NTT ICT & HDS DELIVER $5 MILLION SAVINGS WITH CLOUD READY, SINGLE STORAGE ENVIRONMENT FOR AGL

NTT ICT Services	Solution Design Project management
Partner	Hitachi Data Systems
Our Customer	AGL www.agl.com.au
Industry Sector	Energy

Project

- Storage consolidation and refresh project to underpin core SAP and SQL environments

Challenges

- Storage environment struggling to absorb exponential growth in data
- End of life performance issues
- Silos of storage difficult to manage
- Unsustainable data centre costs

Solutions

- Fixed price, outcomes based project
- Management of risk and issues to meet timeframes and budget

Benefits

- NTT ICT and HDS design team achieved a 5x performance improvement
- ROI of $5 million dollars in savings in 3 years
- Cloud ready
- Capacity and flexibility within single storage environment for longevity

ABOUT AGL

In 1841, the Australian Gas Light (AGL) company lit the first gas lamp in Australia. Over 175 years later, publicly listed AGL (ASX:AGL) has one of Australia's leading retail energy and dual fuel customer bases. It is also the largest private owner, operator and developer of renewable assets. AGL's Retail Energy Division markets natural gas, electricity and energy related products and services to more than 3.8 million residential and small business customers across NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland.

CHALLENGES

By late 2011, driven by the installation of smart metering with its consumer accounts, the storage infrastructure underpinning AGL's core SAP Retail System was struggling to absorb exponential growth in data and was facing end of life performance issues. These problems were exacerbated by multiple vendor silos and shrinking backup windows. AGL's data centre costs – across power, cooling and floor space requirements were also becoming unsustainable. Limited visibility into this complex storage environment was making life increasingly difficult for AGL's internal technology team.

Brett James, Enterprise Operations Manager at AGL explains, *"Management of our critical storage environment was a constant task. It didn't take much for performance to go from good to bad and a single action would slow the system for everyone."*

MY EXPERIENCE IS THAT NTT ICT AND HDS REALLY OPERATE AS ONE COHESIVE TEAM.

THERE WAS A STRONG SENSE THAT EVERYONE WAS FOCUSED ON SUCCESSFULLY MIGRATING US TO OUR NEW INFRASTRUCTURE PLATFORM

BRETT JAMES, ENTERPRISE OPERATIONS MANAGER, AGL.

NTT Communications **ICT Solutions**

HITACHI Hitachi Data Systems | TrueNorth Partner **GOLD**

Energy in action. **AGL** Since 1837

SOLUTIONS

A partnership of NTT Communications ICT Solutions (NTT ICT) and Hitachi Data Systems (HDS) was chosen to deliver the SAP Retail Infrastructure Optimisation (SRIO) project as they combined the required project management and technical expertise, and the two companies had already successfully delivered several projects for AGL.

The NTT ICT design proposed a migration from the legacy storage platforms to a new generation Hitachi Virtual Storage Platform (VSP). NTT ICT's SRIO project would revolutionise AGL's SAP Retail production environment in Melbourne and the disaster recovery site in Sydney.

Previously, AGL had been manually managing storage deployment. The new platform automated data placement and differentiated storage classes and performance capabilities – with associated pricing benefits. Dynamic provisioning was key to NTT ICT's planning for simplified management and significantly improving capacity usage, eliminating hot spots and providing dynamic tiering.

From extensive experience, NTT ICT knew selection of the VSP architecture would allow AGL most effective use of their resources and ability to align other technologies to create an entire data management strategy. The inclusion of Hitachi NAS Platform (HNAS) and Hitachi Content Platform (HCP) would also allow these benefits to be extended to all file and object data in AGL's environment providing a single, consolidated platform for all data.

BENEFITS

"The SRIO project was very successful. Storage management went from a day to day problem to 12 months of uninterrupted performance," Brett explains.

