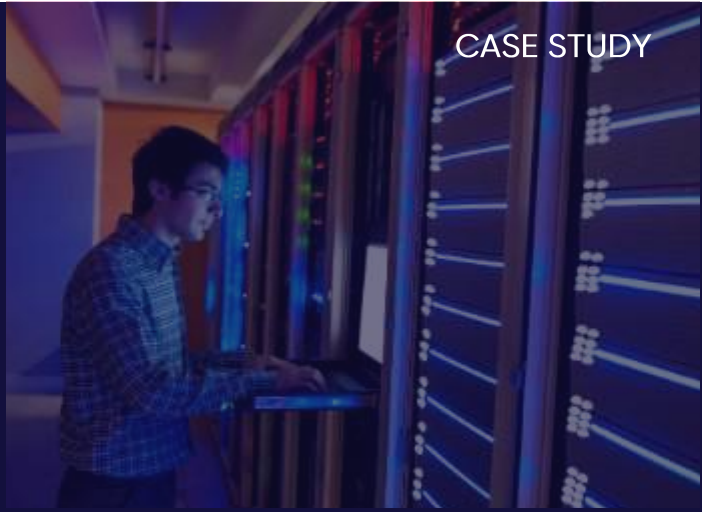




Trox Group

CASE STUDY



## Supporting Growth

Founded in Germany in 1951, TROX Group is a world leader in air distribution and comfort conditioning systems. Operating via subsidiaries in 23 countries, TROX Group employs over 3,300 staff and generates annual revenues in excess of €390 million.

### The Challenge:

When Stephen Sheen joined TROX's UK operation as IT Manager, one of his first tasks was to evaluate the IT infrastructure and provide the Board of Directors with recommendations of the upgrades and enhancements that were necessary to ensure TROX's infrastructure would deliver the features, functionalities and capabilities needed to support the company's future growth.

*"I concluded that our entire IT infrastructure needed a radical overhaul.*

*Although it had served TROX well in the past, the infrastructure was beginning to show its age. We had a multitude of physical machines that were coming to the end of support and needed to be replaced before issues with reliability and spares started to impact the business, and our data replication and disaster recovery capabilities were inadequate."*

Stephen Sheen, IT Manager, Trox

With a very small but highly proficient IT department, TROX's policy was to partner with a number of external organisations to provide the necessary levels of support and maintenance, in theory leaving the internal IT professionals free to focus on core projects to support the business in its drive for growth.

In reality Stephen and his colleagues were constantly diverted into ensuring that the infrastructure remained stable, addressing and resolving issues as they arose, maintaining and managing the systems, and providing help and support to the UK workforce.

As part of the infrastructure analysis process, Stephen met with TROX's IT partners, including eacs – a long term partner that had assisted TROX with projects over the past 10 years.

*"I was very impressed with eacs.*

*They knew our business and the systems that we had in place, but more importantly they listened whilst I outlined our requirements and objectives and I had no hesitation in asking them to help us turn our vision into a reality."*

Working closely together, TROX and eacs evaluated the entire infrastructure in line with TROX's business objectives and, following close consultation with stakeholders and the Board of Directors, identified the issues to be addressed, both in the short term and as a part of an ongoing project to ensure the future operational capabilities of the business.

*"This was a major project. In addition to a complete hardware refresh, we needed to virtualise the hardware estate, consolidate our storage onto one, highly resilient platform, ensure that we had full business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities, and implement an infrastructure that would substantially decrease our management and maintenance overheads."*

TROX also planned to upgrade its existing hardware, PCs and laptops to support Windows 7 and Microsoft Office 2010 and implement Microsoft System Center 2012 as its cloud and datacentre management solution for cloud applications and services.

## The Solution: A Phased Approach

With the analysis completed, eacs put forward a comprehensive proposal which would, in the first phase, address the aging infrastructure issues, provide a virtualised environment with a centralised SAN, and ensure business continuity.

Once the new infrastructure had been implemented, with the necessary knowledge-share to ensure that Stephen and his colleagues were fully familiar with the solution, eacs would then initiate the second phase of the project.

