

“Fujitsu has 100 percent lived up to our expectations, with an enormous increase in performance. Fujitsu’s servers have run flawlessly for the eighteen months we have had them.”

Claus Andersen
CIO
Kopenhagen Fur

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At a glance

Country: Denmark
Industry: Retail
Founded: 1930
Employees: 400
Website: www.kopenhagenfur.com

Challenge

Kopenhagen Fur needed complete disaster recovery support. It cannot risk a crash during an auction, or being cut off by a fire or flood.

Solution

Fujitsu was selected to supply Kopenhagen Fur’s entirely new server infrastructure, which was to consist of a combination of blade servers: 10 host servers and 200–250 virtual servers.

Benefit

- Infrastructure is 100 percent reliable and provides complete disaster recovery
- Takes up 25 percent of the space used previously
- Performs 500 percent faster than previously
- Saves DKK150,000 on electricity bills

Customer

Kopenhagen Fur is the world's biggest auction house for furs, as well as a global hub for the fur trade. Kopenhagen Fur is a cooperative society owned by Danish mink farmers, who are now some of the world leaders in mink breeding. Kopenhagen Fur is also a flagship of Danish fashion and design.

Products and services

- 10 host servers
- 200-250 virtual servers

Challenge

In July 2011 there was a cloudburst in Denmark and the floodgates opened. Claus Andersen, CIO at Kopenhagen Fur, plays in a company band in his free time. When the storm was at its worst, he decided to drive to Glostrup to save his guitars and drum kit from the waters flooding the basement in which the band rehearsed. As he was already out checking the instruments, he decided to look in on the business's data center to see if that too had been hit by the water.

When he let himself in, he noticed that the front office had been flooded. Fortunately, all of the valuable computers and systems were undamaged, as the data center was situated on a raised floor. Other businesses had had less forethought, and in the days that followed the violent downpour there was talk of a number of complete IT breakdowns.

The experience set in motion a thought process which in turn led Andersen to decide to completely modernize the business's IT infrastructure. The infrastructure had worked well up to that point, but with 12 years behind it, it had one significant shortcoming: there was only one single data center; there were no virtual servers featuring computers in another location, and the server itself was by no means redundant. In other words, security was not in peak condition, and with the possibility of water coming from above and below he had to think creatively.

Solution

Kopenhagen Fur's bestseller is mink and it sells 30 million mink pelts each year. The sales take place at five annual auctions, each of which lasts five to eight days and is visited by some 500–600 customers from around the world. The auctions take place on a quiet residential street in Glostrup, which on auction days is transformed into a global village in which people from all over the world meet to trade in furs. A typical day can see turnover of up to DKK0.5 billion–1 billion, at a rate of up to DKK30,000–40,000 per second.

The auctions themselves don't take place online; that simply wouldn't be fast enough. They take place in the building itself, but any clients that aren't present can follow online in real-time from all around the world. As such, even the slightest security breach can have catastrophic consequences for the day's auction. The business is therefore doubly dependent on the IT infrastructure running stably and working optimally, particularly on the hectic auction days, when pressure on the systems is at its peak.

When it came to the modernization, Fujitsu was the natural choice for Andersen to turn to for a quote on an entirely new server platform. Andersen did comparisons with other big providers, and Fujitsu quickly proved to be superior in both performance and price.

"During the tender process we visited Fujitsu in Japan, where we found a fantastic culture of kindness. It is very service-oriented and extremely professional in its deliveries. And the same was true in Ballerup. Fujitsu takes real pride in what it does, and you can really see its dedication. That affects the procurement decision, there's no doubt about it," the CIO says enthusiastically.

As Fujitsu's technology is high quality and future-proof, Fujitsu was selected to supply Kopenhagen Fur's entirely new server infrastructure, which was to consist of a combination of blade servers: 10 host servers and 200–250 virtual servers.

The new infrastructure was implemented for Kopenhagen Fur in spring 2014, involving two redundant data centers with an exact copy of the same setup. As of fall 2015, Andersen has supplemented the solution with the procurement of two additional host servers, one of which is to be used for experiments involving new solutions.

Benefit

The results speak for themselves, according to Andersen: "The basic environment consists of Nimble, Cisco and Fujitsu, and they run phenomenally well together. It takes up only about a quarter of the space it used to, while also performing 500 percent faster. And not only that, we save a lot of power. We actually save DKK150,000 on our electricity bills each year."

Prompted by the powerful downpour in 2011, Andersen was looking for a solution that would give the business full coverage against risks in the form of disaster recovery. This means that if disaster were to strike it would take at most 10 minutes to get the whole system up and running again. "I want to have complete disaster recovery support for the business. We cannot risk crashing during an auction. With the new solution, our production doesn't stop, even if the building floods or burns to the ground. This would only affect us for ten minutes before we'd be up and running again," says a satisfied Andersen, before concluding: "Fujitsu has 100 percent lived up to our expectations, with an enormous increase in performance. Fujitsu's servers have run flawlessly for the eighteen months we have had them."

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