BH TELECOM

EMC VMAX increases data storage capacities, improves data accessibility, and reinforces the commitment to a virtual environment

BH Telecom JSC Sarajevo is the largest telecommunications company in Bosnia Herzegovina. With a vision to provide exceptional telecommunications services and infrastructure to the many people that it serves, BH Telecom invests in the development and constant improvement of a wide range of capabilities, including fixed- and mobile-telephony, broadband, and ISDN. Ninety percent owned by the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the company places special importance on the continuing development of its IT infrastructure.

An EMC® customer for over 10 years, BH Telecom’s ICT environment supports a wide range of operating systems, applications, and databases, including Microsoft Windows, Solaris, SharePoint, SQL, Oracle, and SAP, to name a few. Its IT objectives are straightforward—achieving high levels of flexibility, rapid deployment of new applications, IT architecture robustness, high levels of data accessibility, exceptional data security, and methods to meet an ever growing data storage capacity requirement through the adoption of the very latest in IT storage technologies.

THE CHALLENGE: POSITIONING FOR GROWTH
BH Telecom’s Head of IT Infrastructure, Vahidin Rovcanin, has been with the company for 14 years. During that time, his perception of EMC has changed dramatically. “When we first worked with EMC 10 years ago, we perceived them as only a manufacturer of good IT storage hardware,” explains Mr. Rovcanin. “However, that perception has changed. EMC is now a company that provides complete IT infrastructure solutions, everything from virtualization through VMware®, to storage, archiving, disaster recovery and data backup, and more.”

For that reason, BH Telecom uses a wide range of EMC products and solutions to meet its past and future challenges. One of those challenges is a dramatic growth in data. “We currently have between 25 and 30 terabytes of data, but that is growing all the time,” says Mr. Rovcanin. “We were looking to upgrade our EMC storage solutions. We had been using an EMC DMX™ system, but it was at end of life. We have virtualized, and we required not only a new EMC solution that would accommodate anticipated data growth, but one that would also provide the functionality to support a virtual environment.”

THE SOLUTION: EMC VMAX FOR GROWING DATA VOLUMES AND ACCESSIBILITY
Developed as high-end storage for virtual data centers, EMC VMAX™ scales to a massive 2 PB and consolidates more workloads with a much smaller footprint than other arrays. “VMAX provides us with an out-of-the-box 50 percent increase in storage capacity, based on the configuration that we purchased,” says Mr. Rovcanin. “We conducted some tests. We find that accessibility to data has been increased significantly, and with VMAX is now 20 to 30 percent faster than our legacy solution.”
Fast data access is critical for BH Telecom because the company depends heavily on its infrastructure to support crucial applications. “We use VMAX to store all of our critical production database systems including Oracle and SAP, as well as billing systems, geographical information, and provisioning systems. SAP availability is necessary for enterprise-wide planning.” Always-accessible databases are therefore vital to the successful operation of the company.

“VMAX is now the key component of our IT system,” says Mr. Rovcanin. “While we use many other EMC solutions as part of our ICT environment, VMAX is now the heart of our IT. This is because we store all of our critical operating systems on it. So we require the most capability, and VMAX provides such capability.”

**VIRTUAL MACHINE-ENABLED AND FUTURE PROOFED**

EMC VMAX was designed to support virtualization, a key requirement for BH Telecom. “Our IT went virtual some time ago, and when considering VMAX, we recognized that it could support further virtualization,” explains Mr. Rovcanin. “We have already installed 10 production virtual machines (VMs) on VMAX. Some of these support our security systems, so they are critically important.” Mr. Rovcanin is also impressed with the flexibility, future-proofing characteristics, and the robust design of VMAX. “In the next two years, we will possibly exceed the capacity limits of the VMAX configuration that we have purchased. But then, we will simply add more capacity. It’s a very simple process to add hard disks to meet new data storage requirements.”

**LOCAL EMC PARTNERS**

BH Telecom has had a long association with EMC and its local staff and works closely with them to ensure that existing IT infrastructure meets current and future requirements. “We have contact with them all the time here in Sarajevo,” says Mr. Rovcanin, “and they understand our business. For instance, when we were considering new storage technologies, we identified three key requirements for any new data storage solution: first, that it support VM and virtualization; second, that it provide exceptionally fast data accessibility, and finally, that it would meet our data capacity requirements, and provide the flexibility that we need to meet forecast growth.”

To prove that VMAX would meet BH Telecom’s requirements, EMC technical staff provided an effective Proof of Concept. “We had many meetings to discuss this solution, and EMC provided a number of technical presentations. EMC showed us how VMAX would meet our capacity, accessibility, and other needs.”

EMC and local EMC partners worked closely with BH Telecom to quickly install VMAX with minimal disruption to workflow. “EMC made the installation of the VMAX system very easy. With the help of an EMC partner, our staff migrated the data from the legacy system to VMAX in about 10 hours. They understood how critical it was to migrate data quickly.

“I would recommend EMC VMAX to other companies, and in fact I have already done so. VMAX meets our current and future data storage needs, while EMC personnel provide us with advice and consulting to help plan for the future,” concludes Mr. Rovcanin.