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Miles Nisbet
IT Director
Mizuho International

Mizuho International wanted to migrate its data centre to a shared facility with Mizuho Bank, hosted by Fujitsu. It worked with Fujitsu to migrate over 150 devices to the new location.

At a glance

Country: United Kingdom
Industry: Financial Services
Founded: 2002
Website: mizuho-emea.com

Challenge

When Mizuho International's ten-year contract with its existing data centre supplier was due to expire, it wanted to take advantage of free space in its sister company's data centre, hosted by Fujitsu. The company needed to install the fibre cabling, stand up a new infrastructure, and physically migrate over 150 devices into the new location.

Solution

Fujitsu undertook significant design work, installing new underfloor cabling, fibre and copper cabling, in line with the customer's specifications. 150+ servers, SANs and backup platforms were then relocated from the previous co-location site, securely transported to the new site and then commissioned into the new infrastructure.

Benefit

- Reduced costs for data centre hosting
- Careful planning ensured a seamless migration with minimal operational disruption
- Refreshed network provides better application performance and improved productivity, improving overall service
- High quality project management standards and a customer-centric approach provided peace of mind

Customer

Mizuho International plc (Mizuho International) is the London based securities and investment banking arm of the Mizuho Financial Group, Inc., and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mizuho Securities Co., Ltd. With a primary focus on client based activities, its wide range of services includes sales and trading in both debt and equity securities, the underwriting of new issues and M&A advisory services. Mizuho International has a Branch in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (for which the operating name is Mizuho International plc (DIFC Branch) and a Representative Office in Madrid, Spain. In addition, Mizuho International has a subsidiary (Mizuho Securities Europe GmbH) in Frankfurt, Germany.

Products and Services

- FUJITSU Data Centre Services
- FUJITSU Engineering and Migration Services

Migrating a business critical data centre

Mizuho International previously had a ten-year co-location contract with a data centre and disaster recovery provider, however, when the time came to renew the contract, it wanted to explore alternative, less expensive solutions. When sister company Mizuho Bank freed up a significant amount of space in the Fujitsu data centre, it created the perfect opportunity.

"There is a drive to consolidate within the wider group of Mizuho entities under the 'One Mizuho' approach so moving in and sharing with our sister bank was a great way to reflect that," explains Miles Nisbet, IT Director, Mizuho International. "It was a clear path to significant savings while helping to support the wider corporate strategy."

While the idea of moving to save costs was eminently sensible, the prospect of actually unplugging and relocating over 150 servers and their SAN environments, along with the associated cabling and switch connections, without disrupting the business, was daunting. Mizuho International needed a migration partner to help it perform a seamless and cost-effective migration; as Fujitsu hosts the existing data centre, the bank asked it to propose a solution.

"Fujitsu and Mizuho International has a longstanding relationship with our parent company so it made perfect sense to involve it in the transition," adds Miles Nisbet. "Fujitsu came back with a well-planned, comprehensive proposal that would fit out the tech hall to our standards, making it easier to move our existing hardware."

Laying the groundwork

Fujitsu began by creating a dedicated area within Mizuho's tech hall in the Fujitsu data centre and undertook significant design work on the infrastructure. This involved installing new underfloor cabling (fibre and copper), according to Mizuho International's specifications. Much of this work was required to be done outside office hours to avoid disrupting the ongoing data centre services for Mizuho Bank.

"Fujitsu fitted out two rows of cabinets and established fibre connectivity with the new core network we had commissioned," says Miles Nisbet. "It co-ordinated closely with data centre managers from Mizuho Bank to ensure it would meet our standards and to minimise any risk to daily business."

With the infrastructure, racks and networks in place, the data centre was ready for hardware installation. Swing platforms were established for the virtual server estate and SANs. Pilot migrations were followed by fifteen weekend move phases with an average of ten devices shifted per phase.

Servers and SAN equipment were physically lifted from the previous co-lo site, shipped to the Fujitsu data centre and installed into the new tech hall. After this six-month migration, there was an additional three weeks of contingency to accommodate any change in requirements.

"We worked with the Fujitsu Data Centre Services engineers to rack, patch and power check each device, moving as little as two or as many as 30 devices each weekend," continues Miles Nisbet. "In total, 150 physical devices and 470 virtual machines were migrated, along with 24 market data and external services. These support all core applications, such as front office tools and finance, for 1000 users across Europe."

Dramatic savings and improved performance

Mizuho International has reduced costs significantly as it no longer solely pays a third party for its data centre services. At the same time, it is enjoying better performance through the refreshed network architecture – even though it is using the same servers and SANs as in the previous co-location facility.

"Mizuho Bank is paying for FUJITSU Data Centre Services space regardless, so it removes a massive overhead for our business while also giving us access to its shared pot of Fujitsu engineering hours for 24/7 Ops support," comments Miles Nisbet. "And, because Mizuho International implemented a complete network refresh, our users are seeing a boost in performance, which improves productivity."

Mizuho International has also been impressed by Fujitsu's management of the space and the strict controls that are in place: "The quality of the installation, standards and record-keeping maintained by Fujitsu is high which will pay significant dividends going forward. It also gives us peace of mind in terms of availability," remarks Miles Nisbet.

Fujitsu's ability to assist with every aspect of the migration, bringing previously unconnected fields of expertise together to ensure a seamless transition, has given Mizuho a reliable, scalable and high-performing platform for future growth.

"It has been a successful partnership, built on collaboration and co-creation, where we have gained from Fujitsu's size and efficient working methods," concludes Miles Nisbet. "It is an extremely well-run facility and the crystal-clear planning and communication have made the migration as painless as possible."

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