HAMILTON RENTALS
IT & AV Rental Solutions

Delivering Certainty

Rental solution enables local authority to undertake an ultra-fast technology refresh of mission-critical servers

Hamilton Rentals helps city council mitigate risk with a fully supported server rental solution that delivers predictable lifecycle costs and enhanced flexibility.

Background

The service delivery imperative

As a unitary authority responsible for all local government functions within a designated district on the south coast, this council provides an extensive range of services to residents, businesses and visitors – everything from city development and cultural services to transport and environmental services, housing and property services, children's and adult's social care, education services, revenues and benefits and health and welfare services.

Serving over 200,000 citizens, the council's bold 5-year strategy for urban regeneration and economic growth is already delivering better outcomes for local people – including new jobs, new housing and an improved urban infrastructure.

The council's revenue & benefits platforms represent the beating heart of the authority. Powering the administration of council tax, business rates, housing and benefits, these systems are vital for collecting the all-important revenues that fund the authority's front-line services.

The enterprise servers that underpin these mission-critical platforms were reaching end-of-life, causing stability issues that posed a considerable risk for the council's revenue collection and management capabilities.

"Powering the administration of council tax, business rates, housing and benefits, these systems are vital for collecting the all-important revenues that fund the authority's front-line services."

"The pressure was on to find a fast and cost-effective short-term solution to replace our existing Solaris estate"

The requirement

Buy or rent – the pathway to a cloud-ready infrastructure

In a bid to increase efficiencies and improve services for citizens, the council is pursuing a 'cloud-first' strategy that meets the demands of 21st-century digital government. But the urgent requirement to replace the two mission-critical legacy Oracle Solaris servers in the council's on-premise data centre created a major dilemma.

"There was no time to unpick the existing highly complex hardware and software estate and migrate this infrastructure to the cloud without risking data loss or major disruption to services," explains the council's IT Service Project Manager.

"We realised a hybrid cloud model represented the best foundation for our ongoing infrastructure transformation, but with just weeks to go before critical year end preparations began - when thousands of council tax and commercial rates demands need to be generated – the pressure was on to find a fast and cost-effective short-term solution to replace our existing Solaris estate."

The council was confronted with a difficult decision. Either commit to a large upfront capital outlay and purchase replacement servers. Or rent the required technology and get back to 'business as usual' fast.

"Following a detailed five-year financial projection to evaluate the options open to us, it was clear that the rental service offered us much greater flexibility going forward, plus affordable periodic payments and a lower total cost of ownership – especially if we opted for a fully supported service solution," he continues.

The solution

Delivering business continuity

Following a comprehensive tender process, Hamilton Rentals was selected as the council's preferred IT rental partner.

"Quite simply, they were able to provide the servers we required within incredibly tight timeframes at an impressive price that bundled support and maintenance services into the monthly cost," explains the council's IT Service Project Manager.

"Early in the procurement process, Hamilton Rentals' technical team impressed us with a detailed review of our requirements. They went through everything with a fine-toothed comb – our architecture, our configuration specifications, and our longer-term Solaris upgrade plans."

But Hamilton Rentals went one step further. Offering the council an additional third server that could sit on-site ready to take over in the event of any issues.

"Hamilton Rentals gave us the additional operational resilience we needed at no extra cost. Providing a standby 'spare' server that's pre-configured and ready to go in the event of a physical server failover gives us incredible peace of mind and plenty of options when it comes to planned maintenance on the primary servers powering our revenue & benefits platforms."

"Early in the procurement process, Hamilton Rentals' technical team impressed us with a detailed review of our requirements. They went through everything with a fine-toothed comb – our architecture, our configuration specifications, and our longer-term Solaris upgrade plans."

The outcomes

Creating a Wow Factor

The 12-month server rental agreement has enabled the council to maintain its current transactional environment at a predictable fixed cost, leaving it free to pursue its longer-term cloud migration strategy.

"We've been able to upgrade our installed Oracle server base in a manner that makes sound commercial sense, without sinking valuable capital reserves into infrastructure that will ultimately become redundant over time," explains the council's IT Service Project Manager.

"Furthermore, Hamilton Rentals handles all maintenance and on-site response and support of the kit in a highly efficient manner and at no additional outlay to us – something that's important in these budget constrained times."

The Oracle T4 servers were loaded with the processors and memory specified by the council and fully tested before being delivered on-site within a two-week timeframe. This exceptional 'plug and play' approach enabled the council's in-house team to complete final configurations fast before Hamilton Rentals' specialist engineering teams deployed the servers in the council's on-site DC.

"Hamilton Rentals was incredibly responsive throughout the pre-planning and equipment set up process, maintaining excellent communications in the critical days prior to delivery on-site," confirms the council's IT Service Project Manager.

So much so, that when the council decided to upgrade its platform to Solaris 11 six months after the new servers were up and running it once again turned to Hamilton Rentals to rent a further two servers as a stop gap resource to support the migration.

"To assure a smooth and stable transition to Solaris 11 that's engineered for private cloud environments, we took the decision to rent a further two servers for a six-month period to rigorously test our application environment and migrate data files to a local file system before going live.
Once again, renting servers from Hamilton Rentals proved the logical approach to tackling our modernisation ambitions for this environment."

Why Hamilton Rentals?

Knowledgeable and experienced at helping organisations cost-effectively resolve infrastructure challenges in a robust and proven manner, Hamilton Rentals' server rental service delivers fast access to a total technology solution without any need to purchase assets.

Renting rather than making a direct server purchase enabled the council to resolve the challenge of keeping mission-critical systems up-and-running in an ultra-fast timeframe, while achieving demonstrable best value that's critically important as it prepares to move to the cloud in the coming months.

"Hamilton Rentals has become a valued and highly proactive service provider that goes the extra mile when it comes to delivering the support our IT teams need. For example, their engineering specialists frequently provide additional suggestions and ideas on how to tackle particular projects – and it's this willingness to offer consultation above and beyond the services they've signed up to deliver that has most impressed us," confirms the council's IT Service Project Manager

If I had to sum up Hamilton Rentals' commitment to us as a customer, I'd have to say that professional and helpful doesn't begin to describe their approach. Unlike other providers, they're genuinely invested in our long-term success.
Time and again over the last few months, they've demonstrated just how easy they are to do business with."

Contact us

With over 35 years of experience, Hamilton Rentals delivers Technology and IT services to organisations and events of every shape and size. Our capabilities cover technology provision, engineering, logistics, consulting, project and managed services, and asset retirement, making us perfectly positioned to help with your IT and AV requirements.

See how Hamilton Rentals can help your business succeed. Please contact us on info@hamilton.co.uk

www.hamilton.co.uk

LinkedIn:
hamilton-rentals

Twitter:
@Hamiltonrentals

YouTube:
Hamilton Rentals