

Case study – Mears Group.

Datacentre, Cloud and Hosted Solutions.



New infrastructure gives base for future growth.



BT helps reduce space and power usage for the Mears Group, with a single, flexible platform that handles all its IT needs.

For a company with 12,000 employees and 250 offices around the UK, it is vital to have a consistent, reliable IT system that supports diverse divisions and can grow as needed.

That's why the Mears Group turned to BT when its existing system needed upgrading – and was delighted to be able to consolidate all of its computing applications and storage with BT's VDC Private.

Part of BT's solution portfolio, VDC Private features Cisco's® Unified Computing System (UCS) and enabled the Mears Group to consolidate its 25 servers into just one cabinet containing 12 blade servers – with capacity to increase computing power by 50% when required.

This capacity will come in handy when the Group looks to expand its two core businesses of social housing repair and domiciliary care. Teams around the country maintain, repair and upgrade more than 500,000 properties belonging to councils and housing associations every day. The care teams support thousands of elderly and vulnerable people in their own homes, helping with day-to-day tasks so that they can remain independent.

“ It's vital that we have a reliable, accessible IT Infrastructure – BT has given us that. ”

Chris Page
IT infrastructure manager, Mears Group

Comprehensive access.

Says Chris Page, IT infrastructure manager for the Mears Group: “With operational bases across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, it's vital that we have a reliable, accessible IT infrastructure underpinning it all. By providing this from a central point, it gives all of our sites – regardless of how many staff they contain – access to the same data and applications, without the hassle of managing the IT estate themselves.”



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One of the reasons BT was chosen to upgrade the Mears Group system was that it had the breadth of knowledge about the company’s existing technology to migrate or integrate it with the new platform. The existing BT IP Clear MPLS network links most of the Mears sites and will give them access to the system, while the company’s voice needs can eventually be incorporated within the platform when its phones are upgraded.

“The new consolidated platform is much simpler for us to run,” comments Chris. “If we expand and want to add a server, we just slot in a blade. There’s no need to buy a new chassis or a controller board, and we don’t have to worry about channelling additional power cables to it. ”

The VDC Private system takes a fraction of the space and electricity to run, allowing Mears to reclaim some building space, reduce power costs and work towards its environmental aims. Being extremely resilient and enabling issues to be fixed centrally, the platform helps to reduce downtime for business-critical applications. It uses the Cisco® hardware and NetApp storage that Mears wanted, but had thought would be beyond its budget.

Technical knowledge.

“However, BT took the trouble to understand our needs and managed to bring it within reach,” explains Chris. “They spent time walking us through the solution, explaining its benefits and making sure we were comfortable with it.

We were impressed by BT’s technical knowledge and the fact that they worked with Cisco’s® own engineers to configure it for us. That partnership gave us great peace of mind.”

He concludes: “At Mears we are great believers in investing in innovations that secure long-term outcomes rather than short-term solutions. VDC Private from BT is one such investment – it gives us a much simpler, more efficient infrastructure today, and is flexible enough to let us grow and add to it as our needs change in the future.”

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