

ClearPointe improves remote management services to 25,000 users

Leader in “hands-off” services selects HP ProLiant and HP management software platform “hands-down”



“HP ProLiant servers combined with HP management software makes the jobs of our technicians a lot easier. HP has the most proactive tools in the market.”

– Bob Longo, Channel Partner Manager, ClearPointe.

Objective:

Deliver remote management services and meet stringent service level agreements for a growing customer base, while reducing operational costs

Approach:

Standardize remote service delivery infrastructure on HP ProLiant servers and using HP Integrated Lights-Out Management (iLO) Advanced and HP Systems Insight Manager (HP SIM) remote management software

IT Improvements:

- ClearPointe added three HP ProLiant DL380 servers to their own data center
- Since 2000, ClearPointe has remotely managed more than 300 HP ProLiant servers, which included the HP ProLiant ML110, ML370, ML530, ML570, DL360, DL380, and DL385 servers
- Utilize HP Integrated Lights Out (iLO) Advanced and HP Systems Insight Manager (HP SIM) to remotely manage the more than 300 HP ProLiant servers in 38 states and parts of Canada
- Standardized infrastructure decreases operational costs
- More reliable systems improves service quality
- More scalable infrastructure provides foundation for growth

Business benefits:

- HP ProLiant servers combined with HP iLO and HP SIM enables 100% ‘hands-off’ service delivery
- Better reliability enables 99.9% service level agreements
- 100% customer retention after moving to HP as a result of company’s successful remote management services

Moving to a new remote management delivery infrastructure

ClearPointe (www.clearpointe.com) has been delivering remote managed IT services to companies located throughout North America, including 38 states in the U.S and areas of Canada.

ClearPointe has established itself as a national center of excellence for practical deployment of advanced Microsoft technologies, including managed services for small and mid-sized businesses.

Over time, the Arkansas-based company’s IT environment had grown to include a mix of UNIX and other non-Windows operating systems on a mix of disparate servers, including mainframes.

“Our IT environment had become difficult and we couldn’t get enough traction with it,” says Bob Longo, Channel Partner Manager at ClearPointe. “Our customers were unhappy, and internally, we couldn’t control our costs.”

With rising costs of operation, growing customer dissatisfaction and difficulty moving to new service delivery business model, ClearPointe realized that it was time for a complete IT overhaul.

To meet its goals, ClearPointe decided to standardize its IT services delivery infrastructure on HP ProLiant servers and HP Integrated Lights-Out Management (iLO) and HP Systems Insight Manager (HP SIM) remote monitoring and management software.

“We liked HP’s track record of reliability, serviceability, and the scalability to add additional servers when needed,” says Longo.

Solution at a glance

Hardware

- HP ProLiant ML110, ML370, ML530, ML570, DL360, DL380, and DL385 servers

Software

- HP Systems Insight Manager (HP SIM)
- HP Integrated Lights-Out (iLO) Advanced Pack
- Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM)
- Windows
- Microsoft Exchange
- Microsoft SQL Server
- Lotus Notes
- Blackberry software
- * Microsoft ISA

HP Services

- HP service and support

Three servers manage 300

Today, ClearPointe's IT remote service delivery infrastructure consists of three HP ProLiant DL380 servers running HP iLO and HP SIM software that remotely manage more than 300 remote HP ProLiant ML and DL Series servers.

ClearPointe uses the new systems and management software to manage Windows, Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft SQL Server, Lotus Notes, Blackberry software, ISA (Microsoft firewall), and customized web applications on its customers' remote HP ProLiant servers. It also uses them to manage similar applications, as well as Microsoft Operations Manager (MOM) software running on its own internal HP ProLiant systems.

Hands-off service

A primary ClearPointe business objective was to be able to deliver a 100% hands-off remote management services solution.

"When we approach our customers with this solution, they often ask: when do we need to get involved?" says Longo. "I tell them that with the HP ProLiant servers and the HP remote management software, it's 100% hands-off."

ClearPointe is able to handle its customers' server issues, regardless of server status or location.

"HP iLO allows us to connect in if the customer's server is experiencing load issues or even if it is powered off," says Longo.

The combination of HP ProLiant servers and iLO has proven beneficial in various customer situations for ClearPointe, with many of their customers' IT issues occurring in the middle of the night. Without the HP ProLiant servers and iLO, ClearPointe would have had to arrange for an IT professional to visit the customer's data center to assess and solve the situation. This would also require someone from the customer site to get involved – which means more of a burden would be on the customer. "The joint solution of the HP ProLiant servers and the HP management software help to alleviate that burden from the customer's shoulders. This allows for a more seamless IT solution on our part for our customers," says Bob.

Hands-down reliability

Reliability was another issue, which ClearPointe was able to overcome with the new HP ProLiant and remote management software platform. Now it is able to offer and meet more stringent service level agreements, up to 99.9%.

"Compared to solutions offered by HP's competitors, HP is hands-down the most reliable," says Longo. "When there are issues, other vendors suggest that you try this or try that, which can take hours or even days."

In contrast, he says, "HP runs the diagnostics that tell you exactly what needs to be done, and, if necessary, which part to order, and when it will be ready."

A profitable business

Being able to deliver remote services that are executed 100% remotely, while also meeting a 99.9% service level agreement has helped ClearPointe to maintain its leadership position as a managed services technology provider.

Another positive result has been improved customer retention and satisfaction. Longo gives credit to the HP ProLiant hardware and HP hardware and software that enables ClearPointe to discover and solve potential issues before their customer even notices it.

"Some of our customers have no IT staff and they often spend much of their budget outsourcing someone to come on site, troubleshoot and resolve their IT problem," Bob explains. "With the HP ProLiant servers, HP iLO and HP SIM software, we are able to define their problem, and execute the solution from right here."

"When our IT-troubled customers seek complete remote administration and ask us who we recommend," says Longo, "We say, 'hands down – HP'."

"The savings for the client in total cost of ownership can amount to thousands of dollars," he adds.

"In this industry, IT services companies used to be viewed as companies that profited when businesses had problems," Longo says. "Now, for the first time ever, with the HP ProLiant servers and HP management software, we're able to offer a cost-effective service solution that delivers us profits when our customer is up and running."

Moving forward, he says, "It makes sense to keep putting our efforts into keeping our customers up and running."

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