Royal Arctic Line

Ensuring that essential supplies reach the residents of Greenland without fail

Overview

The need

Royal Arctic Line transports all sea cargo to and from Greenland, making it a lifeline for the country's inhabitants. The company sought to replace an ageing IT infrastructure to ensure continued service.

The solution

The company dramatically improved service resilience, moving its critical cargo management system to two IBM® Power® S814 servers configured for near-instant failover in the event of a disaster.

The benefit

To minimize the risk of delays and enable rapid insights into the status of shipments, Royal Artic Line slashed both backup and disaster recovery times, boosting customer satisfaction in the process.

In Greenland there are no roads between towns, so everything is transported by airplane or ship. People's lives depend on the cargo that arrives, bringing food, medication, building materials and fuel to communities that have no other way of accessing these supplies.

Stakes are high, and the companies that transport cargo to the island cannot afford to falter. Royal Arctic Line, which is responsible for all shipping to and from Greenland, is a lifeline for the country's population. When the company began reaching the limits of its IT infrastructure, it needed to move fast to ensure services were not affected.

Casting off

In response to a demand for larger and more frequent shipments, Royal Arctic Line is adding five new ships to its fleet, building a new harbor in Nuuk, Greenland, and expanding its operations in Aalborg harbor, Denmark. To prepare for growth, the company embarked on an analysis of its IT systems, looking for opportunities for optimization.

"Greenland's harsh climate and isolated communities mean that we must always strive for our shipments to arrive on time. The IBM Power Systems platform has provided us with exceptional stability for years, making it the only choice to support our critical cargo management system," says Dragan Kesic, CIO at Royal Arctic Line.

Solution components

Hardware
- IBM® Power® S814

Software
- IBM i
- IBM PowerHA®

IBM Business Partner
- ATEA A/S

Dragan Kesic, CIO at Royal Arctic Line, explains: "The global cargo management system that is at the very center of our operations is over 15 years old and highly customized. We developed an IT roadmap aimed at reducing risk, as delays or interruptions to our services can have serious consequences for the inhabitants of Greenland that rely on us."

As part of its IT plan, Royal Arctic Line targeted increased standardization, faster recovery from disaster and greater headroom for growth. Dragan Kesic adds: "Our existing IBM servers had never gone down, but if they did we suspected it could take us up to a day to recover, an unacceptable amount of time. Estimating that we were at almost 90 percent capacity of our infrastructure, we knew that it was time for a change."

Setting the right course

Royal Arctic Line deployed two Power S814 servers, configured for high availability with IBM PowerHA®, to support its critical cargo management system and related applications. IBM Premier Business Partner ATEA A/S provided the servers, while a team from IBM helped the company with the implementation.

"The project was a truly unique experience, because we were able to work with IBM as a single company," comments Dragan Kesic. "As a result, we were happy to trust them with our most essential system."

Full steam ahead

The solution offers Royal Arctic Line a range of new capabilities, helping the company prepare for its expansion.

"With the two IBM Power S814 servers in place, we can maintain an exceptional service at all times through near-instant recovery from disaster, giving us great peace of mind." says Dragan Kesic. "We are now using just 25 percent of the capacity of the platform, giving us plenty of room to grow or change our IT systems. For example, we used to have a shared testing environment and can now accommodate a dedicated one, allowing us to be more thorough and innovative in trying out new software."

"Our job is only made possible thanks to partners like IBM, who provide the technology we can rely on in any circumstance."

— Dragan Kesic, CIO, Royal Arctic Line

Smooth sailing

By moving to IBM POWER8® processor-based systems, Royal Arctic Line boosted performance of its IT systems, supporting greater continuity of service provided to customers.

"Our backup times have dropped from six hours to just a couple of minutes since we moved to the IBM Power S814 platform, an improvement more than 99 percent," elaborates Dragan Kesic. "We used to have to schedule backups around major shipments, now we do not even notice they are running! Response times have also dropped, so the users logging into our systems can see the status of their shipments faster than ever before."

Dragan Kesic concludes: "Some remote settlements in Greenland only receive shipments once a year, so you can imagine the consequences of running late or failing to deliver. Our job is only made possible thanks to partners like IBM, who provide the technology we can rely on in any circumstance."

About Royal Arctic Line

Headquartered in Nuuk, Greenland, Royal Arctic Line A/S (RAL) is a shipping and transportation company owned by the Greenlandic Self Rule Government. It transports, handles and coordinates the delivery of all supplies to Greenland, including food, clothes, medicine, building materials, contractors' supplies and fuel. Founded in 1993, the company employs approximately 750 people and generates annual revenues of DKK897 million.

To learn more about Royal Arctic Line, please visit www.royalarcticline.com

For more information

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IBM Danmark ApS
Kongevejen 495B
2840 Holte
Denmark

Produced in Denmark
July 2015

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