



Columbus Communications unites the Caribbean with HPE OneView

HPE OneView implements 3 remote sites in
3 hours versus weeks



Objective

Implement an improved cookie-cutter server infrastructure and management strategy in support of remote Caribbean Island sites

Approach

Deploy HPE ProLiant Blade Servers, managed anytime, anywhere with HPE OneView single management tool

IT Matters

- HPE OneView software-defined approach gives visibility to all remote racks through one pane of glass
- HPE OneView eliminates infrastructure complexity with automation simplicity
- Potential to manage entire converged infrastructure through HPE OneView
- HPE ProLiant cookie-cutter approach simplifies installation at remote sites
- HPE ProLiant power flexibility enables operation in erratic power environments

Business Matters

- Large savings: implemented three island sites in 3 hours vs. weeks at great expense
- HPE OneView alerts enable high uptime, resulting in positive customer experience
- Ability to manage systems anytime, anywhere increases response and reduces travel expense



The core business of Columbus Communications is providing cable television services, digital video, high-speed internet access, digital telephony, and corporate data services, as well as providing telecom capacity and IP services to large international telecom carriers, internet service providers, and other value added service providers. It operates in 42 countries throughout the greater Caribbean, Andean and Central America region. Recently, Columbus Communications and Cable & Wireless Communications merged in order to accelerate growth strategies and deliver superior customer service. With this acquisition, the company faced a two-fold goal: to offer customers an ever-increasing portfolio of high-quality products and services, and to deploy and manage stable server installations in remote and unreliable power environments.

Columbus evaluated several major technology providers and narrowed its real-time tests to Hewlett Packard Enterprise solutions and support, determining that HPE resources would best strengthen its market position against larger competitors. The evaluation team learned that HPE alone had the technology and tools to bring a variety of Caribbean countries under a reliable and easy-to-manage technology umbrella.

Luciano Ramos, senior director of technology, Columbus Communications, spearheaded this ambitious task and successfully unearthed a game-changing solution for Columbus. According to Ramos, the immediate goal was to create a cookie-cutter system, which could handle the erratic power spikes and differing voltage requirements found in a plethora of remote environments. In addition, Columbus Communications needed a way to effectively manage these systems across 26 Caribbean Islands. Finally, Columbus wanted a solutions vendor that could offer the individualized service this remotely scattered environment demanded.

“We initially tested the HPE BladeSystem c7000 Enclosure for three months to see if it worked with our home-grown content delivery applications under stressful,

high-load conditions,” explains Sebastian Rodriguez, senior systems architect, Columbus Communications. “Then we tried to crash it by power-spiking it, cutting the power (as in a hurricane-induced outage), and running it on differing voltages. HPE has invested a lot in hardware protection and safety under difficult and varying conditions, and the servers passed every power related test we put them through.”

HPE then sent Rodriguez to the Hewlett Packard Enterprise Customer Experience Center in Houston in order to learn the HPE Converged Infrastructure Roadmap, and receive expert analysis of his business issues. Through this interaction, Rodriguez learned that HPE OneView would be the perfect answer to the complex problem of managing 26 sites spread over 26 Caribbean islands. As soon as he could, Rodriguez was putting HPE OneView to work uniting the Caribbean.

“Columbus Communications is a lean new company and we can’t afford downtime or imperfect decisions,” he says. “How we are going to manage our centers across Caribbean islands is a key decision due to the varying conditions encountered. HPE OneView lets me, or any of our IT staff, manage thousands of parameters from literally anywhere. The layout is so simple that, although training is available, I haven’t needed any to fully exercise it.”

HPE OneView for all and all for OneView

Once Rodriguez and the IT staff at Columbus Communications got their hands on HPE OneView, they didn’t let go. “We were so pleased with the HPE OneView ability to manage, not only all our sites through one pane of glass, but potentially, storage and networking as well, that we ordered it for every system. HPE is the only vendor that offers a single management tool for an entire infrastructure. The automated alerts have increased our response to issues exponentially, ensuring we can provide delivery quality that will continue to build our reputation.”

“Using HPE OneView, it took me only three hours at negligible cost, to implement a new server stack for three remote islands. Before HPE, I estimate we would have sent a total of 10 people, including engineers, to each island, with travel expenses, and dedicated a full week to implementing the same three sites—all on a break-neck schedule. Our time and money savings is huge.”

