

CASE STORY GLOBAL VOICE

GLOBAL VOICE PROVIDES CROSS-DIVISION STORAGE SERVICES AND HIGH QOS (QUALITY OF SERVICE) FOR THE INDUSTRY

CLIENT

Global Voice

BACKGROUND

Global Voice offers solutions for Business Continuity and information management, especially for highly regulated market segments. Founded in 2002, the company relies on its own high-speed fiber-optic networks as a basis of its offerings.

CHALLENGE

Many companies not only need more and more storage capacity – the availability requirements are also growing. In addition, an economically acceptable balance of legal compliance and storage costs should be achieved.

SOLUTION

Global Voice offers Managed Storage Service with extremely scalable SLAs. The customer-specific end-to-end solutions leverage a combination of different storage network technologies from HP and Cisco Systems.

VALUE

Compliance:

- All information are stored in a revision-proof manner

Business Continuity:

- Selectable levels of availability
- Predictable monthly costs instead of imponderable investment risks
- Reduced costs for the storage capacity resource
- Storage capacity
- GV positions itself as a technological trend-setter in the growth market
- Managed Storage Services



Global Voice, with German headquarters in Frankfurt/Main (Rödelheim), offers extremely scalable Managed Storage Services: This enables organizations of any size to benefit from highly available storage space as an external service. Not only are companies enabled to achieve a sound balance of storage demand and costs, they are also better equipped to meet the growing legal requirements. The service platform, which was developed under the leadership of Hewlett Packard, is based on Cisco's MDS 9000, with innovative features such as Inter-VSAN Routing and integrated multi-protocol capability offering a high degree of scalability as well as maximum investment protection.

Sarbanes Oxley in the USA, Basel II in the European Union and the "Grundsätze zum Datenzugriff und zur Prüfbarkeit digitaler Unterlagen" (GDPdU) in Germany – the compliance requirements for storing and archiving business information are becoming stricter around the globe. And this does not only concern tax-relevant financial data but increasingly also production and delivery data, especially in the pharmaceutical, process and food industries, where legislation mandates the capability of seamless batch tracking.



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Dary McGovern,
Chief Technology Officer von Global Voice

At the same time, storage capacity requirements are skyrocketing: The Enterprise Strategy Group estimates that more than 1,600 petabytes (1 petabyte = 1,000 terabytes or 1,000,000 gigabytes) of regulation-compliant storage will be required worldwide as early as next year. For reference: In 2003, this number was still at 376 petabytes. According to IDC, storage space within companies is increasing at a rate of nearly 80 per cent every year.

MANAGED STORAGE SERVICES WITH DIFFERENTIATED SLAS

But mere figures do not paint the whole picture when it comes to the additional challenges that storage infrastructures must meet today in view of the ever-increasing availability requirements. “The more business-critical transactions depend on long-term storage, the more urgent will the subject of failure protection become,” confirms Dary McGovern, Chief Technology Officer of Global Voice. Founded in 2002 and listed at the Singapore Stock Exchange, the company has specialized on business continuity. For this purpose, Global Voice maintains optical fiber networks with the associated conduit infrastructure in 14 large European cities, including Frankfurt, Berlin and Munich, but also London, Dublin and Rotterdam.

The company-owned network is not only beneficial to the storage service portfolio of Global Voice. “It enables us to offer highly secure end-to-end solutions that are fully compliant even in heavily regulated sectors of the industry,” explains CTO McGovern. Global Voice offers storage-on-demand – whenever it is needed – on the basis of extremely differentiated Service Level Agreements (SLA). This enables companies to order online storage with scaled availability levels – exactly as they need it to suit their specific business processes. “This helps to achieve significant cost savings for storage as a business resource, in spite of growing demands,” adds McGovern.

The business model of Global Voice takes the burden off the companies to build, maintain and manage their own storage networks. Without having to acquire corresponding expertise and without making high up-front investments, the business customers participate in a high-availability infrastructure that would normally not be affordable for most companies. Instead, customers are charged a predictable fixed monthly rate, with the scalable SLAs ensuring that they only pay for capacities they really need. This model is especially helpful for companies with large variations in storage demand. These need no longer invest in excess capacities only to be able to cover peak load situations.

