CASE STUDY:

Weatherford Updates Technology for Future Growth

Weatherford is a leading global energy services company. Operating in approximately 75 countries, the Company answers the challenges of the energy industry with its global talent network of approximately 17,000 team members and approximately 350 operating locations, including manufacturing, research and development, service, and training facilities.

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Lance Jackson, the IT Infrastructure Director at Weatherford, was tasked with modernizing and digitizing the company, from headquarters to the oilfields. One of his main concerns was making Weatherford's infrastructure more efficient and resilient. This included the expansion of networks out to the fields with predictive analytics on equipment, IoT devices, and a software group that would allow for virtualization, automation, and remote control of an oilfield. Everything they did would also have to work with JD Edwards software, as Weatherford International relies heavily on JD Edwards instances.

Internally, Jackson and the IT team were also contemplating whether they should utilize a hybrid cloud. They had a lot of aged equipment, and data was backed up on LT05 physical tape devices, which were quite cumbersome to use and manage. Other hardware and software would have to be switched out at the same time, and all of it would have to work well with a new operating system.

Additionally, disaster recovery needed to be prioritized, as the existing disaster recovery plan for outages was lacking detail. Jackson had limited resources for all his goals, and all changes would have to be made with no impact on business continuity. There were a lot of obstacles and hurdles to get this all accomplished, and deadlines would have to be met, as these upgrades would have a major financial impact on Weatherford International.

Jackson had a lot of options on who to call, including calling IBM directly, but his Weatherford co-workers recommended using Mainline. And as Jackson said, "They were absolutely right."

Jackson thought the best way forward may be to do a buyout of the existing equipment and keep it running for a few more years, thus giving Weatherford International more time to make its cloud decision. Allen Beach, the Mainline Account Executive put together a proposal showing that, for roughly the same cost of buying out the equipment, Weatherford could purchase brand new gear, including a tape upgrade. Mainline would also help develop a solid disaster recovery plan for the organization. Jackson was shocked by the proposal and how much Mainline could positively impact Weatherford's budget. He noted that Mainline made it very easy for him to develop his business justification.

Customer: Weatherford International
Headquarters: Dublin, Ireland
Industry: Oil and Gas

THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Increase lifespan of on-prem assets while planning for hybrid cloud adoption
- Replace hardware and software while upgrading to a new OS
- Implement a true disaster recovery plan
- Ensure zero impact to business continuity
- Make use of limited resources

THE SOLUTION

- IBM Power9 with upgraded OS
- New Storage and Tape
- Disaster Recovery Plan
- Mainline Consulting Services
- IBM Lab Services

THE RESULT

- Cost reduction and cost avoidance
- Disaster recovery time shortened from one week to one day
- Reduced scheduled maintenance time by 66%
- Lifespan extension of on-premises hardware
- New interfaces to utilize external systems and cloud providers

THE SOLUTION

IBM Power9 and ERP

To help rebuild Weatherford's aging systems, one of the first changes Mainline made was to bring in brand-new IBM Power9 servers as the backbone of Weatherford's infrastructure. Working with Mainline and IBM Lab Services, the new Power9 servers were installed, along with a new OS level, to help automate and streamline operations. Big data applications and storage were moved to the corporate data centers in Houston. The entire network was then tied into Linux and Windows platforms for easy sharing of cloud workloads.

On-premises Backup

A conscious decision was made by Weatherford to move as much information as it could onto its corporate data centers, requiring an upgrade of existing hardware. LT05 Tape Drives were replaced with LT07 models to simplify everything from the physical tape swapping to the overall stability of the system and to increase protection of backup copies of Weatherford's most sensitive data, keeping it offline and inaccessible.

Disaster Recovery

Mainline charted out a detailed Disaster Recovery plan, which included the planning of the appropriate hardware capacity needed for sustaining operations to the actual steps to take during all conceivable types of emergencies. With Mainline's consultative expertise, Weatherford set appropriate goals for acceptable downtime related to disaster events and scheduled maintenance.

THE RESULT

Weatherford International was able to achieve the goals of modernizing and digitizing the company. The company knew these changes would have a major financial impact, and "Mainline moved mountains to help adjust timelines and contain costs," Jackson said. He stated that "there was a high trust level. Everything was structured, note-taking was excellent and meticulous. Everyone knew what their takeaways and action items were, what items had already been taken care of, and what tasks had to be done next. It is difficult for me to recall a more organized project execution."

Some of the biggest gains were due to Weatherford's new focus on disaster recovery. Downtime from an event in the field dropped from an average of one week to just one day. Meanwhile, the scheduled weekly maintenance outages on Friday nights for patching and testing shrank from 6 hours to 2 hours while also cutting down staff overtime and outsourcing costs.

The disruption for all these upgrades and improvements was so negligible on the business organization, Jackson bets that "unless you're in IT or executive management, you probably don't know that we made a change."

For more information, call your Mainline account representative or call Mainline directly at 866.490.MAIN(6246).

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