

Managed Storage Solutions



COLT and BI-Tech Solutions have launched a new initiative to help Europe's leading businesses reduce total IT infrastructure spend by up to 25% while ensuring the solution meets all new regulatory requirements for data recovery and data compliance.

Using BI-Tech's leading data management expertise and COLT's world-class infrastructures this initiative is enabling the consolidation and automation of storage, servers, networks and data centres across Europe.

Streamlining your infrastructure

A well managed network storage infrastructure has the potential to substantially reduce your operational costs, decrease your exposure to risk and save your internal IT teams significant time.

Every organisation is aware of the ever-increasing volume of data it is required to receive, process, manage and store. Server consolidation, disaster recovery, regulatory compliance and storage infrastructures have moved up the boardroom agenda.

Yet for the IT departments of many organisations, these areas are considered expensive, difficult and time-consuming to manage and a distraction from their core focus of delivering new functionalities, applications and services.

It doesn't have to be this way. A network storage infrastructure should be an intrinsic part of every organisation's IT strategy, embracing day-to-day back-up and restore, email and document archiving for regulatory compliance, up to complete disaster recovery.

The result is an infrastructure which is flexible and able to cope with rapid changes in the face of competitive demands, more cost-effective than many separate and disparate 'information islands', and which requires less time from internal IT staff to monitor and manage.

The decision by forward-looking organisations to deploy a network storage infrastructure will take into account a range of business, technical and financial considerations. These include:

Data volumes

The volume of data which organisations are required to manage is typically increasing at over 50 per cent per annum.

Unless they already have a flexible and scalable network storage infrastructure, organisations are finding themselves 'fire-fighting' to cope with the latest server failure or backup. This typically results in the implementation of a large number of isolated point solutions instead of the deployment of a more strategic, consolidated solution.

Reducing operational costs

Today's focus is on the reduction of operational costs as a means of increasing profitability. A key element in this is the streamlining of an organisation's IT infrastructure. The past few years have seen server and storage architectures become ever more complex and disparate, requiring more and more hardware, software and support.

Re-architecting and consolidating an organisation's infrastructure usually reveals significant unused server capacity and redundancy. This can be used to increase availability, improve SLAs and, most importantly, reduce or contain further spending.

Backup and restore

The ability to backup and restore data is fundamental for organisations of any size. Whatever the reason for the loss of data, a rapid and accurate copy of the data needs to be available immediately to either existing offices or a dedicated disaster recovery facility.

According to McGladrey and Pullen, 43 per cent of companies experiencing a disaster never reopen, with a further 29 per cent closing within two years.

Streamlining your infrastructure – continued

2



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IT skills

The best use of an organisation's IT team is in developing new products and services and ensuring efficiencies throughout the organisation. For most staff, archiving, backing up and restoring data reduces their productivity and makes little use of their skills.

Furthermore, the growing IT skills shortage will make the problem more acute, as organisations find it harder to recruit staff to carry out these essential yet repetitive tasks

Regulatory compliance

The sheer volume of emails and electronic documents sent and received every day makes regulatory compliance an expensive and time-consuming task unless a dedicated solution is in place.

For financial institutions and legal firms in particular, it is essential to be able to generate a clear electronic audit chain which demonstrates compliance to regulators and other authorities.

Summary

From a strategic viewpoint, implementing a network storage architecture promises to:

- reduce both short- and long-term operational costs;
- provide a more agile platform for the development of new products and services;
- maximise the use of existing infrastructure;
- deliver higher levels of service to the business;
- minimise an organisation's exposure to risk.

Managed network storage infrastructures

With the advent of network storage infrastructures, data storage and management as an enterprise core competency has become demanding and complex.

Most organisations lack the internal skills and experience to deploy an enterprise-wide network storage infrastructure on their own. Furthermore, there is a perception that these infrastructures add additional layers of cost.

In order to overcome these issues, COLT eBusiness and its storage implementation partner, BI-Tech Solutions, have developed a suite of storage solutions, delivered as either remote or in-house managed infrastructures, which make the most of each organisation's core skills.

