FUJITSU

Case Study
Vicenza Municipal Authority

»We wanted to reorganize our data center to cut costs and energy consumption, but also to improve our services. By selecting Fujitsu blade servers, we were able to achieve these goals«

Marcello Missagia, Director of GIS Information Technology and Statistics, Vicenza Municipal Authority

The customer

Country: Italy
Industry: Public Administration
Employees: 900
Website: www.comune.vicenza.it

The challenge

Population registers, mapping systems, digital document flows, payroll and tax compliance are just some of the areas where Vicenza Municipal Authority has initiated a process of profound innovation built around the efficient use of IT resources. With this in mind, it has begun to consolidate its data center with a view to reducing management and running costs, while also assuring scope for future growth without costly investments.

The solution

The FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY BX blade system reflects the organization's need to manage processes and applications through a single, central system, while providing both the necessary power and space for growth. The related cost savings, measured by savings on energy consumption, are in the order of 60 percent.

The customer

The Municipal Authority of Vicenza serves a population of over 113,000 people and is the fourth largest administrative area in Italy's Veneto region, covering approximately 80 square kilometers. The Authority has about one thousand employees – 26 in IT – who not only perform standard administrative tasks but also operate the Vicenza Local Services Center (CST), which serves 43 municipalities. Vicenza currently sits sixth in the league table of non-provincial capitals for the amount of open data it provides.

The challenge

Against a domestic background that is increasingly oriented towards controlling and containing the funds allocated to local administrations, expenditure cutbacks also have a direct impact on technological infrastructure used to provide services to institutions and individuals. Vicenza Municipal Authority not only needed to consolidate a large and scattered fleet of servers but also to simplify its infrastructure management and ensure scalability, in view of changes in the amount of digital services provided.

The solution

The consolidation process, based on system virtualization, has now been ongoing for some time at Vicenza Municipal Authority. But it received fresh impetus with the decision to deploy a Fujitsu PRIMERGY BX900 server with twelve blades as part of a continuing push to gradually retire the 30-plus machines still in use in its data center and offices. As Marcello Missagia, Director of GIS Information Technology and Statistics, explains: "The number of computerized procedures has increased in recent years, meaning we needed to reorganize in order to cut costs and energy consumption, and to achieve a level of flexibility in view of rising performance requirements." The new system – which has already been upgraded with four new blades – has provided the backbone for innovation and an expanded range of services offered by the Authority. In addition, the push for 'integrated territorial management', which involves sharing and cross-checking databases to improve the effectiveness of the fight against tax evasion, recently won the "e-Government: Champions of Re-Use" prize at the SMAU awards in Padua.

The benefit	Products and services
■ Implementation of a single, central system for managing all data center processes ■ Energy consumption cost savings of over 60 percent ■ Faster digitization of the services	■ FUJITSU Server PRIMERGY BX900 S2 ■ FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS DX80 S2, already expanded, with additional shelf ■ FUJITSU Storage ETERNUS LT60 S2 ■ VMware vSphere 5.1 virtualization environment ■ Guarantee covering high product reliability

The benefit

Local authorities are facing two key challenges at the moment. Cutting operating costs has to be twinned with more efficient, more secure and more reliable online services for citizens. Vicenza Municipal Authority had already identified virtualization as the way to achieve real results in both areas, but the qualitative leap only came with the decision to base the whole information system on one central unit. The decision to use a Fujitsu PRIMERGY BX900 blade server with 12 blades, each with 128 GB of RAM and two Intel XEON processors – which can be expanded up to 18 blades – paved the way for improved performance across the entire municipal IT system in terms of reliability, energy efficiency and scalability (the ability to respond effectively to increases in load, even if only temporary).

The foremost beneficiaries of the new system are internal users, who can now run applications faster and have seen zero service disruptions. The project is still being finished off, but the most important infrastructure has already been migrated to the new blade system. Missagia says: "The ultimate goal is to have around sixty virtual servers working off this unit, mainly operating in an open source environment. The decision enabled us to free up space and resources for other uses and has also brought estimated energy savings in the order of 60 percent." In addition, technological advances have allowed the IT department to keep all of its processes and (mainly confidential) information entirely in-house.

The scalability of PRIMERGY BX900 technology has given the Authority's journey towards digitization a real boost. While the population register has been online since 2012, now a number of new projects have been rolled out, including critical updates for the payroll system and social services, much more intensive email use, and the replacement of massive paper trails with digital processes. The latest innovations include the online availability of building codes and professional registers, permits for entering limited traffic zones and the availability of open data.

Filippo Zanetti, a local councilor responsible for streamlining bureaucracy, comments: "Vicenza is sixth in the league table of non-provincial capitals for the amount of data sets it makes available. We have over a hundred of them now, mainly dealing with maps and statistics. It's another way to improve transparency in relationships between people and the state."

Vicenza is also placing great emphasis on the 'integrated territorial management' project, which involves a computerized system for sharing and cross-referencing databases (e.g. with the Revenues Agency or Finance Police) in order to improve the effectiveness of the fight against tax evasion – an area where Vicenza is at the forefront. The system, which was developed in partnership with Milan Municipal Authority and the Region of Umbria, is also available to other local authorities upon request.

Conclusion

Vicenza Municipal Authority is a leading light in a virtuous Italian public sector that is able to meet cost-cutting requirements without compromising on innovation and the quality of the services it provides to its network of institutional partners (starting with the 43 municipalities working with Vicenza's 'Local Services Centre') and the public. As such, the decision to opt for Fujitsu blade technology together with an open-source environment built around virtualization has already brought tangible results in terms of performance and service expansion. In the same vein, the Authority is soon expected to start building a disaster recovery site, reusing some of the systems removed from the old central data center.

"We needed a central system that would give us the power and the space to grow. We have achieved this objective, while also making advances in terms of innovation."
Marcello Missagia, Director of Information Systems GIS and Statistics, Vicenza Municipal Authority

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