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MALTA-BASED BMIT TECHNOLOGIES PREPARES FOR NEXT-LEVEL GROWTH

Malta experiences the power of HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub

Industry
Cloud services provider

Objective
Provide key features of Microsoft Azure Stack Hub while enabling local control and faster performance

Approach
Use trusted HPE infrastructure to deploy an Azure-consistent hybrid cloud solution right on the island

IT matters
- Helps customers meet stringent regulations for data sovereignty
- Enables scalable growth and flexible infrastructure
- Delivers Azure features to customers in Malta

Business matters
- Increased speeds by a factor of 50
- Ensures regulated data stays local
- Opens new growth opportunities

The future is moving fast on the small island of Malta and—as the main cloud services provider for hundreds of gaming and financial businesses—BMIT Technologies wanted to provide its customers with even better performance and greater control—today and beyond. HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub equipped them to do so.

On the smallest European Union state of Malta, you can find sunny beaches, ancient ruins, and a thriving industry of gaming companies, financial institutions, and more. Many of these companies handle highly secure and regulated data—and the company they trust to manage their complex digital needs is BMIT Technologies, a service provider offering a full range of data center, cloud, and managed IT services right on the island.

Over the past 20 years, BMIT Technologies has enabled its customers to lead the world in the innovation of apps, games, and financial tools, while also keeping up with the stringent, ever-shifting regulations of these industries. As part of this, BMIT was the first to offer island-based cloud services several years back so its customers could store data on the island when regulations required it.

CHALLENGE

Higher performance with a local cloud
With one eye on the future and another on the lightning-fast changes to their customers' modern workloads, BMIT Technologies began looking at how to expand their capabilities, increase their performance, and enable further growth opportunities—for their customers and for themselves.

Case study
BMIT Technologies

Industry
Cloud services
provider

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> "The decision for HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub was based on looking at the platform that can broaden our horizons and potentially then evolve in the future."

– Nick Tonna, Chief Commercial Officer, BMIT Technologies

HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub dramatically enhance speeds and performance for BMIT Technologies. It has reduced latency by half.

According to Nick Tonna, BMIT Technologies' Chief Commercial Officer, the company wanted to move from just offering **rudimentary** IS services—like virtual machines—toward supporting more advanced needs, like containers and platform as a service (PaaS) infrastructure.

In addition, many of BMIT Technologies' customers in Malta wanted to leverage Azure Technology. However, to do so would require their data to be hosted on a public cloud thousands of kilometers away—in Amsterdam, Dublin, or further. This posed two problems—their speeds lagged at that distance and Malta's regulations require gaming and financial data to be stored in the country.

"Being regulated constrains Malta companies from utilizing any public cloud provider, or Azure, in this case—purely because none of the major service providers have any localized nodes on the island," explains Tonna.

So BMIT Technologies began exploring Azure Stack Hub.

SOLUTION

Azure capabilities with local control
For BMIT Technologies, Azure Stack Hub was a natural choice. Their customers wanted the Azure experience, and they needed their data and infrastructure right next door. HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub enabled this.

"The ability to bring down the Azure experience very close to the customers was very important for us," says Gordon Bezzina, BMIT Technologies' Chief Technical Officer.

For the BMIT Technologies team, another advantage of HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub is its hyperconverged infrastructure, which enables the scalability and flexibility to support ongoing growth and ever-changing needs. An infrastructure that can grow as they grow—for both compute and storage capabilities—is exactly what BMIT Technologies needed.

"It's not monolithic," says Bezzina. "It's very flexible but it's also very modern. When the load starts growing, you can grow the system in a smooth way without requiring down times or re-engineering."

As a long-time HPE Gold partner (HPE has been supporting BMIT Technologies' internal-use hardware for quite a few years), BMIT Technologies decided early on that its Azure Stack Hub implementation would be led by HPE. BMIT Technologies engaged the HPE Pointnext Services team and entered a partnership with HPE and Microsoft to architect, build, and implement the Azure Stack Hub solution.

Throughout the process, BMIT Technologies engaged in a series of conversations and workshops hosted by HPE, including a visit to the HPE Customer Innovation Center in Geneva, Switzerland, where Microsoft and HPE collaborate closely.

