

# Time to provision new services cut by 95% with Server Virtualisation and Storage Solution



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Founded in London in 1987, Central Trust is a financial services group specialising in the marketing and administration of mortgages and personal loans. It currently employs more than 600 people in the UK and Guernsey. As part of its long-term strategy, the group is involved in a programme of process improvements designed to boost productivity and thus provide support for continued profitable growth.

As a centralised service function, IT can make an important contribution to these improvements. For Daniel Johnson, IT Infrastructure Manager, the challenge is to enhance the service provided to the business while at the same time reducing overheads. In a highly dynamic environment characterised by relentless growth in data volumes, a willingness to make major changes is necessary if this challenge is to be overcome.

***“Traditionally, every time the business wanted to launch a new service, we would implement a new server or servers with associated storage,”*** explains Johnson. ***“Over time, we came to be burdened with an unconsolidated infrastructure characterised by low server utilisation and data scattered***

***across multiple systems. This consumed too much power and occupied too much physical space, and it was also difficult to manage and administer.”***

Central Trust identified a more cost-effective alternative in the form of server virtualisation coupled with a storage area network (SAN). Initially it planned to source the new technologies from its existing hardware supplier, Dell, but an OCSL virtualisation seminar introduced Central Trust to a potential alternative. The combination of HP technology and OCSL services proved compelling.

***“HP’s technology was clearly the most advanced and the most flexible, while OCSL’s people were real experts with an excellent track record of successful implementation,”*** comments Dean Field, Systems Engineer. ***“OCSL stood out from most of the IT suppliers we deal with because its people really knew what they were talking about and, crucially, were able to offer a complete solution with a single point of contact.”***

**Undiluted success**

OCSL provided Central Trust with a range of professional services in the form of initial consultancy, solution design, project management, implementation, and support of all products involved. The new,

virtualised server infrastructure was built around HP BladeSystem c-Class technology, with four HP ProLiant BL685c four-way server blades taking the place of more than 60 existing servers. The new servers run VMware ESX 3.5 and VMware Virtual Centre for ease of management. The SAN is based on an HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Array system, offering 11TB of storage capacity.

According to Field, the implementation was an undiluted success. ***“It became clear that the OCSL sales process was backed up by excellent follow-through from the Technical Consultants, who carried out work of supreme quality and kept us informed at every stage in the implementation. They managed everything and enjoyed an excellent relationship with the other vendors involved. When an issue arose with a switch provided by one of these vendors, OCSL assumed complete responsibility for resolving the problem.”***

Although all the servers that can be virtualised have now been moved to the new platform, some data remains to be migrated. In addition, Central Trust is looking at implementing a similar architecture at a second site, thus introducing the potential for a more robust business continuity and disaster recovery strategy. It may also expand the storage solution to encompass backup operations, with the aim of reducing backup and recovery times significantly.

### **Quick reactions**

In line with expectations, the OCSL solution is providing Central Trust with major benefits in terms of a more cost-effective architecture and more efficient processes. Direct cost savings come from the fact that instead of 60 servers with utilisation levels sometimes as low as 5%, there are now just four. Each of these runs as many as 20 virtual servers, maximising the benefits of the company's investment in hardware.

The infrastructure is also more robust and reliable, with improved redundancy and fault tolerance. For example, it is possible to set up a virtual server in place of a physical machine that has to be taken down for maintenance, with zero downtime and no disruption to the user. According to Field, maintenance

can now be done even during business hours. In addition, the new architecture offers exceptional ease-of-use, and far fewer resources are required to manage it.

***“Administration of the SAN is exceptionally straightforward – so much so, in fact, that we learned everything we needed to know from OCSL in just a couple of hours,”*** says Field. ***“Upgrading, too, is very easy. All you need to do is insert the new hard drives, and you're ready to go.”***

These various improvements not only save money but also add up to a better quality of service to internal customers. In addition, they have an impact on the service that Central Trust provides to its external customers. For example, Johnson claims that the time to provision new services has been reduced by an average of 95%. A new server that would have taken two or three weeks to procure in the past can now be deployed as a virtual server in less than half an hour. This makes the IT function much more responsive to the demands made on it by the business units, which have to react very quickly to changing market conditions.

***“Through its flexibility, the new architecture provides a perfect match to the needs of the business,”*** concludes Johnson. ***“Although the financial impact can't be measured directly, the contribution to business agility is clear.”***



## Why partner with OCSL

OCSL is a leading Preferred Partner for Hewlett Packard and has just been announced as HP UK's Preferred Partner of the Year for our work with Corporate and Enterprise customers.

OCSL also works closely with software industry leaders including Microsoft, Symantec and VMware, to ensure we can always deliver the right solutions for our clients. We differentiate ourselves through our expertise in providing Technology Solutions to Business Issues. We supply to companies who care about their IT, who value their data and see it as critical to the business and who want a supplier with in-depth knowledge and resources who can prove ROI.

## Accreditations

OCSL are a top HP Preferred Partner 2008 and have been awarded Fastest Growing Preferred Partner in Europe.

HP Accreditations:

**HP StorageWorks Solutions Specialist**  
**HP Data Centre Solutions Specialist**  
**HP Computing Systems Specialist**  
**HP High Performance Computing Specialist**  
**Authorised Business Solution Partner (ABSP) - Service Specialist**  
**HP Service Sales Specialist**

Other Accreditations:

**Microsoft Certified Partner**  
**VMWare Enterprise VIP Partner and Gold VAC (Consulting Partner)**  
**Symantec Gold Partner (Enterprise Vault Accredited)**  
**Red Hat Advanced Partner (Linux)**  
**Oracle Certified Partner**

## What to do next

From our Support Sales Team to our Technical Consultants, it is the quality of our people and the level of the accreditations they hold that makes us the company we are.

We'd welcome an opportunity to show how OCSL's Technology Solutions have helped our customers Increase Profitability, Reduce Risk, Improve Business Agility and Lower Costs. We'd welcome the opportunity to be benchmarked against your current suppliers because we know OCSL can offer you smarter alternatives.

**Simply contact OCSL on 0845 605 2100, email [info@ocsl.co.uk](mailto:info@ocsl.co.uk) or visit the website at [www.ocsl.co.uk](http://www.ocsl.co.uk)**

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