When the migration was completed AGL had a robust, reliable storage environment that enables them to choose any Cloud pathway. Impressively, the NTT ICT and HDS design team achieved a 5x performance improvement. The dynamic provisioning had increased utilisation from 40 percent to 65-70 percent which meant a reduction in capacity acquisition. AGL's data centre footprint has also reduced from ten existing racks to only two with a subsequent 80 percent reduction in power usage.

IMPRESSIVELY, THE NTT ICT AND HDS DESIGN TEAM ACHIEVED A 5X PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

The NTT ICT/HDS team undertook a Storage Economics study to quantify the cost savings resulting from a move to the VSP architecture. Taking into account the purchase price, maintenance outlay, data centre costs and environmental costs; the results justified the investment and provided an audacious ROI of five million dollars of savings over 3 years.

"The ROI exceeded our expectations in terms of the hard benefits, there's no doubt they were all delivered. We've achieved investment and data protection well into the future. AGL has a single, logical environment that's completely scalable to cater for the hundreds of terabytes required to support Smart Metering," Brett said.

NTT ICT and HDS have had a continuing role in bringing their areas of proven expertise to the table. Quarterly reviews of AGL's capacity and performance ensure proactive management of the environment.

Brett said: *"NTT ICT and HDS didn't finish and walk away. The continuing deep dives into the health of our environment mean we can review that understanding against what's happening in the business. With this ongoing conversation, we can make sound decisions about additional investments to cater for growth outside our original projections."*

FUTURE

With AGL on an expansion path, the inbuilt virtualisation engine can take 3rd party storage and virtualisation into the HDS platform which can be applied to create a single managed storage environment.

Crucially, the HDS solution enables AGL to go down any cloud pathway: *"It's part of the strategy to integrate our existing cloud solution into the storage environment and we have been positioned by NTT ICT to do so whenever we're ready,"* Brett said.

IT'S PART OF THE STRATEGY TO INTEGRATE OUR EXISTING CLOUD SOLUTION INTO THE STORAGE ENVIRONMENT

AND WE HAVE BEEN POSITIONED BY NTT ICT TO DO SO WHENEVER WE'RE READY

RELATIONSHIPS COOKING WITH GAS

Over the past decade, the partnership of NTT ICT and HDS at AGL has deepened through the highly successful execution of a series of critical infrastructure projects. NTT ICT is a gold-level Hitachi TrueNorth™ Partner with a proven track record that goes beyond its successes at AGL. NTT ICT's direct responsibilities have evolved to identify and drive opportunities for continual improvement.

"Several times during the project items arose that may or may not have been part of the scope of work, but the NTT ICT/HDS team just got on with it. The relationship is very good," Brett James, Enterprise Operations Manager at AGL explained.

"AGL likes to deal with companies it can rely on. If NTT ICT and HDS say they can do it, we trust they will do so and we've had several opportunities to test their capabilities," Brett said. *"We've now done five projects together and the constant is that NTT ICT is about delivering capability."*

ABOUT NTT ICT:

NTT Com ICT Solutions (Australia) Pty Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary company of NTT Communications, the global data and IP services arm of Fortune Global 500 telecom leader, Nippon Telegraph & Telephone Corporation (NTT). The brand was launched in 2013 and comprises of NTT Communications' Australian entities NTT Australia, Frontline Systems Australia, and Harbour MSP.

NTT Com ICT Solutions (Australia) Pty Ltd (NTT ICT) is a fully integrated, one-stop hub for IT services. The company delivers end-to-end information and communication technology solutions supported with professional services, managed services, and ever-ready technical support working with enterprise-size Australian organisations that want to re-imagine IT through infrastructure innovation. Services include a world-class Tier-1 Internet backbone, secure closed networks, security, system integration, network and application management, managed hosting, infrastructure resale, and global content delivery services. In addition, NTT ICT is a data centre service provider, specialising in fully integrated colocation, private cloud, and managed IT services.

Contact our team of experts today to see how NTT ICT can solve your IT issues
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