Bezzina says this level of care made a difference. "There are a lot of questions that come up," says Bezzina. "You don't always know which choice to make versus another. HPE was extremely helpful in explaining the pitfalls and the future impact of going with one part versus another."

Once it came to configuring the Azure Stack Hub software, BMIT Technologies appreciated HPE's expertise even more. "The software is more complex, obviously, and that is where we found a lot of help from HPE," says Bezzina.

For the BMIT Technologies team, knowing they could have ongoing support—provided seamlessly between both HPE and Microsoft—was another deciding factor in their decision to go with HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub. "Basically, for us," says Tonna, "if there is ever a problem on the Stack, the resolution can be coordinated between the vendors themselves."

Whether an issue is hardware- or software-related, BMIT Technologies knows Microsoft and HPE will work together toward a fast resolution. "That was obviously another important consideration for us," says Tonna.

"The choice of HPE is primarily because, over the years, we've built a relationship that has proved itself to be beneficial to both of us."

– Gordon Bezzina, Chief Technical Officer, BMIT Technologies

Customer at a glance

Solution
Hybrid cloud solution that allows customers to run Microsoft Azure services in local Malta data centers

Hardware
- HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub

Software
- Microsoft Azure Stack Hub

HPE Pointnext Services
- Factory build and services for Azure Stack Hub, including basic install and connection to customer network

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BENEFITS

Faster performance and greater opportunities

Now that HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub is up and running, BMIT Technologies is able to offer companies on Malta something they've never had—a seamless Azure experience right on the island. BMIT Technologies' customers can now enjoy the power of Azure Stack Hub while also fully complying with Malta's data regulations.

BMIT Technologies' new hybrid cloud capabilities enable its customers to either connect their own hosted equipment to BMIT Technologies', or bring BMIT Technologies' Azure Stack Hub into their offices. Either way, they keep their data local rather than going over international channels.

HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub has also enabled BMIT Technologies to dramatically enhance speeds and performance for its customers. For example, instead of taking 50 milliseconds for data to travel from Malta to Amsterdam, BMIT Technologies' island-based private cloud—built on HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub with intra-island fiber connectivity—has placed data just one millisecond away.

"We basically reduced latency by 50 times," says Tonna.

BMIT Technologies has also helped eliminate data sovereignty headaches for its clients.

"With Azure Stack Hub, the data is hosted in Malta, which means if you, as a gaming customer, are challenged by the regulator about where your data is hosted, you know it's on the island, in line with the regulations."

Another advantage of the Azure Stack Hub solution is that BMIT Technologies can better address the changing needs of its customers' small, modern workloads. Now, instead of being limited to supporting virtual machines and basic workloads, BMIT Technologies'

private cloud can fully support its customers' DevOps, PaaS, and other complex scenarios.

"These kinds of needs are what we are seeing more commonly today—as opposed to what we used to see one, two, three years ago," says Tonna, "and Azure Stack Hub enables us to deliver those services to our customers."

As a result, BMIT Technologies is now able to offer greater power, flexibility, and security to its customers on Malta, enabling them to grow even more quickly than before.

More growth to come

Looking ahead, HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub has also equipped BMIT Technologies for its own increased revenue opportunities. Tonna sees the chance for BMIT Technologies to enter new revenue streams and offer new services that, until now, the company has been limited in providing. One area BMIT Technologies specifically plans to focus on is the booming Internet of Things industry.

In addition, once BMIT Technologies has finished migrating its customers to Azure Stack Hub, Tonna expects to see a drop in workload and management needs, freeing up his team to support new opportunities. By consolidating onto the Azure experience, the BMIT Technologies team can now focus on a single platform instead of learning and managing multiple platforms at once.

Overall, HPE ProLiant for Microsoft Azure Stack Hub has equipped BMIT Technologies to support its customers and grow its business into the future.

"This platform is built on the most recent technologies there are. This is where the industry is going," says Bezzina.

Tonna agrees: "The Azure Stack Hub road map was a more future-proof road map for us."

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