

Case Study

Moneyfacts Group

Moneyfacts Group is the UK's leading provider of personal finance data with a 30+ year pedigree in their industry.

Its expert team provides data on a comprehensive range of financial products available in the UK, from mortgages and loans, to credit cards and pensions.

The data is used by virtually every UK bank and building society, as well as other established financial bodies such as the Bank of England, the Financial Conduct Authority, and HM Treasury.

Challenge

It is essential that an organisation like Moneyfacts Group has the most up-to-date technology infrastructure, so they can provide top-level financial data to its customers on demand without ever needing to worry about downtime and data delivery.

The company had an ageing infrastructure, which had served very well during its lifespan, but due a refresh in line with the company's IT lifecycle policies. This upgrade would enable its teams to continue doing their jobs as quickly, efficiently and accurately as possible. It also needed guaranteed security as part of the solution to keep its valuable data safe.

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Industry

Financial Services

Investments

- **Infrastructure Refresh:** HPE Proliant Servers, HPE Nimble All Flash Storage, HPE FlexFabric networking and VMware technology.
- **Data Protection:** GUARDiAN Appliance protecting up to 80TB of data with a Quantum i30 LTO7 Tape library enabling a 3-2-1 backup strategy.
- **Software:** All software required including a Microsoft Products and Services Agreement (MPSA) for all server and application licenses, including on-premise and Office 365.
- **Support:** GUARDiAN CASP Support

Antony Gouldstone, Head of IT Operations at Moneyfacts Group explained: "With most new technology it is not so much a want but a need. A need to keep up with the pace and requirements from our customers. The solutions that we put in place are there to provide both internal and customer-facing solutions, and we need the right technology in place to deliver the solutions that our customers want."

Because it has worked with COOLSPIRiT since 2011, the organisation turned to them once again to upgrade its tired infrastructure.

Gouldstone said that in addition to replacing old and ageing kit, the upgrade would give them access to cutting-edge technology.

"Aside from improving the underlying infrastructure platform that our systems run on, it would also provide us with the ability to use some of the new and emerging technologies that were becoming available with the new versions of the hypervisors that just weren't supported on our old hardware," he explained.

GUARDiAN

Hewlett Packard Enterprise

Solution

The expert team at COOLSPIRiT quickly established Moneyfacts Group's technology needs and completed a total infrastructure refresh consisting of the entire primary infrastructure stack: HPE Proliant Servers, HPE Nimble All Flash Storage and FlexFabric networking with the latest VMware hypervisor software.

During this period, COOLSPIRiT also renewed the entire Microsoft licence estate belonging to Moneyfacts Group, via their MPSA agreement which includes all servers and applications; both on-premise and Office 365 based.

Because of COOLSPIRiT's expertise in data protection, Moneyfacts also invested in added data security with a GUARDiAN Appliance powered by Commvault; as well as supplementary tape-based protection with a Quantum i30 LT07 Tape library – leading to the creation of a trusted 3-2-1 backup strategy within the organisation.

Warren Wheatcroft, VP of Sales at COOLSPIRiT said: "Having the whole HP stack brings scalability and flexibility to an organisation like Moneyfacts Group. They needed to ensure the hardware platform that runs their day-to-day applications is properly supported and the best fit for their workloads and requirements.

"It needed to be appropriately sized and delivered, something COOLSPIRiT can do with ease. Because we have such a longstanding relationship with Moneyfacts, we know them very well and have listened carefully to their requirements, so we know exactly what technology they need to keep things running smoothly."

Benefits

Gouldstone said the technology has made an immediate and discernible difference to his teams.

"The technology we are running on now is far superior to its predecessor and allows us to be more agile – making business decisions that we couldn't make before. This ultimately allows our product set to be more agile too, while offering options that weren't available to us before."

He added the technology has taken the headache out of managing the infrastructure too, freeing up more of the IT team's valuable time.

