



ADEPA's Move to the Cloud Allows Stronger Focus on Core Asset Management Business



Challenge

- rapid growth and expansion
- IT infrastructure cumbersome and complicated to operate and manage
- compromised focus on core business
- compliance with strict financial service legislation

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Solution

- initially, a comprehensive set of managed services for existing infrastructure
- subsequently, migration of all software applications to an IT-as-a-service managed hosting model
- roll-out of two separate, and interconnected data centres offering disaster recovery
- email and Internet security
- financial services compliance built into technology and design

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Result

- optimal IT environment with a single IT partner improves focus on core business
- scalability to add new subsidiaries and users, making expansion easy and efficient
- predictable pricing thanks to pay-per-use model offered by IT-as-a-service
- better security and legislative compliance leading to lower risk

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'The cloud-based solution **gives us the flexibility to scale our IT to our needs** at any time by **connecting new subsidiaries and their users** to the organisation's **core applications.**'

Alessandro D' Ercole, Head of Operations at ADEPA.

 Challenge

Cumbersome infrastructure

Like a sound investment approach, a strong corporate strategy requires a focus on core strengths in which returns are guaranteed, rather than on areas where expertise is lacking and outcomes uncertain. This single-minded focus was central to financial services organisation ADEPA's strategy when it opened its asset management division in Luxembourg seven years ago. Founded in Spain in 1980 and currently headquartered in Luxembourg, the organisation also has a satellite office in Italy.

Starting small, the Luxembourg business had only a few employees and was preparing itself for growth. But the organisation was burdened by its IT infrastructure at the time. Says Alessandro D' Ercole, Head of Operations at ADEPA: 'We needed a stable IT environment that could deliver quality services. But our infrastructure, initially adequate for the start-up phase, became too difficult to operate and manage, and took too much of our daily attention. Complex technical and strategic IT decisions distracted us from our core business of monitoring and managing our clients' financial assets and investment vehicles.' ADEPA then considered moving management of its IT infrastructure to a third party.

Legislative restrictions

Complicating the challenges was Luxembourg's restrictive legislation governing banking secrecy and the protection of customer data, with which all financial services firms needed to comply. These laws, among other things, stipulated that all sensitive customer information should remain within the borders of the country and that every financial organisation should employ sound disaster recovery measures to protect this information. These measures also had to be tested every year.

A further requirement was a high level of firewall security to control external access to data, both from outside the business and the country's borders. ADEPA had to find either a solution or a partner that was fully compliant. The partner had to be able to offer a protective environment in which ADEPA's financial services software programmes could operate risk- and interruption-free.

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 Solution

Comprehensive managed services

Dimension Data entered into ADEPA's partner selection process relatively late and faced competition from players in the Luxembourg market that were well positioned in providing IT solutions to small and medium-sized businesses. However, Dimension Data suggested a more comprehensive, global IT solution than the local players were able to provide.

The aim was to not only provide the required technology and integration services – such as implementing the servers on which to run ADEPA's IT environment – but also to deliver managed services, thereby assuming a greater degree of responsibility for operating the organisation's IT environment. ADEPA received this proposal favourably and signed an initial agreement with Dimension Data as its main IT partner.

IT-as-a-service as the next step

Towards the end of the contract, Dimension Data re-entered into discussions with ADEPA and proposed a new approach to offer the organisation even more flexibility, at lower cost. Dimension Data proposed migrating most of ADEPA's infrastructure – including the organisation's servers and applications – to an IT-as-a-service managed hosting environment that could offer per-usage billing on a full scope of services.

The infrastructure that Dimension Data provided consisted of two separate data centres, interconnected to provide immediate and foolproof disaster recovery capabilities. Dimension Data also provided the required high-speed, high-capacity telecommunication lines to connect the data centres with ADEPA's office buildings, all aspects of email and Internet security, as well as remote access points to provide greater enterprise mobility.

With Dimension Data's help, ADEPA successfully migrated several Microsoft applications into the cloud, including Microsoft® Active Directory and Microsoft® Exchange. Remaining on the client's premises was only the local area network, the end users' desktop environment, and the organisation's telephony infrastructure. All other parts of ADEPA's infrastructure were outsourced to and managed by Dimension Data.

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 Result

Agility, mobility, and flexibility

Remote, secure connections to ADEPA's cloud-based infrastructure allow its employees a more flexible work style with anywhere, anytime access to core applications. For example, emails can now be accessed and read securely using smartphones and webmail access. Says D'Ercole: 'Dimension Data's solution enabled us to develop specific applications to meet not only our customers' needs, but also our shareholders' requirements who, for example, wished to have a real-time view of our decisions via online reporting. This provides them with both ease of use and peace of mind. The cloud-based solution also gives us the flexibility to scale our IT to our needs by connecting new subsidiaries and their users to the organisation's core applications easily and efficiently via a virtual private network.'

With more predictable pricing thanks to the pay-per-use model offered by IT-as-a-service, ADEPA knows the cost of providing IT to every employee. Dimension Data also put special measures in place to ensure all processes and systems complied with Luxembourg's financial services legislation. This compliance is built into the technology. Dimension Data is currently adding innovative services to the solution that would add more mobility, including the integration of products such as Cisco Jabber or Microsoft® Lync on all kinds of devices.

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Services overview

- IT outsourcing
- IT-as-a-service