Otaverkko Helps Customers Tame Big Data While Controlling Costs

Otaverkko, a leading provider of IT infrastructure as a service (IaaS), hosts some of the largest Microsoft® Exchange environments in Finland. With customer data volumes growing exponentially, the company needed a storage solution that would meet its capacity requirements without unpredictable cost repercussions. Otaverkko selected Hitachi Data Systems, deploying Hitachi Unified Storage VM, Hitachi NAS Platform 3080, and Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2100.

Burgeoning Data Growth

Due to an unfailing commitment to operational excellence, customer service and data security, Otaverkko has realized profitable double-digit growth in recent years. The company has seen 20% year-on-year organic growth from new customer acquisitions and its existing customer base. This expansion is a result, in part, of the ever-increasing volume of information its customers are experiencing.

Another significant portion of this data growth is attributable to Otaverkko hosting some of the largest Exchange environments in Finland and its work with 2 separate customers with over 10,000 users each. As the number

Otaverkko prides itself on operational excellence, customer service and information security. Hitachi Data Systems solutions have enabled us to help our customers tackle rapidly increasing data volumes without compromising on performance or incurring spiralling costs.

Tuomo Karhapää
CTO
Otaverkko
of emails and attachments being sent increased every day, customer organizations were being challenged with a particularly sharp influx of data to manage, back up and protect.

With hundreds of terabytes of data stored in its data centers, Otaverkko found itself facing a capacity crunch. To keep up with its customers’ rapidly rising data volumes without sacrificing the speed at which they could access mission-critical data, a significant number of additional disk drives were deemed necessary. However, the previous platform was not running fast enough to meet Otaverkko’s high operational standards and was occasionally causing performance issues on clients’ virtual machines. It was also becoming increasingly clear that the cost of scaling the solution was prohibitive. The price of additional drives always seemed to vary, making it extremely challenging for the Otaverkko team to plan and budget for the additional incremental investment and, perhaps more importantly, provide customers with accurate, transparent quotes.

With a firm emphasis on long-term customer relationships and high-performance operations, Otaverkko chose to review its storage architecture. The goal was to control costs for both the company and its clients and put a more competitively priced, powerful solution in place.

**Scale Without Compromise**

Otaverkko embarked on a competitive review of the midtier storage solutions available on the market. While knowing the cost of scaling the solution at the outset was a must, the company’s commitment to highly available, mission-critical operations also meant the management team was not prepared to compromise on reliability, flexibility or security. Furthermore, there was a strong desire to lower energy consumption in the data center to reduce the company’s impact on the environment and contain energy costs.

These technical requirements for the new solution were underpinned by Otaverkko’s continuing ambition to be the best IT services provider in the market. In light of this, the team prepared a request for information (RFI) for various storage vendors. Based on the responses to RFI and interviews of local vendor representatives, the team tentatively chose to work with Hitachi Data Systems.

After consulting with Hitachi Data Systems architects over a period of several weeks Otaverkko was fully convinced and chose to work with Hitachi Data Systems and Descom as a trusted channel partner. The management team already knew about the Hitachi Data Systems reputation for reliability and excellence in delivering customer service. However, they were also impressed by the company’s transparent licensing model and its products’ high availability, performance and low energy requirements.

**Unified Solutions**

Otaverkko chose Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage because it is specifically designed to be easy to use, scalable and cost-effective. It is also perfectly suited to Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft SQL Server®, Microsoft SharePoint®, Microsoft Hyper-V®, VMware and other business applications regularly used by customers.

The team also selected Hitachi NAS Platform 3080, designed for file server consolidation and business-critical NAS workloads in remote data centers. The Hitachi NAS Platform was ideally suited for Otaverkko as it is specifically engineered to help businesses solve challenges associated with data growth while achieving a low total cost of ownership. The solution’s high throughput of up to 1.6GB/sec, 200,000 input/outputs per second (IOPS) per node and scalability of up to 16PB of usable capacity also assured Otaverkko that the system would be able to keep up with its customers’ workload demands.

Through seamless integration with Hitachi Command Suite, NAS Platform 3080 helps simplify file and content management through consolidation, automated migration, policy-based tiering and replication. Hitachi storage virtualization technologies, such as Hitachi Dynamic Tiering and Hitachi Dynamic Link Manager, allowed Otaverkko to unify management across all of its Hitachi storage systems. This capability gave the company the confidence that it would be able to maximize the return on the storage it was investing in and minimize operational costs. The Hitachi Dynamic Provisioning solution also eliminated the traditional complexity of “per-application” provisioning of storage volumes by creating a virtual pool. Therefore, it reduced the need for purchasing physical disks and maximizing efficiencies.

The migration to the new system coupled with dynamic provisioning capabilities also gave the Otaverkko team a window of opportunity to upgrade select business applications, such as Microsoft Exchange, bringing further performance benefits to customers. Working with Hitachi Data Systems to receive best practice advice on how to best deploy and use the new solutions, the implementation was complete within just 2 weeks.

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Otaverkko
Operational Excellence, Financial Savings

While price was a major driver in the initial decision to change storage providers, the operational and financial benefits for Otaverkko and its customers since migrating to Hitachi Data Systems have been manifold. Crucially, the company is now equipped to help customers tackle their burgeoning data volumes in a way that is both cost-effective and scalable for future growth. What’s more, by eliminating concerns relating to rising, unpredictable costs and performance issues, Otaverkko is now able to focus on what is most important: customers.

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Other key benefits include:

- High-density storage, resulting in a 30% to 40% physical footprint reduction in the data center and decreased energy consumption and costs.
- Performance issues with clients’ virtual machines ironed out due to the virtualization capabilities of the Hitachi Data Systems solutions.
- 100% availability promise from Hitachi Data Systems, crucial to Otaverkko’s business-critical storage offering.
- Real-time monitoring service from Hitachi to alert Otaverkko to performance issues before they become a customer problem.

In addition to the benefits seen from the solutions, Otaverkko has found HDS to be a collaborative and trusted partner, proactively offering constant and reliable customer service whenever needed.

Staying Ahead

Not content with simply meeting today’s customer demands, Otaverkko is constantly analyzing its operations and infrastructure to deliver on the customer demands of tomorrow.

Having seen a strong return on its original investment with Hitachi Data Systems, Otaverkko decided to expand its deployment with Hitachi Unified Storage VM (HUS VM) to stay one step ahead of changing customer needs. Otaverkko recognized that HUS VM could reduce management overhead by as much as 50% by allowing various storage platforms to be managed from a single point. The company chose HUS VM to deliver storage virtualization in one unified and easy to manage platform.

Furthermore, the solution’s capability to increase the performance and capacity Otaverkko was able to deliver made it an excellent choice. Otaverkko is now assured that its systems are future-proofed against its customers’ future data growth.

“At Otaverkko, we are continually reviewing our IT infrastructure to ensure we are able to react quickly to the evolving needs of our customers, supporting them to deftly manage the big data flowing through their systems and helping them transform IT challenges into IT opportunities,” says Karhapää.

Hitachi Data Systems has enabled the management team to do just that. With reliable, flexible and cost-effective storage solutions in place, Otaverkko can focus on the multidimensional needs of their customers, without worrying about the cost or practicality of scaling capacity to meet their burgeoning data volumes.