

TSYS Europe

Kelway deployed a new HP-based platform for a real-time solution for TSYS Europe's commercial card

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TSYS provides electronic payment services to leading financial institutions and retailers. Through a state-of-the-art data centre in Knaresborough, TSYS Europe processes 30 million accounts for the European market. It offers a range of issuing and payment technologies for consumer finance, credit, debit and store cards as well as gift and merchant programmes.

The Challenge

Implementing hardware platforms is a regular job for TSYS (Total Systems Services Inc.) as it experiences sustained business growth. When the company needed to add new hardware to offer a real-time solution for commercial card clients, it called for professional help. Now, thanks to Kelway's expertise, TSYS has met tight project deadlines and introduced a powerful new HP-based system to support future business development.

The latest requirement was for a modular, dynamic and flexible Web-based system that provides companies with a set of tools that are integrated with the transaction processor.

"We needed to support the first couple of clients and their own customers logging into the system from the internet," says Liptrott. "We already have a similar hardware platform running in the US so we went over there for a requirement-gathering session. We then designed the platform for roll-out in the UK."

"We've been working with Kelway for the last seven years - they're a TSYS preferred supplier. Thanks to their expertise, we were able to design and set up a powerful new HP platform to run a real-time solution for commercial card clients. Kelway not only gives you the confidence to tackle such important projects quickly but also a feeling of security because you can always rely on them to go the extra mile too."

Gareth Liptrott, Senior Project Manager, TSYS Europe

The Solution

Although the U.S. system used HP technology, TSYS Europe initially kept an open mind about hardware manufacturers. IT staff wanted to implement an improved platform design and then tightly integrate it with several other TSYS systems and existing SAN storage.

TSYS already relies on several suppliers for software, hardware, and other IT infrastructure. This ensures that competitive, cost-effective pricing is backed by a range of timely professional services and in-depth technical know-how. Suppliers are given tough challenges in terms of pricing, specific build requirements, and adherence to strict timescales.

"Kelway is a preferred supplier of TSYS. We've had a working relationship with Kelway for the last seven years," said Liptrott.

The relationship has included projects where Kelway has provided TSYS with detailed three-year business projections covering hardware, maintenance, and software. In one instance, Kelway presented TSYS' European IT Director a compelling business case for running Oracle on IBM rather than Sun, as TSYS originally envisaged. Kelway reviews the company's business needs in addition to satisfying often tight equipment delivery requirements, adding value through insightful advice.

Liptrott approached Kelway with draft server specifications produced following the U.S. fact-finding trip and initially asked for like-for-like IBM and HP quotations. The TSYS-specified solution was already sized for planned UK usage and included details of processors, memory, and disk storage. The details

were carefully checked by Kelway, and included a manufacturer's order and accurate pricing, along with advice on hardware choices.

"It was a project that we needed to push through quickly. Kelway are very good and I have an excellent working relationship with the account manager," said Liptrott. "They turned our request around in a couple of days and provided a full specification with costs."

The equipment ordering process often includes 'best practice' advice where Kelway consultants advise and rework draft specifications for the optimum, best-value solution. Such advice is based on Kelway's independence from hardware manufacturers and experience in many similar projects. Liptrott found that Kelway's proposed solution - using HP hardware for easier integration with other HP systems - lived up to expectations in terms of detail, functionality, and price.

Kelway then unpacked, assembled, and thoroughly tested the ordered hardware before delivery to TSYS' Knaresborough data centre. This included HP pluggable hard drives, HP ProLiant blades and several other HP servers used for Microsoft SQL Server and Web services - all backed by an HP three-year support contract. TSYS staff then installed the tested hardware, attached an HDS data SAN storage system and loaded the Windows operating system along with the document archival and retrieval software. Following further system configuration and user acceptance testing by TSYS, the new solution went live in Autumn 2008.

The Results

The successful project is another milestone in the long-term relationship between Kelway and TSYS which has included temporary equipment loans and expert ad-hoc advice. When it comes to the next challenging IT project, the "solid relationship" that exists between the two companies will give added confidence.

"Kelway are always there as a point of referral for our architects when finalising the IT infrastructure and specifications that we need. Their technical knowledge has been successful at meeting our rigorous requirements," said Liptrott. "I can recommend Kelway because they always deliver for us and go the extra mile."

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