— Sebastian Rodriguez, senior systems architect, Columbus Communications

HPE OneView by design sets out to provide its users the most powerful and simple management tool available, understanding that, although what’s under the hood is crucial, the ability to harness the power is equally, if not more, important. The HPE ProLiant Blade Servers, powered by Intel® Xeon® E5-2600 processors, and c7000 BladeSystem Enclosure provide a simple, flexible design to support inconsistent and problematic power issues throughout the Caribbean. HPE ProLiant Blade Servers are less expensive and use less electrical power than his previous rack server solution, reducing power consumption and cooling costs, which is especially important for the island installations. HPE OneView is the perfect tool to enable Rodriguez to remotely manage and provision his new ProLiant-based solutions wherever he is.

By culture, Columbus Communications leans toward multi-vendor solutions, but the HPE Roadmap, especially its Converged Infrastructure and HPE OneView rollout, is changing some minds in the IT department. “The option of extending this efficient one-tool management solution to include storage and networking has opened us up to opportunities for even greater efficiencies.

HPE is the only vendor that even offers a single-point-of-management converged infrastructure as an option.”

Three islands operational in three hours

Columbus Communications has implemented three sites since choosing HPE, Jamaica, Curacao and Trinidad & Tobago. The company is in the process of buying another three systems for the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, and Turks & Caicos. Utilizing HPE OneView, Rodriguez experienced such a smooth implementation of the first three islands, that he is relaxed and confident about replicating the next three.

“I called HPE, who has our cookie-cutter configuration ready to go, and HPE sent the system to the three island sites,” he recalls. “The local Columbus Communications staff easily set up the server package, and then the magic happened. Although the systems were in the south Caribbean, I was far away in Bogota, Colombia. I connected to each site through HPE OneView and it took only an hour per site to fully implement. I didn’t have to setfoot on a plane!”

Case study

Columbus
Communications

Industry

Telecommunications
Service Provider

Customer at a glance

Application

HPE OneView manages HPE ProLiant servers scattered throughout Caribbean through one pane of glass

Hardware

- HPE ProLiant BL460c Server Blades
- HPE BladeSystem c7000 Enclosure

Software

- HPE OneView Management Software
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux

Services

- HPE Proactive Care

Rodriguez clearly likes the time and expenses saved, as well as significant increases in productivity gained by using HPE OneView. Columbus Communications, by design, operates a lean and expert IT staff, who had often been stretched to their limits by the previous need to travel and trouble-shoot at remote sites. In addition to HPE OneView, the Columbus Communications IT staff also chose the high-level HPE Proactive Care, due to the need for extraordinary support on an island-by-island basis. One of the biggest challenges the IT team faces is support for, not only the more populated islands, but the more remote ones as well. HPE Proactive Care knows the profile of each implementation and what is needed to support the ProLiant Server Blades.

“Our Hewlett Packard Enterprise solution is a dramatic improvement over our previous rack servers and management systems,” he admits. “Using HPE OneView, it took me only three hours at negligible cost, to implement a new server stack for three remote islands. Before HPE, I estimate we would have significant resources and travel expenses involved. We could require 10 people, including engineers, to visit each island and dedicate a full week or more to implementing the same three sites—all on a break-neck schedule. Our time and money savings is huge.”

Building a software-defined architecture

Previously, the only way Rodriguez and staff could gain the level of visibility needed to address and solve a remote server problem, was to get eyes on the server, in person. That meant time and travel and a necessarily impeded response time. The HPE OneView software-defined approach eliminates complexity and allows IT staff to roll out and implement new systems and applications faster, maximizing efficiency through automation.

“HPE OneView gives me a full view of all of my remote racks, and I can see if any alarms are presenting and what issues, if any, need attention,” he says. “In the past, I had 30-40 windows open for all servers, which was a really painful process. The only other option was travel. Now the servers are all automated and the visibility through HPE OneView is comprehensive.”

Given the chance to summarize his experience with HPE OneView, Rodriguez laughs, and says, “Aside from the business benefits we’ve already seen, you can imagine how happy I am personally to leverage my effectiveness, ensure secure systems, and to sleep like a baby again.”



Sign up for updates

★ Rate this document



© Copyright 2015 Hewlett Packard Enterprise Development LP. The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The only warranties for HPE products and services are set forth in the express warranty statements accompanying such products and services. Nothing herein should be construed as constituting an additional warranty. HPE shall not be liable for technical or editorial errors or omissions contained herein.

Intel and Intel Xeon are trademarks of Intel Corporation in the U.S. and other countries.

4AA5-8733ENW, November 2015, Rev. 1