Managed services firm deploys multi-location surveillance platform for three of Saudi Arabia's largest hotels within three days

"Originally, we thought we'd need Dell's help to set up the servers and storage, but after the demonstration we saw how simple EqualLogic is to use and were able to set up everything ourselves within three days."

Mohamed Raafat Atia, Technical Services Manager, Digital Solutions Provider

Customer profile

Company:	Digital Solutions Provider (DSP)
Industry:	Services & Consulting
Country:	Saudi Arabia
Employees:	150
Website:	www.dsp.com.sa

Business need
DSP wanted to build a high-capacity environment to support surveillance solutions at three of Saudi Arabia's largest hotels.

Solution
It used Dell™ PowerEdge™ blade servers and Dell EqualLogic storage to deploy a scalable, enterprise-class datacentre.

Benefits
- **Hotels gain a high-performance, scalable surveillance solution**
- **Environment deployed in three days**
- **System management takes just three people**
- **Performance is improved**
- **Additional EqualLogic storage area networks deployed within one day**
- **Trusted relationship with Dell builds foundation for future**

At the world's best hotels, service is everything. This is a view shared by Digital Solutions Provider (DSP), which offers 'smart building operations' to hotels and other large complexes in Saudi Arabia. Its services include IP service provision, onsite operation and maintenance, plus datacentre and call centre operations. For every project on which it works, DSP creates a customised solution using cutting-edge technology.

> "The hotels we work with maintain the highest standards for their guests, and they expect the same from us. The great thing about EqualLogic is that performance increases as more units are added to the SAN."
>
> *Mohamed Raafat Atia,*
> *Technical Services Manager,*
> *Digital Solutions Provider*

When DSP wanted to set up a new datacentre to manage services for three hotels in Saudi Arabia, one of its primary concerns was establishing and managing surveillance systems. Mohamed Raafat Atia, Technical Services Manager at Digital Solutions Provider, explains: "We needed to set up surveillance cameras and monitoring equipment at the Fairmont, Raffles and Swissôtel hotels. This involved a large number of digital cameras, and the datacentre systems and storage to handle the huge volumes of data generated every day."

With up to 3,000 digital IP cameras needed, hundreds of terabytes of data would be flowing through the storage systems. In light of this, an infrastructure with a large capacity, easy scalability and simple day-to-day management was vital. Raafatatia says: "We wanted to work with a technical solutions provider that had a trusted brand and could deliver high performance within an easy-to-use system. We'd had disappointing experiences in the past with complex systems that caused issues for the team, and we didn't want to make life difficult for ourselves again by building a complicated environment."

Technology in practice

Services

Dell Support Services
– Dell ProSupport Next Business Day Onsite Service

Hardware

Dell™ PowerEdge™ R710 servers with Intel® Xeon® processors 5520

Dell PowerEdge M610 blade servers with Intel Xeon processors 5600 series

Dell PowerEdge M1000e modular blade enclosure

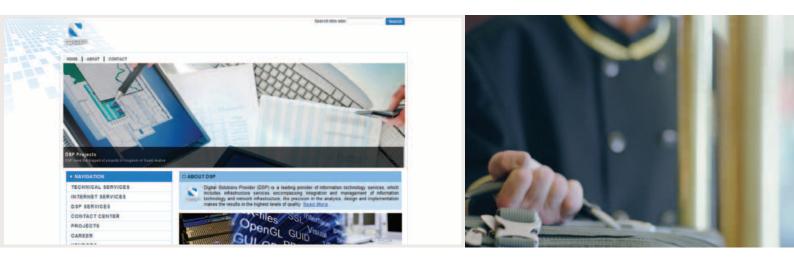Dell EqualLogic PS6500E storage area networks

Dell PowerConnect 1™ 6248 switches

Panasonic IP cameras

Software

Dell Management Console

Netavis Observer software

Storage environment deployed within three days

DSP spoke to Dell about its challenges. It recommended the Dell EqualLogic storage area network (SAN), providing a demonstration of its capabilities. Raafatatia and the team at DSP were impressed with the easy setup of the SAN, especially when connected to Dell™ PowerEdge™ servers.

