

Case Study: Virtual Infrastructure Build BAM Nuttall - Construction Sector



BAM Nuttall align with Foundation-IT to design and build a new virtual infrastructure to reduce costs and improve disaster recovery capabilities.

Customer Profile:-

Industry:-	Construction
Founded:-	1865
Employees:-	2000+
Office Locations:-	21
Turnover:-	£1bn

Executive Summary

As part of a refurbishment at BAM Nuttall's head office in Camberley, Surrey, it was an ideal time to consider virtualising its 70 servers.

Not only did virtualisation offer BAM Nuttall with the opportunity to reduce the number of physical servers and overall cost of ownership, it would also mean fewer racks, a smaller server room and be considerably more cost efficient. A much sought after goal in contributing to BAM Nuttall's overall environmental performance.

"Choosing the right partner can mean the difference between a successful and not so successful project"

Steve Shepherd, CIO, BAM Nuttall

The Issue

A refurbishment of 4 floors within BAM Nuttall's head office led to a number of IT related challenges.

The business had several environmental performance goals that it was aspiring to achieve, they had a large server footprint that needed to be refreshed as well as a complex disaster recovery requirement.

Foundation-IT were engaged for their experience in managing complex infrastructure projects.

How Foundation-IT helped

After several planning meetings the project was scoped and a Support Technician from Steve Shepherd's team, Shabir Govani, was assigned to work alongside Foundation-IT in an effort to gain as much knowledge and experience as possible about the VMWare solution. This was a critical step for BAM Nuttall as Steve Shepherd explained, "We wanted to ensure that in the future we were in control of our own destiny. Foundation-IT made sure that Shabir shadowed their every move, with Shabir also attending the VMWare training where he gained 'Certified' status, ensuring BAM Nuttall's future aspirations for self-sufficiency. Foundation-IT supported and encouraged this process which definitely made all the difference.

Migrating to a virtualised platform

With Dell's EqualLogic SAN hardware and VMWare licenses in place it was Govani's task to destroy or at least carry out as much destructive testing as possible prior to migrating to the new, live virtualised environment. Testing lasted for four weeks with everyone confident and ready for the actual migration of data, much of which took place out of hours. Shabir Govani added, "The test phase was really important as when we switched from physical to virtual servers in a live environment further change would be very difficult to achieve. We encountered a few challenges during the process but this was a good thing as it allowed us to tailor the network more precisely. Switchover timing was also paramount and we had to overcome a few file anomalies. However the really satisfying moments were as we turned off each physical server, took a step back, waited a moment and realised we were virtualised; all in all a very successful transition.

"Foundation-IT's easy manner, coupled with expert technical competence struck a chord with us; we knew from the outset that we could work well together."

Steve Shepherd, CIO, BAM Nuttall

Creating a disaster recovery site

With up to 2000 users across 150 active sites at any one time, each having a high dependency on the data centre, the next phase was to strengthen the company's disaster recovery capabilities. The board agreed and work began on creating a disaster recover site.

Steve Shepherd commented, "We looked at the options; a managed off site solution of in house; timing-wise a new Halesowen office in the West Midlands was about to open and we opted to utilise this site."

Additional servers were ordered for Halesowen, 5 in total; VMWare vCentre Site Recovery Manager (SRM) was then installed onto the servers in Camberley and the infrastructure to support disaster recovery was ready.

Steve Shepherd continued, "Should an unforeseeable disaster occur that is outside our control, we now have complete confidence and peace of mind, that we can quickly and seamlessly failover our services to Halesowen. Our business is protected and it's thanks to Foundation-IT's expertise and approach that we achieved this goal."

Why Foundation-IT?

Asked for the highlights, Steve Shepherd concluded "We certainly made the right choice, Foundation-IT supported us every step of the way, their technical expertise and industry knowledge fast-tracked the project, we were even able to reduce the overall number of project days as Govani became more knowledgeable and capable of carrying out tasks previously assigned to Foundation-IT. It was a rare pleasure to be this pleased with a vendor and very satisfying to announce to the Board that the project was an absolute success. Foundation-IT played a large part in that success and that is why they were the right partner for us."