

## ADVTECH TURNS TO ASCENT TECHNOLOGY FOR EXPERT VIRTUALISATION AND DATABASE SKILLS



Implementing Microsoft Server 2012, Hyper-V3 and SQL Server 2012 leads to cost efficiencies and scalability.

The ADvTECH Group, is the private sector leader in the fields of education and resourcing, contributing meaningfully towards the sustainable development of human capacity in South Africa. We aim to build and grow a high quality organization in education, training and placement that is widely recognised for passionate commitment and success in enriching people's lives and futures. In addition, the group has twice received the standard of excellence achiever award for Deloitte's 'Best Company to Work For'.

ADvTECH is a market leader, and to maintain this position and move forward with its growth strategy, the group needs to ensure that its technology investments keep pace with its ambitions and innovation. To this end, ADvTECH chose to transform their data centre hardware and systems environment. This included virtualising its entire environment, and also implementing Microsoft SQL Server 2012.

In order to realise this strategy, the business needed the services of a specialist company with both Virtualisation and Microsoft SQL Server implementation experience.

"Due to the experience we already had with Ascent Technology in respect of their Database Administration Co/Outsourcing Services, and their understanding of Complex Database Environments, it made sense to utilise them for this project as well," says ADvTECH CIO, Steven van Zyl.

Van Zyl explains that the group has through the data centre hardware refresh upgraded its entire technology stack. "More critically, ADvTECH wanted to virtualise its entire environment, and therefore decided to join the Microsoft Technology Adoption Programme (TAP), which allowed ADvTECH to be an early adopter of Microsoft Windows Server 2012. This, in turn, meant that ADvTECH also became an early adopter of Microsoft Hyper-V3, enabling it to access the host of new features this solution offered."

"One of the group's goals was to leverage our existing Microsoft technology investment and in particular, the latest advances in Hyper-V3. The additional functionality in Hyper-V3 allowed us to virtualise our entire environment, including all the SQL Servers. As part of the project, we also upgraded to SQL Server 2012," he says.



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Steven van Zyl, ADvTECH CIO

Wilfried Vedder, ADvTECH Infrastructure Manager adds: "Not only were we able to virtualise everything in the data centre, which is delivering considerable financial savings through the reduction in both physical hardware and licensing requirements, but the additional scalability Hyper-V3 delivers will also assist us in delivering on future capacity requirements."

"Ascent was instrumental in assisting us to leverage our SQL Server 2012 investment, by deploying its AlwaysOn Availability Groups, which allows for improved data management and for the deployment of near real time reporting for the Group, delivering an improvement in productivity. Furthermore, Ascent also assisted us in achieving true active-active data centres, by leveraging the latest high availability technologies available in Windows Server 2012, in conjunction with the Availability Groups", he says.

Benno Bessinger, Group IT Manager for ADvTECH, says that the entire project, from architecture through to the switch over to the new technologies, was completed in four months.

"The most challenging part came with the actual

system migration – which had to be done with an absolute minimum of downtime, as it had the potential to impact our employees, lecturers and students. Ascent, however, ensured that the switch over was completed in a matter of minutes."

According to Ascent's MD, Johan Lamberts, the Database Administration Co/Outsourcing agreement allows ADvTECH's technical support team to increase its own skills in this environment.

"ADvTECH's IT staff are complemented by our specialist skills, ensuring that ADvTECH receives consistent and reliable Database Management Services.

We are very pleased to have ADvTECH as a client, it has been satisfying to be able to add significant value to their organisation and we look forward to continuing to do so as we move forward together," he says.

Benno agrees: "Ascent's expert technical skills and flexibility means that there is no doubt that ADvTECH envisages an on-going and growing relationship with the company."