



//Plastic Logic creates Enterprise class infrastructure to launch electronic reading phenomenon

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Ben Adderley, Global IT Infrastructure and Operations Manager, Plastic Logic.

Richardson Eyres builds Enterprise launchpad for electronic reading phenomenon

Plastic Logic's advances in plastic electronics are resulting in the world's thinnest, lightest, largest and most robust plastic displays and its new eReader product has been applauded as one of the most significant recent developments in the printed electronics industry.

Measuring 8.5 inches by 11 inches, the Plastic Logic eReader is a big readable display that is thinner than a pad of paper and lighter than many business periodicals.

Magazine and newspaper articles, books or business documents can be loaded onto it, either directly from your computer or wirelessly and a wide range of business formats are supported, including Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Adobe PDF.

Vital redundancy

Plastic Logic carried out the research and development work at its original premises in Cambridge, UK but when eReader needed to go into manufacture it was decided to develop a commercial-scale plastic electronics facility on a brown field site in Dresden, Germany. The IT had to support a comprehensive Management Enterprise System (MES) and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System. Replication of critical data was also vital so it was decided to build identical infrastructures both at Dresden and in a new Cambridge datacentre.

To achieve this, Plastic Logic needed a partner with a pedigree in designing and creating Enterprise class infrastructures and networks. Following a tender process, the choice was Richardson Eyres.

Deep understanding

We chose Richardson Eyres over the others because theirs was the most professional response. Also, they were the only company that really understood what we wanted to do in terms of the hardware solution and our need to ensure that redundancy was built in," explains Ben Adderley, Global IT Infrastructure and Operations Manager for Plastic Logic.

"It was also useful that Richardson Eyres is a Professional Services Partner with Hewlett-Packard because that meant they could design and install a full solution rather than just selling us the boxes. Working with Richardson Eyres is a much more rounded and meaningful relationship and their ability to offer that totally comprehensive service is a major strength."

Once the requirements were scoped and deadlines set, Richardson Eyres designed then oversaw implementation of the crucial platforms, first in Cambridge and then in Dresden. A significant challenge was to create the Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) based Verizon Wide Area Network (WAN) links that would support essential data replication for disaster recovery between the two distant sites.



Platform for growth

Each platform is composed of an HP Storage Area Network (SAN) with HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays (EVA) and HP ProLiant DL385 and DL585 servers. Backup is done on HP StorageWorks MSL tape libraries. Using HP Continuous Access software, data is replicated between the two sites with Oracle ERP data held in Cambridge being replicated to Dresden and MES data held in Dresden being replicated to Cambridge. VMware has also been used for extensive virtualisation of the server landscape, enabling Plastic Logic to reduce its physical platform down to a handful of servers while still deploying an enterprise environment at greatly reduced cost.

““ Since we are a comparatively new company that is poised for rapid growth, we needed an infrastructure to support that growth. That is what Richardson Eyres has created for us and their enterprise-level IT systems will give us essential support for the future. ””

Since the main implementations, Richardson Eyres has also given Plastic Logic remote help to install a virtualised platform at its US headquarters. “Both the design and the infrastructure are working well and we have absolutely no complaints,” says Adderley. “The job that Richardson Eyres engineers do is extremely professional. You can tell the difference between a company that provides a fully rounded service and one that just puts infrastructure in.

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Challenge

- When Plastic Logic created a new manufacturing plant in Dresden it needed an Enterprise class infrastructure to support critical manufacturing and business systems.
- For disaster recovery, it also wanted an identical system at its datacentre in Cambridge, UK with replication between the two.

Solution

- Plastic Logic needed a partner who could provide a total design and implementation service, leveraging maximum productivity from the data centres and delivering best value. It chose Richardson Eyres.
- Each of the two identical environments includes an HP Storage Area Network (SAN) with HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays (EVA) and HP ProLiant DL385 and DL585 servers.
- Backup is done on HP StorageWorks MSL tape libraries.
- Data is replicated between the two sites using HP Continuous Access software.
- VMware has also been used for extensive virtualisation of the server landscape.

Results

- These enterprise class infrastructures will form a solid foundation for the significant growth anticipated by Plastic Logic.
- Replication between the two sites ensures business continuity and high availability.
- Virtualisation has enabled Plastic Logic to reduce physical servers and still achieve an enterprise environment at a lower cost.
- Reducing the server landscape lowers power consumption, saving further costs and reducing carbon emissions.

// Richardson Eyres provides solutions for data centre consolidation. It works with its customers to streamline IT infrastructures, freeing up time, resources and ultimately saving its customers' money.

Richardson Eyres develops long-term and mutually beneficial relationships working with its customers to ensure that it provides bespoke solutions to help their business run efficiently, effectively and above all, profitably.

Richardson Eyres

Unit 12 Alma Road Trading Estate
Chesham, Buckinghamshire, HP5 3HB
t +44 (0) 1494 792 002
f +44 (0) 1494 791 882

www.richardsoneyres.com

It has partnerships with HP and VMware, and is one of a small number of HP Professional Services Partners (PSP) in the UK. It also provides solutions for companies globally, from their offices in the UK and the US.

With over 20 years experience as a data centre consultant, Richardson Eyres has extensive technical knowledge and the know-how to apply this knowledge to help organisations run their IT infrastructures more efficiently. Established in 1986, the company is privately owned and its headquarters is in Chesham, Buckinghamshire.
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