



VIRTUALIZATION DOES THE HEAVY LIFTING FOR FORKLIFT COMPANY





Industry

Material handling

Objective

Prepare for future storage needs while also decreasing the demands on the IT department as they support a growing workforce.

Approach

Leverage HPE IT solutions to deploy HPE ProLiant servers, HPE Nimble Storage, and HPE StoreEasy storage.

Save valuable time as the workplace changes with HPE IT solutions for small and mid-sized businesses.

Action Lift Inc. in northeastern Pennsylvania is taking advantage of HPE ProLiant DL360 Gen10 servers, HPE Nimble Storage SAN, and HPE StoreEasy to make sure they are ready for the future of work. The material handling company is growing, and it's now positioned to welcome new employees and deploy VDI for a more flexible work environment. Explore how HPE IT solutions for small and mid-sized businesses not only enabled growth, but provided IT professionals and owners with peace of mind.

WAREHOUSE DEMANDS IN A VIRTUAL WORLD

The way we work is changing. But even as offices reorganize and information workers sign in from home, many jobs require workers to be physically present. Technicians at Action Lift Inc. always need to be available to support clients on-site. The business specializes in material handling, and their heavy equipment isn't something you can upload to the cloud or fix in a virtual collaborative document.

"It's busy. Even with COVID-19, we never shut down. We still have technicians out in warehouses, and those warehouses never shut down," said Chris Lubinski, IT support engineer at Action Lift Inc. "We have dedicated technicians that are there 24/7 working on forklifts and making sure things run smoothly."

The Pennsylvania-based company provides custom warehouse solutions, helping clients by providing the right fleet of forklifts and operational support. Nestled between two Amazon warehouses, they are always busy keeping equipment running. As the demand for an online marketplace and efficient distribution grows, Action Lift Inc. sees the need for their services increasing too.

"We are growing constantly," said Lubinski. "It's a family-owned company, so it started very small. We're about 100 people now, and we are constantly expanding, constantly adding new people."

Securely back up data with ease

HPE StoreEasy is a low-cost, high-value storage solution that helps consolidate and centralize your backups.

"I now have hourly snapshots of my data stores which is a huge peace of mind for me and ownership."

— Chris Lubinski, IT support engineer, Action Lift Inc.



Save time with intelligent storage

“The Nimble alone saved me almost a full day’s work recently.”

– Chris Lubinski, IT support engineer,
Action Lift Inc.

Manage servers securely from anywhere

You can configure, monitor, and update HPE ProLiant servers from home with the HPE Integrated Lights-Out server management software.

“I don’t necessarily need to be sitting here in the office to actually do what I do.”

– Chris Lubinski, IT support engineer,
Action Lift Inc.

A COMPANY PREPARING FOR MORE GROWTH

To meet the rapidly changing needs of the organization, Action Lift’s two-person IT team developed a long-term plan. Reinventing their legacy IT infrastructure with a virtual environment was the innovative solution that could prepare their SAN for growth. The first step was engaging with an HPE provider partner to build out virtualization options.

“They helped me spec it out to the point where we had enough space to guide the company for about five to six years of growth. With what we setup in the last two years, we won’t need to make any major changes until we reach our goals for the next stage of growth,” shared Lubinski.

The business previously used third-party IT support with a responsive approach, but once they built an IT team in house, Action Lift Inc. was able to be more proactive with long-term storage and infrastructure planning. Servers no longer were only repaired or replaced when something broke; they were strategically chosen and maintained to support business goals. With the HPE Nimble Storage, the company was positioned to grow without always encountering storage challenges.

“We’re not even using a quarter of the storage we have on that Nimble right now. It’s just amazing. The compression ratio I have on that thing is unreal. I’ve never seen it before,” said Lubinski.

SOLUTIONS THAT SUPPORT IT EFFICIENCY

With the help of HPE, their shift from a responsive role of IT to a strategic function was seamless. Lubinski mentioned that setup of the new storage was easy with the help of an expert from HPE. He received step-by-step instructions over the phone on a Saturday morning, so the implementation didn’t affect business continuity.

Even though Lubinski was well versed in the product, he shared how important it is to have someone who knows the product better than him walk through the setup. “It’s valuable to have that kind of support in a small business like mine. I have a lot of different hats, so I can’t dedicate all of my time to one project.”

Once the new infrastructure was set up, it helped the small IT team save time managing storage. HPE Nimble Storage is self-managing, with a guaranteed availability of 99.9999%, so Lubinski can spend more time implementing new solutions instead of resolving issues. From intelligent storage to the automated backups, HPE solutions are designed to help small business IT save time.

“The Nimble alone saved me almost a full day’s work recently,” shared Lubinski. “I was working on an Exchange Server, and I ended up misconfiguring something because I had four other things going on. Instead of having to rebuild the exchange server, and back track four or five hours, I was able to go back to that snapshot.”

In addition to the efficiency of HPE Nimble Storage, HPE makes file and application storage simple with HPE StoreEasy. “The StoreEasy saves me from taking home backup tapes every night. I now have hourly snapshots of my data stores which is a huge peace of mind for me and ownership,” said Lubinski.



Solutions

- HPE ProLiant DL360 Gen10 servers
- HPE Nimble Storage SAN
- HPE StoreEasy

Business outcomes

- The company is prepared for growth and an expanding workforce.
- Owners have peace of mind with secure and regular backups.
- The infrastructure can support innovative solutions for a flexible workplace.

IT outcomes

- Hourly data store snapshots reduce the risk of data loss.
- Powerful storage supports five to six years of growth.
- Integrated solutions with VMware vSphere maximize IT efficiency.
- Easy-to-manage solutions and expert guidance help save time.

ENABLING WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

When Action Lift Inc. rapidly shifted to remote work in 2020, the time saved with their HPE solutions paid off. The HPE solutions and VMware vSphere® could handle the workloads with ease, so Lubinski could focus on preparing his legacy equipment and reconfiguring his network. Even though their forklift technicians needed to be on-location, Lubinski needed to shift from supporting five remote workers to upwards of 30.

“I had to configure our VPN to handle the amount of traffic. It was a bit different to handle, but we’re making out just fine,” said Lubinski. He only had four weeks to prepare his company to work from home—including buying new laptops for users—but the smart infrastructure helped him save time and get everything done.

The intelligent storage solution also helped Lubinski respond to the flexible workplace himself. With new limitations on how many people could be in the office, the IT team couldn’t always attend to the solutions in person. Luckily, his HPE ProLiant servers were easy to manage remotely, and cameras in the server room helped him keep an eye on things.

“Doing it all remotely is a godsend. That was a huge thing for us. I don’t necessarily need to be sitting here in the office to actually do what I do,” shared Lubinski. “The company is still doing really well with people that don’t have to be here every day.”

THE FUTURE OF WORK

Despite the challenges of adjusting a small business to a new operational model, Action Lift Inc. saw remote work as an opportunity. At its rate of growth, the organization was getting close to capacity in their physical office space, and employees proved that they could be just as efficient working from home. The key was to double down on innovation, and use HPE for the next stage of their digital transformation.

Lubinski explained that he was looking into deploying virtual desktops and updating switches over the next year or two. “What we’re looking at doing long term is some kind of VDI and getting more out into the cloud,” shared Lubinski. “With the virtual environment and how powerful that is, VDI is an option for us.”

As the world is becoming increasingly connected, Action Lift Inc. is mapping out how it can continue to reinvent the way the company approaches workflows, workspaces, and workforces with the help of HPE. That means new tools, new solutions, and new innovations to help their company become more flexible. HPE makes it easy for this small, family owned business to adapt to the new realities of work.

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