

ASE Global demands high-performance data processing. It allows the automotive marketplace profitability specialist to provide information for automotive brands like Porsche, Bentley and Audi, which they can use to drive profitability through strategic and tactical decisions.



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

ASE Global can now deliver faster information to the large roster of automotive brands it works with, allowing them to make better strategic and tactical decisions in the automotive marketplace.

GEO

United Kingdom

INDUSTRY

Automotive

“The introduction of the Pure Storage platform has massively reduced our operational challenges, while giving us valuable time for daily operational tasks due to the high performance feature set the platform provides.”

John Lucas,
Director of IT and Operations

HIGH-PERFORMANCE DATA PROCESSING PROVIDES TIMELY INFORMATION FOR MAJOR AUTOMOTIVE BRANDS

ASE Global is an automotive marketplace profitability specialist based in Manchester, UK. ASE has been working exclusively in the automotive industry for nearly 40 years, providing motor trade specific accountancy and professional services and the detailed analysis of retail performance data.

Working with big automotive brands like General Motors, Porsche, Bentley, Audi, Lamborghini, and Ferrari, ASE Global is all about data. The company takes data from the automotive marketplace, analysing and using it to help automotive manufacturers, together with their national sales centres, drive profitability across their networks.

Storage is vital in this regard, as its quality decides the speed at which data is processed. Fast data processing means the automotive brands get information faster, allowing them to make better strategic and tactical decisions.

“For customers, ASE is well-placed to give early warning signals about under-performing dealerships, and advise on remedial action.” said John Lucas, Director of IT and Operations at ASE Global. “ASE developed a market leading Software as a Service (SaaS) risk management tool that enables the health of dealers within a franchise to be assessed on a regular basis, and categorised into red, amber and green. With this knowledge, it enables ASE to reduce risk to key stakeholders, especially when combined with ASE’s range of Dealer Support Services, for example, best practice workshops, DMS optimisation/training, financial controls and accounting support.”

ASE Global had developed an in-house software as a service business management platform called RAPID, which collects and delivers pre-selected key performance data reports to manufacturers, field staff and dealers. ASE collates this composite data for over 17,000 dealers worldwide, producing over 21,000 analysis reports per month for most automotive manufacturers on a global basis. With representatives in 34 countries, this global perspective allows us to aggregate our knowledge and use benchmarking to drive best practice and profitability.

The RAPID platform is based upon the Microsoft technology stack (Windows platform and SQL Server) and had previous been deployed on a Dell Compellent hard disk storage array. Lucas said, “Due to the volume of data we were processing for our clients, latency and performance we’re suffering as the storage was reaching the limitations of the platform and impacting operations.”

COMPANY:

ASE Global
www.ase-global.com

USE CASE:

- VSI – VMware® vSphere®
- Database – Microsoft® SQL

CHALLENGES:

- With the amount of data that ASE Global was processing for its clients, the incumbent storage was reaching its limitations and impacting operations.
- New storage was needed that could process data faster, providing information for ASE Global automotive clients that could increase their profits.
- Demand for a storage solution was needed that could be upgraded easily without the need to buy expensive new hardware.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- Pure Storage FlashArray has a data reduction rate of 4.9 to 1.
- Pure Storage FlashArray performance is much better than incumbent solution, with higher IOPS.
- The implementation of Pure Storage and a wider technology refresh means that the ASE Global datacentre has consolidated from four racks to just the one.

“Top benefits include the reduction in overall infrastructure footprint, the simplification of our storage requirement, and throughput performance gains which we’ll be able to leverage going forwards.”

John Lucas,
 Director of IT and Operations

FLASH STORAGE TICKS ALL OF THE BOXES FOR ASE GLOBAL

Flash storage from Pure Storage was ideal for ASE Global. It offered performance and speed benefits that could easily cope with the company’s requirements, but also offered a reduction in complexity and footprint, as well as the ability to upgrade cost effectively when needed.

Lucas revealed that the decision factor was very much one helped by word of mouth. He said, “A peer of mine outside ASE Global had already made a purchase with Pure Storage several years ago, and had sung its praises in terms of performance and service levels. Speaking to somebody I knew and trust was one of the main decision factors in why we chose Pure Storage. It enabled me to draw conclusions about the company and technology, which gave me a level of confidence when engaging with them and making the purchase.”

Lucas added, “The service we get with Pure Storage is excellent. In terms of our touch-points, the account manager is attentive and there when we need him.”

ASE Global had a Pure Storage FlashArray//m50 with 40TB of storage up and running within the day. The migration process took around two months, and now the company runs its Microsoft SQL Server database environment off virtualised servers, as well as data warehousing applications, on the Pure Storage FlashArray.

Lucas said, “The introduction of the Pure Storage platform has massively reduced our operational challenges, while giving us valuable time for daily operational tasks due to the high performance feature set the platform provides. It allows us to increase our operational window, because there is less processing time needed.”

Lucas added, “Typical IT service type operations such as backups also take a lot less time with the introduction of Veeam Backup, Recovery and Replication at the same time as the Pure Storage box. We’ve increased the performance of our applications, making the client experience that much better.”

With a team of four on the infrastructure side, the level of management needed with Pure Storage has been massively reduced, with much less maintenance and observation required. This means they have been freed up to do more high-level work and become more strategic, with a consideration of long-term operational improvements to reduce operational costs.

When an upgrade is finally required, it’s an easy process thanks to Evergreen Storage, which allows ASE Global to introduce more storage as an upgrade without having to spend more money on expensive deployments and repurchasing, a major issue when working with hard disk storage.

HIGH-PERFORMANCE PERFORMANCE GAINS, SIMPLIFICATION AND REDUCED FOOTPRINT

The performance of the Pure Storage FlashArray is far superior to ASE Global’s old hard disk solution, with the performance gains truly matching ASE Global’s needs now and for the foreseeable future.

The Pure Storage FlashArray has a 4.9 to 1 data reduction ratio, which means that as well as having enough storage now and in the future to run processes at the speeds required, it has space to spare for applications of a different nature to what ASE Global usually runs.

ASE Global has a high IOPS during the day and more in the evening and overnight when a lot of the background processing is done. The previous Dell solution IOPs peaked out at around 6.5k. The Flash Array regularly surpasses this, and the upper limit hasn't yet been reached in terms of processing performance.

Also with the new Pure Storage FlashArray and new high-performance servers installed as part of a refresh programme, ASE Global will manage to consolidate from four racks to one rack in the datacentre, which reduces its footprint and should help in power reduction.

Lucas said, "Top benefits include the reduction in overall infrastructure footprint, the simplification of our storage requirement and throughput performance gains which we'll be able to leverage going forwards. ASE plans to extend the usage of the platform, based upon the performance gains, to virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) for over 60 users during 2016/17. This was something which wasn't achievable before with our previous storage solution."

With Pure Storage, ASE Global is now providing an improved service to the long list of automotive brands it works with, because it can now process data at speeds its previous storage solution could simply not reach.

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