



Kitbag Case Study



Kitbag was established in 1999 and is Europe's leading online sports retailer with exclusive rights to operate the official online stores of many of the leading sports clubs such as Manchester Utd, Manchester City, Chelsea, Real Madrid, Barcelona and Everton.

In addition to these online stores, Kitbag run the online and offline direct mailings, call centre operations, dispatch parcel distribution and warehousing in various forms for these sports entities.

Kitbag employs over 250 people and is growing steadily. The growth in its business volumes meant that Kitbag's IT infrastructure faced unprecedented demands for additional server and data centre capacity. It had become clear that tactical solutions were no longer the answer to the problem.

Ready for growth

Joe Doherty, Data and Infrastructure Manager for Kitbag, set about drafting an IT infrastructure strategy, outlining their vision for supporting the company's business plan. "It became clear that the company was growing at an exponential rate. We needed a solution that could solve our expanding business needs, in the form of web-servers and back-end database servers available for provision as soon as we needed them, as opposed to getting internal sign off and procuring new hardware for each individual request."

Of the solution providers short-listed for consideration, Joe says APSU demonstrated the widest range of competencies and expertise in the technologies involved.

“There was no impact to the business during implementation and since the successful completion the project, the board now has total confidence in me when I submit new technical recommendations.”

The Solution

One of the possible solutions proposed by APSU was to use an HP C7000 Blade, which offered real scope to scale up the business as and when it was needed. Joe also wanted additional consultancy to help him learn, manage and understand the systems himself.

“APSU recommended a solution that would give us the infrastructure we really needed and we therefore decided to go with the C7000 blade. We could see significant savings in power and data centre costs through utilising our servers more effectively.”

Once the project plan had been agreed, work started in June 2010 to implement the blades and Joe says that during this time, APSU and Kitbag worked closely together to resolve a number of operational challenges and completed the project by the end of October.



Total confidence

Joe feels he made the right decision to engage APSU in the business as the technical configurations were accurate; the team was professional and any operational issues were ironed out before they became a problem.

“One thing I can say about working with APSU is that I’m 100% confident I chose the right solution. APSU really took the time to understand our strategic plans and we made significant savings just due to the timing of the purchase.

“We selected APSU as they were clearly prepared to take ownership of delivering a total solution, not just the constituent parts of the project.”

The outcome

“Following implementation we have a resilient, reliable and manageable platform that copes well with our peak revenue periods like the World Cup. It’s a fit for purpose, future proof solution that will ensure we’re not back where we started eighteen months further down the line.”

Joe says he anticipates a minimum of 25% annual savings in electricity costs, plus an equivalent value in cooling. The success of this project now means he’s able to embark on his next one, a PCI Compliance project, where he’s looking to build a secure, compliant network aligned to the new server infrastructure.



For further **information** contact our sales team on **01285 862 100** or email **info@apsu.com**