COLT eBusiness takes complete responsibility for your infrastructure, providing a single, bespoke SLA, management of all technology suppliers, migration of your infrastructure and award-winning customer service.

As a vendor-independent storage infrastructure deployment company, BI-Tech selects, manages and integrates the correct technology into COLT's infrastructure solutions to deliver optimum efficiency and flexibility.

Service offerings for network storage infrastructures

e-Mail archiving

Ensure all corporate Exchange e-mail is auditable while reducing the cost and risk of regulatory penalties and minimising reputational risk:

- Reduce your spend on online e-mail storage by up to 75 per cent;
- Simplify your email server migration;
- Reduce restore times;
- Meet compliance regulations for archiving and audit trails.

Managed backup and restore

Guaranteed back-up and restore services enable you to be certain that your server restore plan meets your business objectives:

- Reduction in recovery time;
- Easier, faster management leads to reduced head count;
- Simplified policy-based management;
- Delivery of effective DR solution.

Data replication

"Always-on" storage and infrastructure replicated across multiple customer or COLT sites ensures that your business will continue to operate under extreme circumstances:

- No interruption of customer service
- Minimises risk of complete catastrophic failure;
- Near-instantaneous recovery with no loss of critical data;
- Location independent - world-wide user access via COLT's network.

Consolidation services

Reduce the cost of running your storage infrastructure, typically by 50 per cent, yet maintain a highly available and highly secure system that will also provide improvements on your restore times:

- Fewer servers result in lower capital costs, reduced IT support and simpler disaster recovery;
- Higher availability and faster recovery times;
- Lower data centre occupancy;
- Faster time to market for new application and services via agile infrastructure;
- Reduced licensing costs and management.

Managed storage resource reporting

Comprehensive storage resource reporting and monitoring capabilities allow COLT eBusiness to deliver exceptionally high asset efficiency and utilisation, and assist with service improvement initiatives:

- Reduced spend on hardware and software;
- Simplified management;
- Ability and information to make timely and appropriate purchasing decisions;
- Scalability matched to business growth.

Inertia and fear of change

Despite understanding and appreciating the benefits of a managed network storage infrastructure, many organisations hesitate to make the change. This can be for a number of reasons.

4

Perceived expense and ongoing costs

Organisations anticipate that there will be excessive costs when moving to and maintaining a managed network storage infrastructure.

COLT's business model delivers solutions that are at least cost-neutral when compared with an organisation's existing infrastructure. Based on deployments over the past three years, we expect customers to achieve a tangible ROI within 18 months.

Our economies of scale in skilled technical resources, network and storage infrastructure and partner relationships all help to reduce your monthly operational costs. On top of this, COLT eBusiness offers flexible payment schedules, leasing, buy-back terms and risk-sharing initiatives as well as extensive partner relationships that deliver end-to-end solutions to your business problems.

Performance criteria

Organisations that have never deployed a managed network storage infrastructure are often unaware of the business, financial and technical benefits.

COLT eBusiness delivers customised SLAs and storage solutions which are backed up round-the-clock by their professional services teams. As COLT owns and manages its own pan-European network, it promises – and delivers – exceptional service.

COLT eBusiness has 11 Internet Solution Centres (ISCs) across the UK and Europe. These purpose-built datacentres are designed with fault-tolerant architecture for network infrastructure, power supply and environmental control. Your storage solution is monitored 24/7 to ensure the highest level of availability with full backup security.

Internal issues

A managed service is sometimes seen as a threat to the internal IT department.

A managed service frees up IT staff to focus on the timely delivery of new solutions and services without the overhead of running a network storage infrastructure.

COLT eBusiness and its partners are completely technology- and vendor-independent and can therefore work in parallel with your internal teams to provide the best managed service for your storage developments.

Inertia and fear of the unknown

If existing systems work adequately now, why undergo internal upheavals and take a perceived risk?

With data volumes already growing at over 50 per cent per annum, no organisation can afford to be complacent about the status quo. The simple fact is that all organisations must develop plans to manage their storage requirements.

