



Customer: Grad Osijek City Council

Web Site: www.osijek.hr

Number of Employees: 300

Country or Region: Croatia

Industry: Government—Local

Partner: Integra Group

Customer Profile

Grad Osijek City Council is the local government for the fourth-largest city in Croatia. With 300 employees, the council depends on IT for many of its internal processes and services to citizens.

Software and Services

- Microsoft Server Product Portfolio
 - Windows Server 2008
- Technologies
 - Hyper-V

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City Council Cuts Deployment Time from Hours to Minutes with Virtualisation Solution

“By using Hyper-V, we can create a virtual server and roll out an application in minutes instead of hours. It means we can be much more flexible.”

Igor Galir, IT Manager, Grad Osijek City Council

Until recently, the server environment at Grad Osijek City Council made it time-consuming and expensive to deploy software. Each application required its own physical server, which had to be acquired through a long procurement process. In April 2009, the council’s IT team worked with Integra Group to virtualise its infrastructure using Windows Server® 2008 and Hyper-V™. The team can now deploy servers and applications in minutes rather than hours.

Business Needs

The local government of Grad Osijek—Croatia’s fourth-largest city—uses IT systems to provide everything from internal billing frameworks to online public information Web sites.

The city council depended on an outdated server environment where each line-of-business application was installed on its own physical machine. This was problematic because it meant every new application required the council to purchase a server. With a long procurement process, it could take

several months and significant resources to roll out an application.

Igor Galir, IT Manager at Grad Osijek City Council, says: “In the past, it took so long to purchase and install a server that we’d sometimes be forced to abandon projects before they were finished. We needed to be more flexible.”

The team also had to address the security and reliability of its existing server environment. The council had around 20 hardware servers, several of which were 9 years old. Not only did this

cause compatibility problems because of outdated drivers, but with no backup system in place, there was a risk of critical failure.

Galir says: "If any of the servers had gone down, it would've taken a week or more to get it functioning again. Because each server was running an individual application, we would've lost at least one of our crucial software systems for that whole time."

As in many server environments, power and space were also a major consideration for the team. "We're always looking to cut costs, so we wanted a solution that would help conserve storage space and energy," says Galir.

Solution

In February 2009, Galir and his team began looking for a solution. Their first call was to Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner Integra Group, a company they'd worked closely with on previous projects.

Integra Group suggested that the council update its server environment, with more powerful hardware and a more flexible, virtualised infrastructure. After reviewing the options, Galir and his team chose to deploy the latest blade servers running the Windows Server 2008 operating system with Hyper-V virtualisation technology.

In April 2009, they went ahead with the deployment, rolling out seven blade servers in a fully redundant configuration. They created a virtualised environment across two of the servers using Hyper-V technology, and moved the applications on the council's existing servers to virtual machines.

The team set up the solution with full failover facilities so if one server malfunctions another takes over its processes and applications within minutes. They also set up a storage area network, which holds virtual machine information in the form of Hyper-V "snapshots" so that configurations can be easily recovered in the event of failure.

Galir and his team control all the servers from a single console, which simplifies management.

Benefits

Since deploying the virtualised server environment, the team at Grad Osijek City Council has seen immediate benefits. Virtual servers can now be deployed in a few clicks of a mouse. "By using Hyper-V, we can create a virtual server and roll out an application in minutes instead of hours. It means we can be much more flexible," says Galir. Because it no longer needs to purchase physical servers for each new application, the team is making significant savings. With a fully redundant configuration, the virtualised server environment also offers greater protection against hardware failure and data loss. The Hyper-V snapshots feature makes it simple to recover exact virtual machine configurations in the event of a problem. Importantly, the solution uses less power and space than the previous system, so the council can make further savings over time.

- **Speed of deployment.** Using the virtualised solution, the IT team at the council can deploy virtual servers in minutes rather than hours. This

greatly increases the organisation's flexibility.

- **Security and reliability.** Comprehensive failover facilities mean that the council's line-of-business applications will keep running even in the event of hardware failure.
- **Cost cuts.** The council no longer needs to purchase a new physical server for each application it wants to deploy. This cuts costs and ongoing charges for power and space.
- **Simple recovery.** Hyper-V snapshots of virtual machines protect the council's vital data and application configurations.
- **Reduced carbon-footprint.** Using a virtualised environment helps the council to lower its impact on the environment by using less energy.
- **Improved compatibility.** The IT team no longer faces compatibility issues with drivers on old hardware, because all its existing applications now run on virtual machines.