

Brewin Dolphin Securities

Kelway applies proven project management techniques and IT infrastructure skills to accelerate the establishment of Brewin Dolphin Securities' new state-of-the-art data centre

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Brewin Dolphin Securities is the largest independent private client investment manager in the UK, managing over £21 billion of funds. With more than 100,000 clients depending on its services, Brewin Dolphin Securities' IT systems have to be completely reliable and always available, 24 hours a day, every day.

In the fast moving world of financial services, technology delivers critical competitive advantage, so the IT organisation at Brewin Dolphin Securities is always seeking to leverage the best available equipment to maximise performance and business value.

The Challenge

The imminent expiration of the lease on their London data centre in 2008 presented Brewin Dolphin Securities with an opportunity to move this key facility out of the expensive city environment and establish a more cost effective centre elsewhere. The company had long been users of HP servers and were well aware of the advanced remote management capabilities that HP provided, so physical location was not an issue. After careful assessment, they selected Atos Origin as a hosting partner and Andover as the site of their new facility.

Having made the decision to create a new data centre, Scott Robertson, Group Server Manager, was then faced with the challenge of moving to the new centre without impacting service availability. Also, the existing machines, while performing well, had been in place for some time and were no longer as powerful or efficient as the IT industry could now offer.

Rather than attempt to transfer the servers to the new premises, which would have been highly disruptive, Scott decided to address both concerns by upgrading the infrastructure to the latest HP c-Class Blade Servers for improved flexibility and capacity at the same time. This would allow the new server environment to be built while the current system remained in operation, greatly reducing the risk to the business.

Although armed with a sound infrastructure design and a rational plan, Scott and his team still had the major challenge of getting 50 servers delivered, checked out, built and installed at Andover in a very limited time.

Brewin Dolphin Securities' IT organisation had previously deployed new servers themselves, although only in much smaller numbers, so they knew what was involved. Scott judged that, using only their own resources, a project of this size could take weeks – time they did not have. Bearing in mind that most of the company's IT resources were based in Edinburgh, they would need help and the search for a capable supplier partner began.

"The performance and reliability of the HP equipment has fully met our expectations and Kelway has never let us down, so we will continue to rely on both companies in the future."

Scott Robertson, Group Server Manager - Brewin Dolphin Securities

Why Kelway?

With a procurement of this size, company rules demanded that an open tender process be employed. Three companies responded and, after a rigorous assessment exercise covering completeness of service and credibility, in addition to competitive pricing, Kelway was chosen for the project.

Kelway's was not the cheapest bid, but their well thought out and professional approach inspired the most confidence. Their technicians carefully checked the hardware specifications and made recommendations in the areas of power draw, storage

needs and capacity planning tools. They had also worked with Brewin Dolphin Securities in the past and had established a reputation for competence and reliability.

Kelway was given a tight timescale for its activities. "Our staff were travelling from Edinburgh for the installation and we only had a few days to get all 50 servers installed, which called for careful planning and flawless execution," explained Scott. In this limited time Kelway had to ensure that all the blade servers were delivered, built and configured correctly with the latest versions of firmware and patches.

The Solution

Having organised the supply of products from HP, Kelway's technicians then carried out detailed diagnostic tests to confirm that every component was working correctly, making sure that any issues were quickly resolved. The tests were subsequently packaged up in electronic form and forwarded to Brewin Dolphin Securities for their future use. All components were registered with HP for warranty purposes and the relevant records were also sent.

Assembly and preparation had to be carried out at Kelway's premises as there was no room for these activities at the Andover site. The accurate documentation produced by Kelway was crucial, with all serial numbers and specifications recorded for asset management and the exact location of the blades in the enclosures identified. The servers were then packaged up and

delivered on schedule to the data centre by special courier, where Brewin Dolphin Securities' technicians simply fitted them into the specified slots, using the documentation provided, and loaded the necessary software.

"Kelway's supplier and project management behind the scenes was exceptional," said Scott. "The inevitable issues that occur in a large procurement and delivery exercise were resolved efficiently without our involvement and with no impact on our installation plan." The close working relationship Kelway had with HP was crucial in achieving the on time availability of the hardware and ensuring that any faults were quickly addressed. As a result, the installation of all 50 servers was completed in two days.

The Results

Scott was delighted with the smooth execution of the build and delivery process by Kelway and with the effectiveness of the HP Rapid Deployment Pack, which greatly speeded up installation and configuration of the new servers through the use of a centralised management console. He now has a modern, efficient data centre set up and the first major service is up and running.

Recent advances in server technology have been rapid and the benefits of the new HP c-Class Server Blades are already in evidence. The equivalent of thirty racks of servers in the old data centre has been replaced by only seven new enclosures in the new facility, which results in enormous savings in power and cooling costs.

Powerful remote system management facilities have greatly reduced the administration workload and IT staff in Edinburgh can quickly respond to any event, diagnosing service issues and switching processors or storage as needed.

"Kelway's specialist skills and careful planning transformed this complex project into a straightforward and predictable exercise," observed Scott.

Key benefits

The rapid completion of this major data centre upgrade resulting from Kelway's professional project management and close working relationship with HP meant that Brewin Dolphin Securities' valuable human resources were freed to work on other critical activities. In addition to delivering substantial savings in labour costs, Kelway's efficient execution minimised the disruption to IT operations.

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