Case study

SKIDATA ensures reliability with standardised ticketing platform

HP workstations provide performance, flexibility and reliability at low cost

Industry
Access Management

Objective
SKIDATA wanted to replace its own in-house PC platform with a more reliable, cost-effective solution for a third party

Approach
Met with HP, the supplier of choice for the customer's store servers, to plan and submit Request for Proposal

IT matters
- Customers can design and order their workstations online for delivery within four weeks
- Flexible, modular design allows customers to build workstations that meet their specific needs
- Liquid cooling reduces noise and minimises hardware failure

Business matters
- Instances of hardware failure have fallen from 50 per year to one per year, ensuring optimal uptime
- Future proof workstations remove the need for constant refreshes and updates saving time and money

"The HP Z420 Workstation offers the best price and stability without compromising on performance while providing the flexibility to handle PCI cards - an essential requirement for us."

– Andreas Schmid, product manager, SKIDATA

SKIDATA KUDELSKI GROUP

SKIDATA's ticketing solution runs more effectively on HP workstations

SKIDATA has standardised its ticketing platform on HP workstations for better performance and reliability. The customisable hardware offers the flexibility the company needs at cost-effective prices.

Customer solution at a glance

Hardware

- HP Z420 Workstation
- HP Z400 Workstation
- HP 8200 Business PC
- HP 8300 Business PC
- HP ProLiant DL380 Server

Challenge

Finding a more reliable hardware platform
SKIDATA is a global provider of comprehensive access management solutions for vehicles and people. The company specialises in parking management, ski resorts, stadia, arenas, amusement parks and trade fairs.

SKIDATA traditionally builds its own hardware to act as the foundation of its ticketing machines. However, it found that this approach was power-intensive and lacked the stability required by some of its customers.

"We need our machines to be operational 24/7 and our own PCs are not always up to the job. In addition, they need regular updates which involves time and manpower," explains Andreas Schmid, product manager, SKIDATA. "We decided that also using a third party platform would provide optimal reliability and the long term capacity to handle our software as it evolves."

The company looked at a range of workstations; one key criterion was the existence of a PCI slot in order to support the ARCNET cards that SKIDATA uses as part of its solution. Cost and power consumption were also important factors.

"The PCI slot was the crucial deciding point for us but we also wanted to keep costs down without compromising on performance or stability," adds Schmid. "HP workstations offered the flexibility to handle PCI cards while still delivering best performance, low power usage and reasonable cost."

Solution

A flexible, customisable platform
SKIDATA chose to standardise on HP Z420 and Z400 Workstations running Microsoft® Windows® Server 2008. The HP Z420 gives the company professional expandability in an accessible tool-free mini-tower form factor at an affordable price. With up to eight discrete processing cores, the latest processing and I/O power from Intel® and the latest graphics technology, the HP Z420 has the power and reliability to deliver optimal performance around the clock.

"The HP workstations are easy to configure and deploy making their installation seamless and pain free," continues Schmid. "They also give us the flexibility to include RAID storage depending on our customers' preference."

Customers now select their system configuration online, then local reseller all you need dispatches the relevant kit to SKIDATA which loads the software, tests performance and delivers to the customer's door. For extra-large facilities, the company recommends HP ProLiant DL380 servers.

"It is a simple process that lets us deliver high volumes of hardware without having to keep lots of stock in-house," says Schmid. "Customers are guaranteed to receive the workstation they need, when they need it."

The HP workstations also boast a liquid cooling system which not only keeps noise to a minimum but also reduces the risk of hardware failure.

Benefit

Performance and reliability combined
Since introducing the HP workstations three years ago, SKIDATA has delivered over 450 units to customers across Austria. At peak times, as many as 50 workstations are built and dispatched per quarter. The company is also using HP workstations in its subsidiaries in Italy.

"The customer demand continues to grow and the HP workstations certainly play a part in that," comments Schmid. "They give us the high performance and reliability that our customers require."

The workstations are also future proof, meaning SKIDATA does not have to worry about constantly refreshing or updating the hardware. This saves time and money for the company and its customers. Support is provided by a network of local resellers.

"HP is the principle platform here in Austria and we will extend the use of these workstations across our entire global network," concludes Schmid. "They ensure that our customers, whether they are car parks, sports arenas or concert venues, can enjoy the best price and performance with all the flexibility and reliability HP can offer."

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