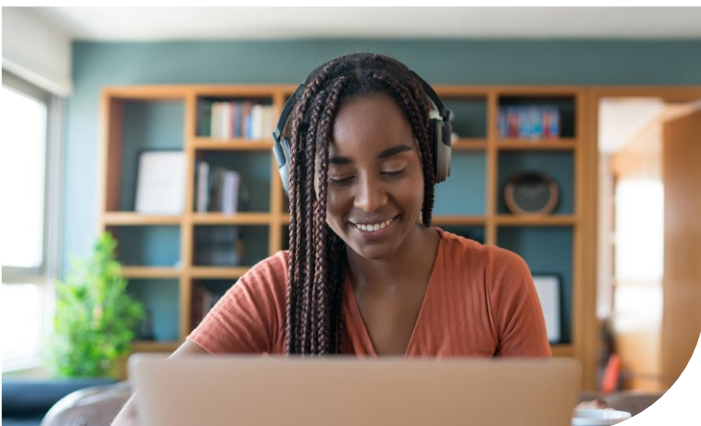# Adopting a robust centralisation strategy for operating company datacentres

Kingfisher, Europe's leading home improvement group, is a geographically diverse retailer operating 1,331 stores globally. It operates in nine countries across Europe and Asia and generates sales of nearly £11 billion. Over six million customers are served in-store, on the web and apps every week, from everyday DIYers to trade professionals. The Kingfisher brands; B&Q, Castorama, Brico Depot and ScrewFix employ 78,000 staff worldwide.

Summary:

› Relocation of large datacentre from France to the UK

› Complex project to relocate multiple Operating Company systems

› Datacentre comprising multiple operating systems, many older adding to complexity

› Migration of business critical applications such as ERP systems, hosting vital data such as inventory

› Fast and efficient relocation in just 9 months

› Significant reduction in physical footprint

› Energy savings equivalent to 60,000 Euros per year

The Challenge:

Kingfisher made the decision to adopt a centralisation strategy for its operating company datacentres. The reasons for doing this were two-fold; to both leverage cost savings from the consolidation of infrastructure and support, and to gain better control of the current and future IT infrastructure deployment. Earlier attempts to migrate the Lille datacentre had failed and whilst there was a proposal made by a large IT infrastructure supplier for a fully outsourced migration, the cost for this was far greater than Kingfisher's target budget.

Kerv Connect's remit was to create a solution that was technically viable, within budget and also managed the risks associated with moving critical IT systems from the local datacentre in Lille to the UK main datacentres.

A further challenge that presented was that many of the systems were legacy technologies; this added to the complexity – assembling a team with the right skills set, increased fragility and concerns in moving older hardware and obsolescence issues if any damage was to occur.

› Multiple system operating systems including Windows, Linux, HP-UX, AIX and Tru64

› Multiple operating company systems hosted in Lille – Castorama France, Castorama Russia, Castorama Poland, Brico France and Brico Spain

› Migration of business critical applications such as ERP systems

The Solution:

Over a 3-month period, Kerv Connect's team performed a detailed audit of the IT systems housed within the Lille datacentre. This included technical analysis, application network flow mapping and interviews conducted with key resources to understand the overall environment and application uses, and to define whether each system was a candidate for centralisation. Deliverables included a full physical and logical audit spreadsheet of all servers and an application map showing which servers made up each application and server dependencies based on network bandwidth between servers.

From the audit findings, a proposal was created which would allow for the migration of all servers that were candidates for centralisation within Kingfisher's target budget. The proposal mapped out which applications needed to be migrated simultaneously and detailed the different technical approaches for migrating the various flavours of OS, physical hardware and virtual servers.

> ❝ **Having worked with Kerv Connect on previous initiatives I was totally comfortable in partnering with them to carry out the Data Centre migration. Kerv Connect's ability to rapidly track the inter-system dependencies enabled the programme to get underway where previously traction was difficult.** ❞
>
> **Nigel Hooper**
> Distribution Account Manager – Kingfisher

> A VLAN stretch infrastructure was put in place between Lille and the UK, allowing server migration without changing their IP addresses, enabling speedier migrations with greatly reduced risk.

> Over a 9-month period Kerv Connect's assigned a Project Manager and technical resources, in total a team of five, worked onsite in Lille to build relationships with Kingfisher's in-house IT team. This was key in facilitating smooth and successful delivery of the project.

> 80 Wintel physical servers were virtualised in Lille to both achieve the standard benefits of virtualisation and make the migration process quicker and less risky.

> 174 Wintel virtual servers in total were then migrated to the UK utilising Zerto replication software. These virtual machines were consolidated onto existing UK ESXi server clusters.

> 5 Wintel physical servers were migrated to the UK as during technical analysis they were deemed

> 9 Physical Tru64 servers were migrated to the UK, with their storage consolidated on existing IBM V7000's. Three critical production systems had replica physical systems installed in the UK so they could then be logically migrated, reducing risk and speeding up the rollback process that was essential for getting the migrations approved by the business. All these production systems did not have DR plans in place so by creating server pairs the 'old' servers could then be utilised as DR machines.

> 9 AIX LPAR's were migrated to the UK and consolidated onto existing AIX infrastructure.

> 29 Physical HP-UX servers were installed in the UK to facilitate logical migrations from Lille. These servers had uprated processors that prolonged the supportability of the units; those in Lille had older processors which had already reached End of Life (EOL), again storage in the UK was consolidated onto the existing IBM V7000 deployment.

The Results

Efficient and fast project completion. A full migration was achieved within 9 months.

Significant cost savings were made by consolidating virtual machines and physical fibre channel storage onto existing UK deployments.

The physical footprint in Lille was reduced from 9 racks to 2 racks in one of the datacentre rooms and from 26 racks to 4 racks in the other.

Electricity savings of an estimated 122 KW/h, adding up to a cost saving of 60,000 Euros per year.

Get in touch with us

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