Cortizo, known for being the first manufacturer and distributor of aluminum and PVC systems for the architecture and industry, has updated its storage infrastructure with the installation of two FlashArray™ systems from Pure Storage. This implementation has accelerated the speed of access to information by 50% and reduced latency by 90% compared to traditional disk-based storage, practically eliminating downtime in maintenance. It has also enabled the implementation of new Big Data functionalities for Industry 4.0 (the fourth industrial revolution), which is the current trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies.

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Pure Storage flash storage technology has provided Cortizo with the performance and capacity it needs to implement new Big Data tools oriented to Industry 4.0.

REGION / COUNTRY

EMEA / Spain

INDUSTRY

Manufacturing

"Suddenly, users started asking us: 'Hey, what have you done?' Before internally reporting the change, they had already experienced the improvement."

Ramiro Iglesias, ***Head of Systems***

EVOLUTION TOWARD INDUSTRY 4.0

Founded in 1972 in Padrón (A Coruña), Cortizo has become a leader in the Spanish market and a European benchmark in the manufacture of aluminum and PVC profiles used in architecture and industry. It has nine production centers in four countries, 31 distribution and logistics centers, and sells in more than 60 countries. In 2017, it invoiced 554 million euros and currently employs more than 2,800 workers.

One of the keys to the success of Cortizo is its commitment to the use of the most cutting-edge technology in the sector, in order to offer a technical response to the most demanding industrial and architectural demands. To do this, Cortizo has a powerful technological platform housed in two data centers. However, the growth in the volume of data handled by the company was generating demands on capacity and performance greater than what its previous storage solution could offer.

"Our experience with the previous storage platform has been very satisfactory," explained Ramiro Iglesias, Head of IT Systems at Cortizo who has been working at the company for 17 years. "However, due to the growth of the data we experienced, the storage platforms we had could not support the work either in capacity or in performance."

In the short term, the most pressing need was to improve the speed of the company's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), as well as other applications that exploit large volumes of data. This requirement was essential for Cortizo to continue advancing in its evolution towards Industry 4.0. This model promotes the transformation of industrial production through the application of technologies based on the collection, treatment and analysis of large volumes of data, such as Big Data or the Internet of Things.

HIGH AVAILABILITY, PERFORMANCE AND SIMPLICITY

When choosing the new storage solution to be implemented, Cortizo needed to assess three fundamental aspects. The first was the need for high availability of the company's systems, which supported the operation of its production centers and the commercial network.

The second key aspect was that the solution had to offer adequate performance for processing large volumes of Cortizo's data. At the same time, it needed to be capable of storing the other types of company data.

COMPANY:

Cortizo
www.cortizo.com

USE CASE:

- IBM® Informix, Oracle®, and SQL databases
- VMware® virtual servers
- Industrial control equipment
- User files and email

CHALLENGES:

- Adapt the capacity and performance of their storage units to the rapid growth of the company.
- Implement new tools for collecting and processing large volumes of data (Big Data).
- Manage the solution with a reduced IT team during business hours without business interruptions.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- Time required for the delivery of information was reduced by 50%.
- Writing latency of critical services was reduced by up to 90%.
- The solution radically improved the experience of users who consume large volumes of data.
- The solution eliminated production systems downtime.
- New functionalities for massive data processing (Big Data) were implemented.
- The company was able to centralize data collection of production plants for Industry 4.0.

> "Pure Storage allows us to continue growing with the maximum guarantees of performance and reliability."
>
> Ramiro Iglesias, ***Head of Systems***

A third aspect to take into account was that Cortizo's IT team consists of three professionals: Ramiro Iglesias himself, Head of Systems; Enrique Herranz, Systems Administrator; and Juan Manuel Fariña, Network Administrator. This required an automated solution that offered the greatest ease of administration to manage it internally.

After evaluating other suppliers, Cortizo opted for the implementation of two FlashArray//X20 systems in its two redundant data centers. It is a block storage solution based entirely on flash technology. The Pure Storage systems installed in Cortizo manage all the storage needs of the company: Informix and Oracle SQL databases; virtual servers and VMware virtualized workloads; industrial control equipment specific to its sector; and user files and email.

Cortizo chose Pure Storage flash storage technology because it offered the most suitable combination of high availability, performance and simplicity of administration. Other aspects were taken into consideration, such as the fact that other international customers in their sector are using the same solution, its competitive price, and that storage based on flash technology is an upward trend in the technology sector.

IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENTS THAT STAND OUT

The implementation process hardly required 15 days and the benefits became evident immediately. Time required for the delivery of information in the different internal systems was reduced by 50%, while the writing latency of critical services decreased by up to 90%, compared to previous disk-based solutions. This meant a radical improvement in the experience of the users of the company who use large volumes of data.

"Suddenly, the users of the system started asking us: 'Hey, what have you done?' Before internally notifying the change, they had already experienced the improvement," explained Iglesias. "The speed of their business processes has accelerated, something that is also reflected in our metrics. Response times are shorter than we were used to seeing with the previous platform."

Another benefit Cortizo obtained with the Pure Storage solution is the greater simplicity in the administration, updating and maintenance of its new storage platform. Due to its small learning curve, any member of Cortizo's IT team can perfectly deal with updating or maintaining the solution in case a specific need arises.

The high availability of the Pure Storage solution ensures that the system is always active, even when performing maintenance or updating tasks. This way, downtime has been reduced to practically zero. The IT team at Cortizo can perform these tasks during production hours, without affecting the work of the rest of the users, instead of having to schedule stops or wait until the end of working hours so as not to affect production.

Finally, the greater capacity and performance of the storage system allows Cortizo to deploy new functionalities to improve the massive data processing with Big Data tools. Thanks to this, Cortizo is beginning to collect — in a centralized way — the data from its different production plants to undertake new deployments oriented to Industry 4.0.

Ramiro Iglesias concluded: "The storage technology of Pure Storage that we have implemented allows us to continue growing with the maximum guarantees of performance and reliability, according to the needs established in our strategic plan for the next three years."

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