

Customer Story

Delivering Vital Medicines 24/7 with a Highly Available Infrastructure



Challenge

Increase capacity and performance to support a rapidly growing international business and ensure applications are available for users globally 24/7.



Solution

Migrate VMware and SAP applications and databases from legacy storage infrastructure to a new Hitachi VSP One Block 24 array.



Outcome

Enable seamless scalability for up to 40% year-over-year growth. Improve user experience with smooth application performance.



FarmaMondo

RESPONSIBLE ACCESS TO SPECIALTY MEDICINES

INDUSTRY

Healthcare and Life Sciences

LOCATION

Switzerland, EMEA

HARDWARE

Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform One
(VSP One) Block 24

PARTNER



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Our offices around the world must be able to connect to our central IT systems 24/7. To ensure near-100% availability, we depend on the highly reliable infrastructure and services provided by Hitachi and Netability.”

Antonio Adorno
IT Manager, FarmaMondo

Delivering Vital Medicines 24/7 with a Highly Available Infrastructure

Challenge

FarmaMondo's mission is to deliver unmet needs for specialty medicines around the world – especially in cases where physicians may not be able to source the pharmaceuticals their patients need. For example, a new medicine might not yet have been licensed in their country, or there may be a shortage of an essential drug that has no licensed alternative. In these circumstances, the only option is unlicensed medicines (ULMs). These are products that are not commercially available in the patient's home market, but which healthcare professionals are permitted to source and prescribe when there is no alternative.

Since 2013, FarmaMondo has expanded from its base in Switzerland to build an international distribution infrastructure for ULMs that stretches from Argentina to Singapore. This successful international strategy has led the company to expand its operations at a whirlwind pace, with an annual growth rate of 30-40%.

This growth has led to increasing demands on FarmaMondo's centralized IT infrastructure. While the company uses cloud-based services for basic productivity applications such as email and messaging, its core business systems are all hosted at its main data centers in Switzerland. 80 users around the world rely on these systems to run the SAP and VMware applications that support their daily work. And with a working day that extends across many time zones, there is no good time for downtime. With storage systems that were reaching the end of their support lifecycle and running into capacity and performance limits, FarmaMondo realized that it was time to refresh its infrastructure.

Solution

FarmaMondo consulted Netability, its trusted partner, to help refresh and modernize its server and storage landscape. Netability came up with a design that would replace four existing servers with just two new machines and replace the company's existing Hitachi VSP G200 storage system with a latest-generation Hitachi VSP One Block 24 array.

As the managed services provider for FarmaMondo's IT infrastructure, the Netability team also took responsibility for installing the new VSP One storage system and supporting the migration of data from the old array. By creating a fiber channel network connection between the two arrays, Netability was able to accelerate the transfer of data significantly.

"We were amazed by the speed of the migration," says Antonio Adorno, IT Manager at FarmaMondo. "Hitachi and Netability are credited with making it easy to move our data, without downtime or disruption to our business." The move to VSP One has allowed FarmaMondo to replace legacy SSDs with high-speed NVMe drives. Combined with the company's powerful new servers, this has transformed performance for both batch processing and interactive application workloads.

FarmaMondo is also eager to take advantage of the latest features of the VSP One. The ability to create immutable snapshots of data will help to protect the business against ransomware and other cyberattacks. And by switching from a traditional RAID configuration to the VSP One's Dynamic Drive Protection (DDP) groups, FarmaMondo will be able to increase its storage capacity one drive at a time, making upgrades much more affordable.

After seeing the positive results of moving its VMware applications onto the VSP One, FarmaMondo also decided to consolidate its SAP environment onto the new platform — a real vote of confidence in the solution. This involved switching the SAP applications from running on bare metal to virtualization with VMware and then migrating the virtual machines onto the new array.

3x

Increase in data center
space efficiency

3x

Reduction in data center
energy costs per TB

3x

Faster completion of key
SAP batch jobs

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Outcome

Reflecting on the project, Antonio Adorno comments: “The storage we have purchased guarantees us performance and headroom for the future, at an affordable price. Moreover, it’s a much more sustainable solution. To support the same level of growth with our old infrastructure, we would have needed three times more rack units and our electricity consumption would have tripled, so it’s a great energy and space saver.”

In combination with FarmaMondo’s new servers, the VSP One array has dramatically improved application response speeds. “Everything runs a lot more smoothly, especially our SAP applications,” Adorno says. “One SAP batch job that used to take 20 minutes to complete now runs in just six minutes, so it’s more than three times faster.”

Above all, FarmaMondo sees the success of the migration to VSP One as the continuation of a long history of high-quality infrastructure and excellent service from Hitachi and Netability. “Honor and glory to the old VSP G200, which served us reliably for many years,” says Antonio Adorno. “Now, with the VSP One, we are continuing that tradition of reliability, and we’re on a different planet in terms of performance.”

He concludes, “Delivering this migration without disruption to our international business is a great achievement. We trust Netability’s advice because they don’t just sell to us, they are always in the trenches with us. If we have a problem, it’s their problem too. In the long term, having outstanding support from a partner we trust is the most important thing.”



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Antonio Adorno
IT Manager, FarmaMondo

About Hitachi Vantara

Hitachi Vantara, a Hitachi, Ltd. subsidiary, is the data foundation for innovation. We build resilient data storage and infrastructure the world’s innovators rely on.



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