

BPL Global is the leading broker specializing exclusively in credit and political risk insurance (CPRI) for multinational corporations, banks and financial institutions. BPL Global's IT team was wasting valuable time and energy investigating latency issues caused by the company's aging spinning disk infrastructure. Since implementing Pure Storage technology, latency problems are a thing of the past, despite doubling the amount of data held on its email exchange and public folders. The company now has the reliable infrastructure needed to support the development of additional business applications.

**BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION**

Significant data reduction and increased speed minimized the management time required for day-to-day activities, allowing BPL Global's IT team to focus on improving the company's application portfolio and customer-facing portals.

GEO

United Kingdom

INDUSTRY

Insurance

"Simplicity is very important for us, and was a huge part of why we chose Pure Storage... You can create volumes with the flick of a button — it just works."

Adam Koleda, *Director of IT*

MANAGING INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT A GLOBAL NETWORK OF SPECIALIST BROKERS

Headquartered in London, BPL Global has the largest brokerage team in the credit and political risk insurance (CPRI) market. With a commitment to act exclusively for its customers, it's vital that the company has the right resources and capacity to service the complex, time-critical business needs of its clients.

"As a business, our priority is finding the best possible deal for our customers. So in terms of IT, we concentrate on delivering infrastructure that actively supports key business needs," explained Adam Koleda, Director of IT at BPL Global.

The company has almost doubled in size over the last five years, growing from a staff of 50 to close to 100. Its global IT infrastructure, which is mainly supported from the company's UK base, is now underpinned by Pure Storage arrays.

The company's storage is primarily used to support large internal mailboxes and public folders that are shared across teams. The seamless exchange of files is a crucial part of BPL Global's day-to-day operations; specialist brokers need to be able to rely on a smooth and responsive IT infrastructure to share vital information with clients and colleagues.

"It might sound simple but for a company like ours with the structure that we have, it is very important for the teams to be able to share emails and files quickly and efficiently," said Koleda.

However, as users started to exceed the recommended sizes for internal mailboxes, the company's spinning disk storage began to struggle. The addition of increasing amounts of data to public folders slowed down the connection between the company's server and its clients, causing frustration for internal teams.

Koleda found that he and his colleagues were spending large portions of their time investigating latency issues, instead of focusing on applications to meet other business needs.

When the company underwent an office move, Koleda and the team seized the opportunity to completely re-architect BPL Global's storage foundation. They wanted to find an enterprise-grade solution for mid-sized capital expenditure, but felt that none of the large, established storage vendors could provide a solution that was right for them.

COMPANY:

BPL Global
www.bpl-global.com

USE CASE:

- VDI – VMware® Horizon,
- Database – SQL
- Email – Microsoft® Exchange
- Application platforms – Lotus® Notes and Outsystems

CHALLENGES:

- Existing storage could not meet space requirements for large internal mailboxes and public folders.
- Increasing data volumes slowed down the connection between server and clients.
- Management time required to investigate latency issues meant less time to invest in other business-critical applications.
- Alternative enterprise-grade storage solutions were overcomplicated and expensive.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- Greater than 4:1 data reduction solved latency issues, freeing up time for redevelopment of existing business applications.
- Lifespan of data storage extended by up to 7 years.
- Advanced snapshotting features reduce data recovery times by 10x.
- Pure Storage flash arrays perform between 20-25x faster than previous storage, enabling all VMs to perform flawlessly.
- New storage provides 3x more methods of securing data, due to a combination of its proprietary storage methods and snapshots.

“Pure Storage has overcome one of our key challenges, which is creating a bullet-proof infrastructural design.”

Adam Koleda, *Director of IT*

SIMPLIFIED MANAGEMENT A MAJOR DECISION FACTOR

Koleda’s previous experience with storage solutions targeted at large corporations was that they were very expensive to implement and maintain, and could also be unnecessarily complicated. Put off by the complex nature of the control models of some brands, the simplicity of the Pure Storage user interface was a major draw.

“Simplicity is very important for us, and was a huge part of why we chose Pure Storage. You login to the Pure Storage platform and it has a few key metrics. You can create volumes with the flick of a button — it just works.”

Koleda had always liked the idea of working with smaller, more innovative players who were capable of disrupting the sector. While initial research highlighted a range of options, the benefits of implementing Pure Storage technology were hard to ignore.

“We did consider other storage vendors,” explained Koleda, “but it was clear that Pure Storage had an edge over its competitors. The arrays are head and shoulders above other technologies, both in terms of simplicity and cost-effectiveness.”

From his initial meeting with Pure Storage, to the deployment of the arrays, Koleda said the whole process was fast and refreshingly easy. The engagement from the sales team was second-to-none. Not only were they informative and attentive, they focused on how Pure Storage technology could work for BPL Global specifically.

“Unless you’re buying big volumes, the whole process with traditional vendors can be tedious and frustrating. Smaller companies are often very responsive, but Pure Storage has some of the best customer service I’ve seen,” added Koleda.

CONSOLIDATING KEY WORKLOADS ON FLASH

The majority of BPL Global’s IT service now resides on three Pure Storage FlashArrays. The company uses two arrays to support 45 virtual machines and uses a third device for snapshots and replication. This deployment has extended the lifespan of the company’s data storage by up to seven years and provides 3x more methods of securing data, due to a combination of its proprietary storage methods and snapshot capabilities.

“What I was also looking for when purchasing Pure Storage was the ability to have active redundancy within the storage,” continued Koleda.

While not available at the time of purchase, this update has now been implemented meaning BPL Global can operate two storage devices in active-active mode. As a result, should one fail, the other will immediately take over.

“For a storage device at that level of pricing, that functionality is incredible. By doing this, Pure Storage has overcome one of our key challenges, which is creating a bullet-proof infrastructural design.”

Since implementing Pure Storage technology, the company has doubled the size of the data on its email exchange server, while not experiencing any latency issues. Observing one of the arrays, Koleda noted that it was using less than 10% of its total performance capacity, which means the team no longer has to worry about its expanding storage requirements.

FREEING STAFF FROM MANAGEMENT BURDENS

As a direct result of its Pure Storage deployment, BPL Global has seen a greater than 4:1 data reduction and increase in the speed of day-to-day tasks. Creating a volume on a previous storage device would take the IT team up to eight hours; this takes just a second using Pure Storage FlashArray.

“The arrays are head and shoulders above other technologies, both in terms of simplicity and cost-effectiveness.”

Adam Koleda, *Director of IT*

This increased speed and resiliency has reduced storage administration by 80%, allowing the IT team to focus on the future.

Koleda and his team want to rebuild their existing portfolio of applications and improve client-facing portals with new service offerings. In addition, complete confidence in the company’s new storage infrastructure means the IT team now plan to create a comprehensive VDI environment, which will use Pure Storage technology to support 120 virtual desktops.

“Previously it felt like we were going around in circles trying to find the different technical issues that could be causing the slowness in the performance. Now we can concentrate on building applications to support the growth and development of the business,” concluded Koleda.



info@purestorage.com
www.purestorage.com/customers