Raafatatia says: "Originally, we thought we'd need Dell's help to set up the servers and storage, but after the demonstration we saw how simple EqualLogic is to use and were able to set up everything ourselves within three days."

Performance improves as new units are added to the environment

The success of this project for DSP is the service it provides for the Fairmont, Raffles and Swissôtel hotels. The team at DSP has been extremely impressed with the performance of the envirnoment which is set to improve as more units are added, due to EqualLogic's virtualized storage architecture. This datacentre will serve as a hub for future deployments, so a scalable environment is essential. Raafatatia says: "The hotels we work with maintain the highest standards for their guests, and they expect the same from us. The great thing about EqualLogic is that performance increases as more units are added to the SAN."

Additional units deployed in less than one day

For the datacentre based at the Fairmont Hotel in Makkah, DSP chose Dell EqualLogic PS6500E SANs with up to 96 terabytes of storage in each unit. These are connected to Dell PowerEdge R710 servers with Intel® Xeon® processors 5520 and Dell PowerEdge M610 blade servers with Intel Xeon processors 5600 series. By selecting Dell PowerEdge R710 servers, DSP gained the capacity to reliably deliver the most processor-intensive applications. In addition, by implementing Dell PowerEdge M610 blade servers, the company reduced the server footprint while maximising performance. Raafatatia adds: "We particularly like the graphical user interface for managing the blades in our Dell PowerEdge M1000e modular blade enclosure. It simplifies deployment and administration."

As part of the engagement, Dell also delivered Panasonic IP cameras for surveillance and Dell PowerConnect™ 6248 switches. DSP uses Netavis Observer software for system monitoring. Raafatatia says: "We're really happy with this environment. We've just ordered another six EqualLogic PS6500E SANs to support future growth and are looking at deploying an additional 1,000 IP cameras in the near future. I'm sure we can set them up within a day."

> "It makes business sense to keep the IT monitoring team to a minimum. This is a stable system and we've had no issues with it so far."
>
> *Mohamed Raafat Atia,*
> *Technical Services Manager,*
> *Digital Solutions Provider*

Simple system management takes just one person

The environment now serves three of the largest and most prestigious hotels in Saudi Arabia. Yet from the datacentre in Makkah, it takes just three IT staff working in shifts to monitor the environment using the Dell Management Console. Raafatatia says: "We like the fact that the Dell Management Console makes it simple to support multiple servers. It can be used to configure BIOS settings or server actions, and provides online diagnostics to help isolate issues or shut down and restart the server." Ease of use was a key driver in selecting the Dell solution. Raafatatia says: "It makes business sense to keep the IT monitoring team to a minimum. This is a stable system and we've had no issues with it so far."

The environment is protected by Dell ProSupport, Next Business Day Onsite Service. The service gives Raafatatia peace of mind that DSP can maintain maximum uptime for the environment.

"IT plays a crucial role in operations. For example, if one of our systems fails, it affects our ability to deliver a great service to customers and we lose business," says Raafatatia. Thanks to the reliability of the Dell solution, the IT team have not had to turn to Dell ProSupport. Raafatatia says: "It's good to know we have it if we need it."

Strong relationship builds foundation for future deployments

Due to its good experience on this project, DSP is now considering other projects with Dell, as Raafatatia explains: "It's an exciting time for DSP – we're talking to Dell about building a cloud environment that will become a new line of business for us. We know that Dell has the expertise and the technology to make this work for us."

For more information go to:
dell.com/casestudies and dell.co.uk

> "We're really happy with this environment. We've just ordered another six EqualLogic PS6500E SANs to support future growth...I'm sure we can set them up within a day."
>
> *Mohamed Raafat Atia,*
> *Technical Services Manager,*
> *Digital Solutions Provider*

View all Dell case studies at: dell.com/casestudies