Skipton Building Society

the customer
overview

Customer
Skipton Buiding Society

Website
www.skipton.co.uk

Number of employees
Approx 1000

Country or region
Financial Services

Industry
Financial Services

Customer profile
Skipton Building Society is the UK's fourth largest building society. Founded in 1853, Skipton enjoys a national presence represented by its 104 branches, covering Aberdeen to Plymouth, with over 850,000 members.

Skipton Building Society needed a self-service portal for development environments for its mortgage services division HML. Its IT Shared Service Centre was tasked with finding a solution that would allow HML to provision virtual machines to keep pace with its agile development requirement.

SKIPTON
BUILDING SOCIETY
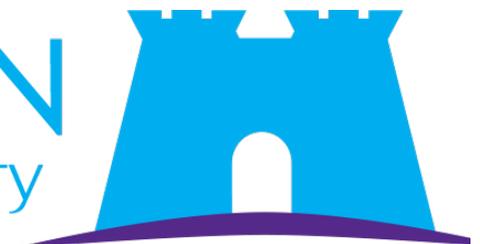
"In addition to the technology aspect, we chose the Microsoft solution because it was cost-effective and presented a lower risk as there was no cost associated with delivering the proof of concept."

David Miskell, Solutions Architect, Skipton IT Shared Service Centre

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David Miskell, Solutions Architect, Skipton IT Shared Service Centre

the problem

Around 80 per cent of the server estate in the Skipton IT Shared Service Centre is virtualised. Miskell says there would have been an extra cost of around £42,000 for deploying the capability required by HML from the incumbent vendor's technology. Ongoing costs would also have risen as the solution was scaled up.

change of business needs

With more than 8,000 employees, Skipton Building Society is the fourth-largest building society in the United Kingdom (U.K.). Established in 1988, mortgage servicer HML— a Skipton subsidiary — currently manages around £44 billion of assets for more than 50 blue-chip clients in the U.K. and Ireland.

Skipton was looking for ways to streamline and accelerate the deployment of new business services through cloud computing. David Miskell, Solutions Architect, Skipton IT Shared Service Centre, says: "With a mainly manual process, it would have taken our team three weeks to deploy new service requests, but HML needed a faster process."

The Skipton IT Shared Service Centre had established a strong working relationship with Microsoft and risual, a Microsoft Partner that holds gold and silver competencies, including the gold level competency in management and virtualisation.
Miskell says: "We took the view that with its latest releases of Microsoft System Center 2012, the Microsoft offering had matured significantly. But we still required peace of mind that the product would achieve the business goals we'd set out for the project."

the solution

The Skipton IT Shared Service Centre decided to use Windows Server 2008 R2 with Hyper-V and the Microsoft System Center 2012 suite of products. Craig Hartwell, Commercial Sales Director, risual, says: "We first engaged with the Skipton IT Shared Service Centre to assist the team with making savings and increasing automation in its data-centre environment. We then worked on providing a solution that would deliver the self-service portal project and reduce time to market to deliver new services."

risual made a high-level proposal to deliver a self-service capability using Hyper-V technology with the Virtual Machine Manager and App Controller components of Microsoft System Center 2012. Hartwell says: "A vital distinction was that Microsoft didn't charge the customer for the proof of concept, whereas the incumbent supplier asked for £12,000."

risual also advised the Skipton IT Shared Service Centre on how to make the most of its Microsoft licensing model. The Microsoft Software Developer Network (MSDN) licences could be used during the proof of concept phase—then, once moved into production, Skipton could use its Enrolment for Core Infrastructure (ECI).

benefits

Microsoft Partner risual has helped Skipton Building Society cut its licensing costs significantly and improve the time to market of new financial services based on a virtualised self-service development portal. By deploying Hyper-V and Microsoft System Center 2012, its IT Shared Service Centre has increased business agility and no longer relies on manual workload processes to develop server-based applications.

- **Skipton gains agility with virtualisation and saves £42,000**
By deploying the self-service portal project with Hyper-V and System Center 2012, Skipton has identified a lower cost alternative for its virtualisation strategy. It gives the business the agility it needs to keep pace with market demands.

The engagement with Microsoft Partner risual meant Skipton no longer had to spend £42,000 on a proof of concept and licensing.

- **Making the best use of existing Microsoft licences.**
Software licensing specialist risual showed Skipton how it will save money in the medium and long terms by making full use of its existing Microsoft Enterprise Agreement. Miskell says: "The Microsoft Software Developer Network licences were part of our existing agreement, and ECI provided a scalable licensing model that didn't increase costs as the project grew."

- **Skipton looks forward to lower management costs**
In the medium term, Skipton will look to use the Virtual Machine Manager component of Microsoft System Center 2012 to manage the entire virtual machine estate. It has the ability to interoperate with non-Microsoft technologies to provide a single management point.

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