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Davide Migliavacca
CTO
Contactlab



Contactlab Powers Digital Marketing Service With Hitachi Unified Compute Platform for VMware vSphere

Challenge: Enhance software-as-a-service (SaaS) offerings to maintain Contactlab’s high level of customer service.

Solution: Implement a private cloud to build a secure 2 data center solution.

Outcome: A simplified, highly efficient and secure infrastructure capable of managing larger quantities of end-customer data

The Challenge: Enhance the Power of Digital Marketing

Italy-based Contactlab, a digital direct marketing services provider, manages the data provided by its customers, typically medium, large and multinational companies, to implement digital customer engagement campaigns.

For customer engagement to continue to be successful in rapidly changing markets, Contactlab continuously enhances its services to provide more targeted solutions built around the end-consumer personalities and requirements. To establish this approach, the company needs tools to maximize involvement of end-consumers and the ability to store, process and analyze data efficiently. “Our challenge is to strengthen our commitment in terms of digital customer engagement,

to offer services to enable companies to get to know their customers better, to segment in innovative ways and to take advantage of the possibilities offered by multichannel marketing,” explained Davide Migliavacca, Contactlab CTO.

Data from customers represents Contactlab’s core business. The company must be able to guarantee data availability, ensure rapid response times, and support advanced data processing services.

“The IT infrastructure at Contactlab must have the flexibility it needs to support the growth of the business,” said Migliavacca. “Our business model is SaaS, software as a service. This enables our customers to use information to create personalized content and harness the power of digital marketing.”



Contactlab

INDUSTRY

Services: Digital Direct Marketing
Services Provider

SOLUTION

Converged, Hitachi Unified Compute Platform for VMware vSphere, Data Protection, Private Cloud

HARDWARE

Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G200, Hitachi Unified Storage VM, Hitachi Compute Blade 500, Hitachi Accelerated Flash

SOFTWARE

Hitachi Unified Compute Platform Director

Outcomes

- Reduced footprint by 55%.
- Manages higher volumes of data.
- Quickly provisions new resources.

The company was experiencing exponential growth in amount of data coming from the ever-increasing number of points of contact between the brand and the consumer. Contactlab's IT infrastructure had grown in silos over the years, resulting in an increasingly difficult-to-manage architecture. As a result, Contactlab IT found that it was spending more and more time on troubleshooting and performing system maintenance.

"We wanted to reduce timescales and simplify provisioning procedures, thereby reducing the impact on dedicated resources. We needed a single, integrated management system, for increased responsiveness in the deployment of our applications and in response times, response times," Migliavacca advised.

The Solution: Private Cloud, From Milan to Amsterdam

"With its growing business, the need for infrastructure scalability and simplification of management tasks was paramount so that Contactlab could maintain control of its infrastructure," continued Migliavacca. "One of the main requirements in our choice of technology partner was that our staff would have control of the infrastructure and data, without a middleman. Our collaboration is based not only on the absolute excellence of Hitachi as a vendor, but also on their role as a technical advisor, able to understand the nature of our business and the idiosyncrasies of our field," he said.

Contactlab chose to build a private cloud based on Hitachi Unified Compute Platform (UCP) for VMware (UCP for VMware). The

solution comprises Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform G200, Hitachi Unified Storage VM with Hitachi Accelerated Flash, and Hitachi Compute Blade 500, and Hitachi Unified Compute Platform Director (UCP Director) software. In addition, the fully converged solution includes Brocade and VMware Enterprise.

Contactlab decided upon two mirrored, synchronized data centers, using Commvault Simpana in their offices in Milan, Italy, and Amsterdam, Netherlands, approximately 1000 km apart. By the end of H1 2016, a second Contactlab data center in Amsterdam will come online. This is a complete replica of the Milan facility and will provide a distributed service delivery platform and implement a disaster recovery procedure with the highest security standards to increase levels of customer data protection.

Benefits: Partnership and Support

"The single most important factor in our decision to work with HDS was their consultative approach," explained Migliavacca. "HDS went above and beyond the initial request for more storage, listening carefully to Contactlab's issues and identifying a much more suitable solution," he added. "Hitachi has also been very supportive in the construction of economic and financial models, to help us plan costs very carefully and highlight the savings of our choice."

With the new solution, Contactlab was able to significantly consolidate approximately 150 physical servers and four storage systems, thereby reducing footprint by 55% from 50 m² (164 ft²) to 22 m² (72 ft²).

Also by implementing UCP Director automation software, Contactlab was able to simplify with a single point of management for the entire data center, with quick provisioning of new resources directly with a native integration with VMware vCenter.

Contactlab has always been committed to offering its customers access to its SaaS services, with the highest quality standards. Today, Contactlab manages a daily email volume of almost 100 million units, and offers channel diversification, as in the recently implemented push notifications and Facebook custom audiences. "We can now handle much higher volumes of data," Migliavacca confirmed. "We have also reduced lead time and setup, and made the infrastructure more secure and reliable."

He continued, "Big data and privacy are the buzzwords at the moment. But for us, the ability to manage and create value from large quantities of data, maintain privacy and keep data secure are key and always a continuous part of our strategy as we continue to grow. With Hitachi solutions we are able to achieve this. Our new IT infrastructure ensures control and flexibility, and at the same time, allows us to plan for growth," Migliavacca concluded.

About HDS

Hitachi Data Systems innovates technology for business and social prosperity. Our IT solutions and services drive strategic management and analysis of the world's data. Ask us how we can help you get started. HDS.com.

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