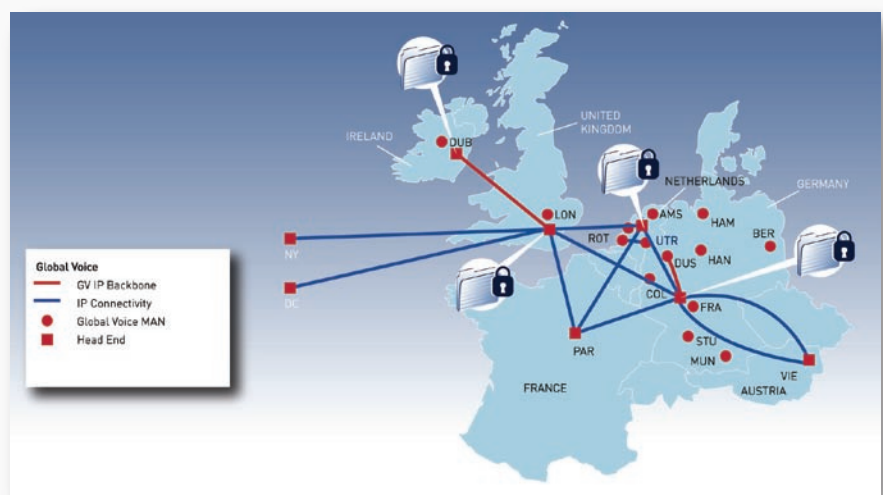
INTEGRATION OF NAS AND SAN

The storage service of Global Voice combines advanced storage network technologies from Hewlett Packard and Cisco Systems. Apart from the two global market leaders, the Bensheim-based system integrator COS Concat AG also made a significant contribution to the development of the storage solution: “COS Concat is a proven specialist for the development of scalable storage, back-up and archiving solutions for high-availability mixed-vendor data environments,” says Oliver Wiedhöft, responsible manager for the Global Voice project at HP.

The solution itself is provided in two parallel data centers that are about 5 km apart and accommodate advanced technology. In addition to continuous data

mirroring, fire protection and air-conditioning, both locations have diesel generators with a battery-buffered or flywheel failover mechanism to ensure continuous service even in case of power failure. Major building blocks of the solution include HP StorageWorks storage servers. The system permits the integration of Network Attached Storage (NAS) and Storage Area Networks (SAN) to form a common, centrally administrable storage pool. Data access is provided both at the block and file level. “This is important because the services of Global Voice address a wide variety of requirements in different industries,” comments Oliver Wiedhöft. Moreover it enables to better master the complexity in the mixed-vendor environment – with positive effects for the total cost of ownership of the solution.

Last but not least, the HP storage solution provides a virtually unlimited scalability of capacity. Here, a Tired Storage Solution was designed, consisting of on-line (EVA systems) and near-line storage (MSA1500 and UDO JukeBoxes). The storage media used include disks but also Hewlett-Packard’s SAN-enabled magneto-optical jukebox configurations (UDO), with the HP Storage Data Protector, version 5.5 software ensuring zero-downtime back-ups across media and making recovery a matter of minutes.



The Global Voice high performance fiber network

INVESTMENT PROTECTION INCLUDED

According to Oliver Wiedhöft, the Cisco Multilayer Directors MDS 9509 and Fabric Switches MDS 9216i were selected, due to the integrated Inter-VSAN Routing (VSAN = Virtual Storage Area Network) feature, among other capabilities: “This permits the seamless integration of customers’ existing storage networks with the Managed Storage Services of Global Voice. This means that previous investments continue to pay off.” Virtual Storage Area Networks (VSANs) organize the physical SANs into multiple logical networks. This enables Global Voice to achieve a clean separation of the storage traffic for different business customers. Inter-VSAN routing also allows a server to access common storage capacities over different VSANs. This significantly improves the flexibility of utilizing existing resources. Contrary to the storage switches of other manufacturers, Inter-VSAN Routing is an integrated feature of the Cisco MDS products, “which immensely simplifies the management task and reduces the administration costs on a long-term basis,” says Oliver Wiedhöft.

He also underscores the importance of the multi-protocol capability of the MDS 9000 product family: “Whether Fibre Connector (FICON), Fibre Channel (FC), FC over IP or iSCSI (Internet Small Computer System Interface) – Global Voice

can run all major storage protocols on a consistent system platform.” Similar to Inter-VSAN Routing, iSCSI is also directly integrated in the device. This means that no extra hardware is required for block-oriented transfers via the IP network.



Cisco Multi Director and Fabric Switch MDS 9216i with Inter-VSAN Routing Feature

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CONCLUSION

Dary McGovern is convinced: “The storage solution of HP and Cisco helps us support our business customers in different industries to utilize their storage resource more effectively than before for their respective business processes while also meeting the growing legal compliance requirements.” The HP Provisioning und Accounting software ensures lean billing processes and an accurate documentation of the compliance with the SLAs – on the basis of XML documents that are recognized by the German tax and revenue office.