*"One of the great advantages of eacs is that they are not tied to specific manufacturers and can therefore design and implement solutions based on the technologies that best suit our needs, as opposed to those that give them the most financial returns*

*This gave us added confidence that the eacs solution would meet all of our requirements and objectives. In eacs, we had our partner of choice."*

To ensure minimal disruption to the business, eacs planned the install and go-live of the various elements of the project – such as infrastructure migration, server initiation, etc. – out of office hours.

*"This approach of dividing the entire project into phases and implementing each out of normal business hours, kept disruption to a minimum and ensured that any issues identified at each phase of the project were addressed.*

*In fact, I doubt whether many of our users even realised that we had migrated to a virtualised environment until they realised that their systems were now operating far more quickly, efficiently and effectively."*

Using VMware as the virtualisation platform, eacs also installed a centralised SAN, which provided TROX with the ability to evaluate, customise and test new versions of Microsoft Exchange in parallel with their existing environment and implement a programme to migrate employees across in groups, addressing and resolving any issues as they arose.

To ensure backup, data security and business continuity, eacs deployed a range of integrated technologies including Veeam Backup and Replication to ensure fast, flexible, and reliable recovery of virtualised applications and data (with backups being hosted at a remote location), a SAN for centralised storage and Mimecast to provide email management as a single service in the cloud, reducing the need for on-premise email storage and ensuring complete email availability, email security and compliance. As well as ensuring business continuity, Mimecast also supported the newly installed Microsoft System Center which allowed Stephen and his colleagues to easily and efficiently manage their IT environment.

*"Data replication and business continuity was a major issue for us.*

*The eacs solution gives us peace-of-mind and has reduced the time and effort that we used to spend in replicating and backing up our business critical data."*

With the infrastructure implementation completed, eacs and TROX began to address the second phase of the project: the roll out, implementation and support of hardware to support Microsoft Office 2010 and Windows 7, using Microsoft System Center 2012 to support management, monitoring, application delivery and remote access capabilities.

Still ongoing, and with eacs also providing support services, the project is already delivering substantial benefits .

*"The solution delivered by eacs precisely meets our existing and future requirements and has replaced aging systems before maintenance and support costs become prohibitive. Virtualisation maximises our investments and provides a platform that gives us the capability to expand the services we deliver with minimal additional expenditure."*

Costs have also been reduced with both a reduction in the number of physical servers and in their associated set up and running overheads.

With storage consolidated on one, highly resilient platform, users have reported improved performance across applications and in accessing data, and thanks to its new business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities, TROX is confident that in the event of a failure, key business applications will remain unaffected and can run from the new disaster recovery facility. Recovery of data is now also instant as TROX can 'tier' data on primary and secondary storage, and can provide historical data online for instant recovery.

Currently, eacs and TROX are exploring options that will make the best use of any future investment, improve performance, functionality and offer an enhanced level of business continuity and disaster recovery for key business applications. However, Stephen also cites a further benefit delivered by the new infrastructure. He and his colleagues are able to focus on core IT projects to benefit the business and support it during its future growth.

*"This major project is still ongoing and has involved us in an immense learning curve as we start to fully understand the benefits, capabilities and features of our new infrastructure. The entire solution has reduced our overheads, enhanced our flexibility and improved our business systems and processes. eacs' best-of-breed solution has maximised our investment, reduced potentially prohibitive hardware maintenance and support costs, improved performance and ensured full business continuity and disaster recovery for key business applications."*

eacs won a European IT & Software Excellence Award in 2013 for their work with TROX Group. "The independent judges were particularly impressed with the implementation of the solution and with the minimum disruption to the client's business,"

John Chapman, IT Europa.

## Benefits:

- Solution meets the existing and future requirements of TROX
- Hardware refresh replaces aging systems before maintenance and support costs become prohibitive
- Virtualisation maximises investments, delivers flexibility, allows the expansion of services and reduces costs
- Storage consolidated into one highly resilient platform
- Improved business processes
- Enhanced and simplified infrastructure management
- Improved business continuity