

1 German/ Netherlands Corps



1 (German/Netherlands) Corps (1GNC) in Münster is one of the High Readiness Forces Headquarters of the NATO Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE).

Having developed from the High Readiness Forces Headquarters to the Joint Task Force Headquarters, 1GNC set itself the task of modernising the data centre and acquiring new future proof IT technologies.

THE CHALLENGE

The new status required more efficient communication with NATO and increased the need for Functional Area Systems. The NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA) commissioned CGI to fully modernise the entire data centre, taking the system and staff requirements into careful consideration.

In addition to scalability and performance, price played a key role: the data centre needed to be modern, yet comparably inexpensive. The aim was to find a balance to meet today's industry standards and, at the same time, enable quick soldier training.

A brief training period is still important to this day, as soldiers are rotated every three to five years. There's also the fact that the administrators face additional challenges, for example, in the form of exercises, so a special training concept needed to be developed.

OUR ANSWER

The aspects of storage and network form the basis of the new and modern data centre. When it came to the network, 1GNC opted for a high-performance hardware to ensure a data transfer rate of 40 Gbit/s inside the data centre. For the storage solution, a decision was made for Microsoft's Scale-Out File Server (SOFS).

SOFS can be managed like a regular Windows operating system and only requires basic training. The hypervisor technology was also changed to Microsoft's Hyper-V, which offers the benefits of low costs and less training.

System centre components such as the data protection manager, configuration manager, operations manager, virtual machine manager and Citrix Provisioning Services were also used to ensure the highest degree of automation possible in the provision of these and future environments.

With its own special security guidelines, NATO also had requirements for this data centre. CGI thus helped 1GNC pass a vulnerability assessment – a penetration test carried out by the German Bundeswehr's computer emergency response team – during the implementation phase. The system documentation



CASE STUDY

- Modern data centre which meets NATO guidelines and staff requirements
- Software-defined storage: lower acquisition costs for hardware and licences; elimination of complex training in SAN
- Scale-Out File Server (SOFS) can be managed like a regular Windows operating system
- Extensive automation
- Low administration costs
- Less training required
- New organisation structure for administrators ('Administrator as a Service')
- Modular training concept

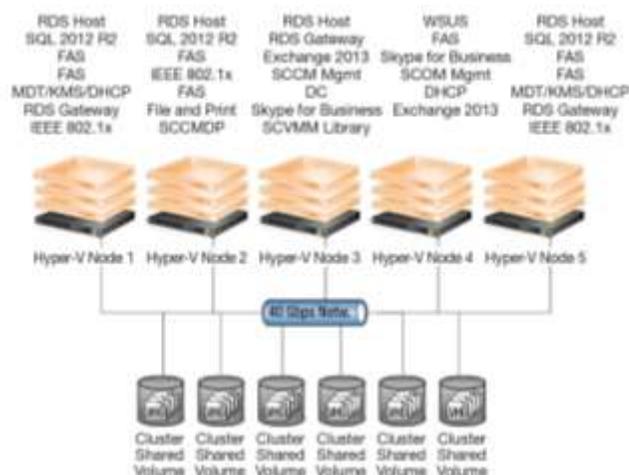
'With the new, consistent data centre design, 1GNC is very well positioned for the future'

Edwin Saiboo, 1GNC J6/CIS Operations

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was expanded to include a variety of workshops and training courses and promote knowledge transfer. CGI worked with 1GNC to develop a special modular training concept that can be broken down into core and secondary areas of expertise. Soldiers are trained individually and can support other soldiers in their secondary areas of expertise, thus forming areas of overlap and avoiding staff shortages. Skype for Business was introduced to enable real-time communication with NATO and its partners.



THE BENEFITS

1GNC opted for a modern data centre, taking NATO guidelines and its own staff requirements into account. With the ‘Administrator as a Service’ approach, the administrator manages one core and at least one secondary area of expertise for all the domains they are responsible for managing. This relieves the administrator, who can specialise in their core area of expertise. Secondary benefits include lower administration costs and less training. The new approach, modern environment and automation accelerate and simplify the process of training new soldiers in their tasks.

To ensure consistency and pursue the ‘streamlined architecture’ approach, 1GNC expressed the desire to migrate all the domains used in its own scope of activities into this architecture.

ABOUT CGI

Founded in 1976, CGI is a global service provider for IT and business processes and is now represented at 400 locations in 40 countries with a total of 78,000 employees.

We offer our customers high-end IT and business consulting, systems integration, outsourcing and intellectual property. We help them to reach their goals, use new digital technologies and business strategies, and thus fully exploit ongoing investments.

We regularly get the best grades in schedule and budget compliance and, in customer satisfaction analysis over the past ten years, have consistently managed to achieve more than nine out of ten points.

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