

Yorkshire's leading shopping centre virtualises their server infrastructure



Opened on the 4th September 1994 on a previously occupied steelworks site, Meadowhall shopping centre has a floor area of 140,000m² and is the seventh largest (2nd largest when first opened) shopping centre in the UK.



Strategic IT solutions and IT procurement for corporate and government.

Executive Summary

Keen to continue in their outstanding commitment to customer service, energy efficiency and technological leadership, the IT Manager and his team wanted to improve their process still further, so embarked on a Server Virtualisation project that would see further resilience to their IT infrastructure.

- Improved operational flexibility & responsiveness
- Consolidate and optimise server infrastructure
- Replace a substantial portion of physical infrastructure
- Increased application availability
- Improved business continuity
- Optimise hardware to reduce carbon footprint



"Using Systems Assurance for over 10 years I knew what I was getting. They're team worked professionally and efficiently; our project was delivered on budget and on time."

Chris Breeze, IT Manager
Meadowhall Shopping Centre Ltd



The Challenges

The major necessity was to provide a more resilient IT infrastructure, one to support them for future growth and reduce operating and capital expenditure whilst still providing flexibility and high availability. Another concern was uptime. With over 300 retailers relying on their systems, zero downtime was essential.

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How we helped

Working closely with Meadowhall IT Manager, our goal was to set up a Virtual environment for Meadowhall to give them a solid platform on which they can run their business systems without the threat of downtime due to losing physical equipment.

Meadowhall wanted to use some of their existing servers as the main ESX servers due to their capability and legacy investment and they were easily upgraded to the required specification. However, to be able to migrate the live systems in to a virtual environment Systems Assurance needed to lend Meadowhall an additional server to enable virtualisation of the physical servers before clearing the hard drives and installing VMware on these servers.

Products we used

Using VMware vSphere and the Standalone Edition of VMware VMConverter, one server was virtualised onto the loan server. The newly purchased servers were then configured, built and virtualised with the provisioning of the additional virtual servers taking place shortly after.

The Results

7 Days were provisioned for the solution; however, Systems Assurance managed to deliver the project well within that time, under budget.

Meadowhall currently uses an offsite / online data backup using a hosted service platform. This service can continue to be used in a virtual environment, with plan in the future for this to be brought in house.

