

Hogia Group provides solutions for finance, business, human resource, and transport systems to a range of international businesses. When an unpredictable storage environment caused downtime that threatened key business operations, the company turned to Pure Storage® for improved performance, and resiliency.

**BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION**

Pure Storage has significantly improved the performance and resiliency of Hogia Group's storage environment, freeing up valuable management time and creating a more reliable testing environment for important business applications.

REGION / COUNTRY

EMEA / Sweden

INDUSTRY

Technology

"We no longer have storage bottlenecks for our test servers, so we know we can perform all of our tests without storage or throughput problems."

Martin Martinsson,
IT Operations Manager

HOGIA SERVICES SUPPORTS SWEDEN'S TRANSPORT NETWORKS WITH PURE STORAGE

Comprised of 27 companies, each with its own unique specialty, Hogia Group provides vital software and services to several international businesses. This includes systems testing and data analysis that helps public transport operators provide accurate, real-time information about the train, bus and tram services people rely on daily.

The group has a dedicated company, Hogia Services, to maintain its IT infrastructure. Martin Martinsson, IT Operations Manager for Hogia Services, heads up a team of six who ensure Hogia's 650 employees have round-the-clock access to all of the applications, services and test and development environments they need.

"We are responsible for IT operations across the board. That means we look after the storage network and servers that all of our users rely on. Our storage needs to be online and responsive 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and so do we," explained Martinsson.

UNPREDICTABLE STORAGE DRAINED IT RESOURCES

In 2016 the company's IBM SAN began to show its age, so Hogia Services decided to upgrade to a new solution. Unfortunately, the new storage was not able to cope with the always-on demand of Hogia's infrastructure, leading to temporary downtime and regular warning alarms, all of which drained resources from the IT team.

Martinsson highlighted the toll this took on his team's time, estimating that — at one point — they were losing up to two days per month "babysitting" storage. Ultimately this meant spending less time on tasks that would add value to the business, such as implementing new security solutions.

The company turned to its long-time reseller partner, CGit, for help. Understanding Hogia's need for better performance, reliability and resiliency, CGit recommended the company move its servers onto a Pure Storage FlashArray.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION DELIVERED IN RECORD TIME

As soon as the decision was made to switch storage providers, Hogia Services wanted to find a solution that could be deployed as quickly as possible. They were reassured by the fact that CGit had worked with Pure Storage before and knew its arrays would be up and running quickly.

COMPANY:

Hogia Group
www.hogia.se

USE CASE:

- Virtual Server Infrastructure (VSI) – Microsoft® Hyper-V

CHALLENGES:

- Legacy storage solution was unable to provide the performance required to support vital test and development environments.
- Transition to a new storage provider resulted in downtime that impacted key business operations.
- IT team was losing up to two days per month managing an unpredictable storage environment.
- Responding to storage alarms around-the-clock negatively impacted the IT team's productivity.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- A single Pure Storage FlashArray™ has streamlined Hogia Group's storage infrastructure, removing bottlenecks and improving performance.
- Time needed to manage storage reduced to under an hour per month, freeing up valuable time and resources to drive innovation.
- No storage alarms or downtime experienced since switching to Pure Storage.
- The Pure Evergreen™ Storage architecture and business model provides non-disruptive upgrades and long-term cost savings.

“The Pure Storage FlashArray has streamlined our storage massively.”

Martin Martinsson,
 IT Operations Manager

Switching over was not only fast, but effortless as well. “Even a child could do it,” joked Martinsson. Hogia Services now runs two Hyper-V clusters, each with four hosts on a single Pure Storage FlashArray. This enables them to run approximately 400 virtual servers, which support the group's 650 users.

“The significant performance improvements of the Pure Storage FlashArray has eliminated the storage bottlenecks we used to experience with our test servers,” confirmed Martinsson. “As a result, we can perform all of our testing without interruption and that directly impacts how quickly we can bring new applications online.”

This fast, reliable performance is extremely important. One of the applications Hogia is developing takes data from public transport vehicles, like buses or trains, to analyse their movements and predict delays. Robust testing that ensures servers can effectively manage this data is absolutely critical to the real-world success of such an application.

REDUCED MANAGEMENT TIME TAKES PRESSURE OFF INTERNAL TEAMS

While high-performance storage has improved the resiliency of test and development environments, Martinsson believes the real value lies in the time it has saved his team. Instead of wasting days monitoring storage, Martinsson said he “only needs to look at the Pure Storage FlashArray for about ten minutes each week to see that everything is working perfectly.”

This dramatic reduction in storage management means the IT team can now allocate considerably more time improving services and increasing productivity among the group's users. For example, the team was recently able to apply their time to supporting a move to Office 365 and SharePoint Live, rather than having to devote key resources to fix tactical storage problems, which could have delayed the move.

In addition, the reliability of the Pure Storage array has removed intermittent and unpredictable storage problems and outages. This directly impacts the IT team's ability to operate a rolling, 24/7 schedule and respond to IT issues that are no longer storage-related.

“We don't have to deal with alarms going off at night because storage is reaching capacity,” confirmed Martinsson. “We haven't had to respond to any alarms at all since we switched to Pure Storage. Previously we had two, three or even four a month.”

STRESS-FREE STORAGE THANKS TO PURE'S EVERGREEN SUBSCRIPTION MODEL

The ongoing support Hogia Services receives from Pure Storage as part of its Evergreen™ Storage subscription sets it apart from other vendors the company has worked with in the past. Martinsson explained that he has one main contact at Pure Storage in Sweden who is always responsive and aware of how the array is running.

“As a customer, you want a strategic vendor to fully understand your operating environment, which is something that Pure Storage does very well,” commented Martinsson.

Additionally, Pure Storage's Evergreen architecture and business model has given Hogia Services complete confidence that its storage infrastructure can respond to future business demand. With plans to extend some of the group's services beyond Sweden, Hogia Services now has storage that can scale with its projected growth. With Pure's Evergreen architecture, Hogia can add capacity and upgrade components independently, including software and controllers, with no downtime or impact on performance. This means they never have to schedule outage windows or off-hours upgrade cycles.

“Now we are in a position where we have a fast, responsive solution that won’t become outdated.”

Martin Martinsson,
IT Operations Manager

In addition, the hardware subscriptions that are part of Pure’s Evergreen business model protect Hogia’s storage investment and provide for controller upgrades and trade-in credits whenever the need arises. Martinsson believes this will save the company money in the long term and alleviate future demand on the IT team. As well as removing the costs associated with new hardware upgrades, the Evergreen business model means Martinsson and his colleagues won’t have to invest time looking for, configuring and setting up a new storage solution.

“The Evergreen business model is very innovative and appeals to our growth plans,” said Martinsson. “We now have a future-proof storage solution that fully protects our investment and can scale on demand without disruption. Compared to before, it really feels like we can sit back and relax when it comes to storage.”



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