COLT eBusiness has the expertise and knowledge to demonstrate how moving to a managed network storage infrastructure will reduce your operational costs, decrease your exposure to risk and save your internal IT teams considerable time.

COLT eBusiness provides 24x7 access to additional network, application, infrastructure and professional services resources. Whether you are working on your existing or future storage requirements, the team provides the backup you need to grow your business.

5

Ease of migration

Migrating to a network storage infrastructure is seen as a major impediment in spite of the inherent business advantages and cost-savings.

Both COLT eBusiness and BI-Tech have a demonstrable track record of migrating an organisation's storage services with zero downtime and minimum disruption to both customers and internal staff.

Companies entrusting their business to the team have the confidence of knowing that solutions are designed based on a proven storage infrastructure deployment methodology. Each project is split into three distinct stages:

- Time, finance and risk assessment;
- Fast deployment services and assured delivery;
- Ongoing management, reporting and assessment, with guaranteed SLAs.

Investment in legacy systems

Almost all organisations have considerable investment tied up in legacy systems, which are often too expensive and complex to consider replacing. This has a direct bearing on an organisation's storage strategy.

COLT eBusiness has considerable experience of integrating legacy systems into network storage infrastructures with minimal disruption. COLT eBusiness works with all leading vendors to manage and refinance equipment and maintenance licensing agreements.

Management and project time

Many potentially successful projects are shelved or put on hold due to lack of internal resource and the need to manage multiple, and sometimes conflicting, suppliers.

COLT eBusiness acts as the single point of contact for sales information, customer service and billing, eliminating the difficulty of dealing with several suppliers.

Because of its extensive and impartial relationships with all major application and technology platform providers, COLT eBusiness is well-positioned to provide customers with the widest choice of solutions.

Customer service

Timely and knowledgeable customer service before, during and after the project can make the difference between success and failure.

A service delivery manager will be allocated to you – you define the management reports to be delivered, enabling you to measure accurately business, financial and technical benefits. In addition, COLT has a proven track record of responsiveness to customer requests, with 29 awards for service excellence.

Summary

Storage and management of data is a growing problem for organisations of all sizes. Most organisations lack the internal skills and past experience to deploy an enterprise-wide network storage infrastructure on their own, plus the cost of implementing their own dedicated storage network is prohibitive.

COLT eBusiness is confident that it can:

- reduce both your short- and long-term operational costs;
- provide a more agile platform for the development of your new products and services;
- maximise the use of your existing infrastructure;
- deliver higher levels of availability;
- minimise your exposure to risk.

About COLT

COLT Telecom Group plc is a leading European provider of business communication services. COLT has high bandwidth local networks in 32 European cities in thirteen countries supported by 11 Internet Solution Centres (ISC) and inter-linked by a 15,000 route kilometre high capacity fibre-optic long distance network.

COLT eBusiness is one of Europe's leading providers of managed e-business solutions. We design and implement high availability, end-to-end e-business infrastructures incorporating storage, hosting, messaging, security, networking, voice and data solutions delivered over our own fibre network.

COLT Telecom Group plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange (CTM.L) and Nasdaq (COLT). Information about COLT and its products and services can be found on the web at: www.colt.co.uk.

About BI-Tech

BI-Tech Solutions, a wholly owned subsidiary of CNT, designs, deploys and manages vendor-independent storage infrastructure solutions for businesses with high volumes of critical data. Our key focus is on delivering dramatic cost reductions across our client's enterprise. Our experience enables us to deliver 'real money' savings in IT infrastructure spend of up to 50 per cent and in addition, significantly improve service delivery and business continuity capabilities.

Our proven methodologies combined with our world-class team of highly innovative business and technical consultants provide us with the capability to engage on a shared risk basis. This eliminates the risk of unplanned project cost and project overruns, as well as ensuring the infrastructure delivers on its pre-defined objectives. For more information on BI-Tech and our services, please visit: www.bi-tech.co.uk.

For further information call **0800 358 3041**, email ebusiness@colt-telecom.com or visit www.colt-telecom.co.uk/ebusiness