



Telford Offshore

chooses Scale Computing for simplified management and future edge computing deployments at sea



Key Challenges

- Inherited legacy IT system through company acquisition – it was time-consuming to manage, costly and complex to maintain
- The solution needed to avoid complex environments with VMware to free up time through simplified management
- Cloud-based solutions were ruled out due to costly satellite connections
- Limited IT staff on hand at offshore sites to manage and maintain IT systems

Scale Computing Solution

Telford Offshore selected Scale Computing's HC3 platform to support its headquarters in Dubai, where its corporate and project management team organise, and support marine operations on its vessels.

Business Benefits

- Simplified and reduced management time
- Complete redundancy – always on 24/7
- Business continuity
- Snapshot replication and backup
- Ready for future deployments at sea

Telford Offshore – A global trusted partner providing safe access and support of offshore work sites

Telford Offshore is a new global company built on years of experience in the oil and gas industry. Headquartered in Dubai, the organisation was formed through a number of vessel acquisitions. The company supports multiple offshore activities, focusing on high capacity accommodation, lifting, fabrication and installation services. A single Telford Offshore vessel can accommodate 400 marine crew for projects including laying pipelines and carrying out subsea construction. Each vessel is able to provide accommodation services, to transport, lift and install subsea or topside components, lay pipe and carry out subsea construction work. The company has a total of four modern vessels, all build since 2007, with multipurpose capabilities ensuring that diverse operations can be undertaken by one single vessel.

Existing IT environment

As part of its acquisition Telford Offshore took over a legacy IT environment which was built on HP Blade. The company saw this as an opportunity to bring in a completely new and modern IT infrastructure that could be customised to suit the business' unique requirements.

The existing storage was difficult and complex to manage. The company was acquiring different businesses at this time which posed the perfect opportunity to reevaluate its IT systems. Not only was it important to ensure smooth and streamlined IT management, but any new system should be future proof and able to meet upcoming edge computing plans. Wouter Lustig IT Manager at Telford Offshore commented, "The legacy system we had inherited through the acquisition was reaching the end of its lifespan and it required more time to manage than we had available. As a new company we wanted to start fresh with an IT system that was right for us. We wanted a solution that was simple to manage and would be future proof for possible further deployments on the vessels at sea. It was essential that this solution would save us time on the day-to-day management."

IT Challenges

Ensuring Telford Offshore deployed the right solution was critical to the business. With vessels at sea, the technology must be available 24/7 and it was critical any system deployed would be fully redundant. The IT infrastructure also needed to be incredibly simple and time-efficient to manage the business with a low overhead on day-to-day IT administration. Working offshore and in remote sites means the company does not have the same level of onsite expertise to hand.

In addition, with internet connectivity slow and costly at sea, the company decided any infrastructure would need to be local and on-premises. With these key requirements Telford Offshore decided a hyperconverged solution was the way forwards. Lustig explained, "We knew we needed a hyperconverged solution as it combines everything we need for our IT infrastructure into one easy to manage appliance, all while being cost effective and efficient."

He continued, "Our WAN connection is via satellite which is extremely expensive, instantly ruling out a possible cloud solution as it would not work in the long run. In addition, with limited IT staff on our vessels we needed a system that was so simple to manage it could be installed and used by someone with no technical experience. If we needed to send out technical staff to manage any issues it could become vastly expensive."

Proof of Concept

After deciding on a hyperconverged solution, Telford Offshore evaluated a number of different vendors including Nutanix and SimpliVity, before choosing Scale Computing's HC3 solution. Lustig explained, "We evaluated the market, however Nutanix and SimpliVity weren't what we were looking for. We needed to be able to guarantee performance and ensure simplified management. Nutanix were secretive around their performance figures in the field and SimpliVity required a lot of technical work."

Telford Offshore reached out on the Spiceworks network to discuss hyperconverged deployments with the wider international IT community. Lustig noted, "After reaching out on Spiceworks we got a response from Scale Computing. The company were open and helpful in answering a number of questions we had around hyperconvergence and how it would fit with our IT requirements. After looking at Nutanix, HPE's SimpliVity and Scale Computing it was clear that the HC3 platform offered us exactly what we needed – a complete, cost effective, easy to manage data centre in a box."

Telford Offshore worked with its partner Cegeka and after a successful proof of concept the company deployed the HC1150 three node cluster, which offered snapshot replication and onsite backup, high availability and full redundancy. Guy Verstraeten, Director of Infrastructure Benelux at Cegeka commented, "Scale Computing's HC3 platform was a natural fit. The solution was designed with simplicity, scalability and availability at its core and these three aspects matched the business requirements perfectly. It pairs greatly with our added services and expertise in hyperconverged infrastructure. Our customers are often looking to save time and simplify their IT environments, so it is great to have Scale Computing's HC3 solution as part of our product portfolio."

Benefits and planning for a simplified future

Telford Offshore immediately noticed enhanced performance and simplified management as soon as the solution was deployed. Lustig noted, "The HC3 solution arrived, there was no need for an instruction manual, and within 40 minutes we had the first Windows server up and running – it was as easy as that. We copied the data base over and the performance increase was immediately noticeable."

In addition, as a growing company Telford Offshore wanted the flexibility to scale and grow on demand. The Scale Computing solution allows nodes to be added as and when its required eliminating the need to over provision storage, as IT infrastructure can be built out to meet unique business and application needs. The system also provides replication, snapshot and cloning technology capabilities, providing the continuity and redundancy needed to keep IT systems up and running 24/7.

Alongside performance requirements a key part of the IT deployment was ensuring that Telford Offshore could future proof its environment. Lustig concluded, "We wanted the solution to be a long-term future proof investment with the possibility of deploying it on the vessels at sea. Being low on overhead, the solution needed to be simple enough for the one or two electricians on board to install and deploy. Scale Computing's solution is perfect to meet these requirements, it operates as its own data centre in a box and can easily connect back to the deployment at the headquarters in Dubai. We are still amazed at how easy it is to install, deploy and manage – we don't need to worry about the management of the day-to-day solution, it just takes care of itself."