"Having this equipment has made manageability far easier,"

he explained. "It has resulted in fewer outages and fewer engineer callouts because the technology just works. Particularly the HPE Nimble All Flash Storage technology we are using now – it is very, very reliable. Thanks to its self-healing features, my teams can spend more time concentrating on forward-looking projects as opposed to the day-to-day repair aspects, and ensuring the delivery of data to our employees."

As part of the partnership, COOLSPIRiT also provides Moneyfacts Group with ongoing support, from daily support and assistance, to pre-sales advice, through to ongoing post support with the GUARDiAN support team; something which Gouldstone could not praise enough.

"We have a fantastic partnership with COOLSPIRiT and they are a preferred partner when it comes to these transactions for two reasons: their pre-support through to installation and post-support is very good. There is never a question the guys are not willing to answer and they are very competitive on pricing as well".

Antony Gouldstone, Head of IT Operations

COOLSPIRiT's Wheatcroft added that he is pleased to see Moneyfacts enjoy the numerous benefits that come with working together.

"I truly believe that the benefits that our expert team deliver to our customers when working with us on their technology products are second-to-none," he said. "Having taken a customer from an initial consumable request right through to a successful complete internal infrastructure refresh twice over evidences our industry-leading approach to ensuring success for our customers, every time."

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High Praise for COOLSPIRiT

Moneyfacts Group's Gouldstone said he wouldn't hesitate in recommending COOLSPIRiT as a technology partner.

"The pre-sales team are always willing to help and jump on a call, and the technological experience among the team is the best that I have come across in the industry," he said. "This is really important to me as a customer because I want to be assured that the solution we are putting in place are right for us and that we are not going to run into any issues.

"In terms of post support – take the Guardian support desk for example – every time I have an issue, whether we email or pick up the phone – it is dealt with promptly and the team is more than willing to help and support us including out of hours if required.

"COOLSPIRiT is a professional and courteous organisation that has its customers' best interests at heart. I would absolutely recommend them to anyone and I already do advocate them in the wider world anyway because of the great work they have done with us."

COOLSPIRiT's Wheatcroft said communication with customers was absolutely crucial when creating long-standing partnerships.

"When we are having conversations with our customers, we ask what the pain points are and what they are looking to achieve. We strive to really understand the customer, and what journey they are on.

"From there we can then start to consider what resources are needed to fulfil that – whether hardware or public cloud. We have to make sure the product aligns with the customer's needs moving forward. We also need to ensure we size environments appropriately so that we can ensure the longevity of the solution, while avoiding overprovisioning, as this would be undesirable from a cost perspective. We want something that truly benefits our customers."

Moneyfacts' Gouldstone also reiterated that communication is

Forward Looking

As a constantly evolving organisation, Moneyfacts Group has ambitious plans for upgrading other parts of its IT estate, with a VDI refresh scheduled for this year and plans for a network refresh the following year. Gouldstone said it was crucial to stay ahead.

"The next two to three years going to be interesting," he said. "As an organisation we have invested heavily in internal infrastructure while we get things to the place we want them to be. We are going to be doing another infrastructure uplift in the next financial year. We have VDI coming this year, and plans for a network refresh next year – we are currently working on plans for the latter now.

"The question we are asking is what do the next 3-5 years look like and how do we extract all the value that we have put into these platforms to ensure we get maximum value? We need to keep an eye on the future and consider where we might need to adjust or move to get us to the place we need to get to. With the expertise of COOLSPIRiT, we're confident of moving into the future."

key when it comes to working with suppliers.

"I have worked in the IT industry for a long time now and I've had a fair few suppliers over the years. The ones that have longevity: the ones that continue through and through, are the ones I know I can pick up a phone and have a conversation with at any time if I need to. It is about putting that face to a name and having those relationships.

"It is all about ascertaining what our needs are and understanding how that moves forward and matching that with the appropriate technologies. Sometimes it is technology that we haven't even thought of and having those conversations and making sure the solution we end up with is best for the organisation," he added.

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