![NetApp]

Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop has choosen NetApp for shared and future proof storage capacity and services

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Another NetApp solution delivered by:

uptimeICT

KEY POINTS

The Industry
Consumer rights organisation

The Challenge
Improve storage performance and guarantee growth opportunities for a group of national consumer rights organisations in Europe.

The Solution
Renewal of shared storage facilities and services, with clustered NetApp solutions.

The Benefits
- Higher capacity, higher performance storage
- More reliable data availability
- More flexibility / scalability
- Support for new projects

The Customer Profile

For the past 50 years, Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop has defended the rights of Belgian consumers, winning improved sales and warranty conditions, as well as providing neutral and dependable product information. In addition, it has created a range of advisory publications and services, in legal, healthcare, insurance, real estate and other domains. It has been a pioneer in improving consumer rights on a European scale by co-founding a strong European consumer rights organisation, and by encouraging collaboration between national organisations. Today, Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop supports a shared information-infrastructure with consumer organisations in Portugal, Spain and Italy.

The Challenge

The existing shared infrastructure was end-of-life, experiencing difficulties supporting the needs of four organisations – each the size of a SMB company, together representing 1.200 employees. "Improved performance was a necessity for employees as well as the members of the organisations and the visitors of the websites," says Jacques Fontaine, Group Manager Operations at Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop.

With the end-of-life storage as the starting point of the project, four axis

of improvement were indicated: improved service infrastructure with a focus on better back-up services, integrated with replication; a larger and higher performance storage capacity; more reliable data availability (database performance); as well as more solid and flexible business operations.

In this process, Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop took the lead for the four organisations involved. As a medium sized organisation, it successfully managed this European scale project, living up to its solid reputation and renown.

The Solution

A comparative market study was launched by Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop, selecting NetApp as a clear winner. "No other offerings did provide a similar level of integration, or offered equivalent applications," concludes Jacques Fontaine.

Furthermore, the NetApp solution proved to be extremely flexible. In the course of the project, it was decided to consolidate the active IT in one datacenter, rather than two. As a result, the solution needed to be reshaped, and NetApp allowed this because of the advantages of using similar and compatible building blocks, as well as a single software concept. "The solution was physically different, but from a logic and

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Jacques Fontaine, Group Manager Operations at Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop

concept point of view it remained the same." In their European context, the organisations also experienced faster growth than expected, expanding the scope of the project with the introduction of a virtual desktop infrastructure. "The original solution would be unable of supporting all of this load," says Jacques Fontaine, but NetApp seamlessly scaled up the solution, based on one platform, with sufficient stretch to handle future growth in a non-disruptive manner.

Close partnership

A key role in the successful completion of the evolving project was played by the NetApp partner, Uptime ICT (part of Uptime Group). "Uptime ICT truly understood our needs, and adapted their solution to our changing requirements," says Jacques Fontaine. An example of this, was Uptime ICT's reaction of offering alternative NetApp products, when the original idea of reusing available storage devices was abolished.

For Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop, it was of the utmost importance to "establish a relationship with a vendor, providing solid advice regarding the partner," says Jacques Fontaine, "particularly when new technologies are involved. We look for a 'solid triangle' of a vendor/partner/customer relationship, with a confidence inspiring solution." Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop got this 'we get it'-reassurance from Uptime ICT, with solid understanding, solid answers, and a solid continuity in project support (from pre-sales onwards). These are important factors, as Test-Achats/Test-Aankoop carried the

responsibility for guaranteeing quality services to other organisations. Actually, according to Uptime ICT's Managing Partner, Olivier Caporali, "Test-Achat/Test-Aankoop represents a somewhat atypical customer, as they insisted on understanding the solution from a technological point of view, rather than just trust the marketing information." As a customer, "we demanded and got information about the true benefits regarding quality of services, reduction of efforts, and improvements, based on scenario's, in collaboration with IT people from the other organisations," says Jacques Fontaine, "rather than accepting bare figures."

Today, "it is now possible to support all new projects, enabling our business expansion, combined with an improved web presence. Furthermore, the solution pointed out new needs and opportunities for our organisations. If there's need for a fast response to a need, the capability is available. If there's a need for a fast response to a fire, the fire brigade teams are available!"

THE SOLUTION COMPONENTS

Main site
- NetApp FAS8040 system
- NetApp FAS8020 systems
- NetApp APIs and proprietary tools

Second site
- NetApp FAS8020 system

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