

## Virtualisation – the perfect solution for today's marketing challenges

In an economy which leans more and more on services, customer relations is of very high importance – and this is even more true in times of economic setback. When servicing your customer to your best knowledge, you will need to understand your client's perception of that service and which aspects you should improve upon to maintain that customer's satisfaction (and therefore, the customer itself).

This has been the guiding principle behind Loyalty Lab ever since it was formed in 2002. Nowadays the organisation has developed itself to a successful supplier of consultancy and marketing services.

Loyalty Lab develops and manages efficient programs to acquire, maintain, and build out new client relations based on customer relation, knowledge, and value. For example: in close cooperation with its clients Loyalty Lab develops long-term strategies and practical ideas in the field of individual, behaviour-driven marketing. It then executes these fully in a practical, controllable fashion – and based on solid, proven business models. With branch offices in the Netherlands, Germany, and Belgium, Loyalty Lab is an international loyalty marketing specialist.

Loyalty Lab's team comprises a balanced mix of general IT specialists, database analysts, and experts in marketing and loyalty marketing. A dedicated team is assigned to each project which will handle the development and implementation of that specific loyalty program. This maximises the synergy between the various disciplines.

For supporting services such as data warehousing and fulfilment Loyalty Lab cooperates with trusted partners which are selected, per client formula or sub-project, based on proven expertise.

## Loyalty Lab's question

The projects are billable using a 'pay per use' model and deliver a full solution for outsourcing all activities relating to loyalty marketing (building up marketing databases and executing tailored campaigns on the assembled target organisations). For the implementation and management of the customer-specific server environments Loyalty Lab was looking for a reliable partner with experience in managing mission-critical IT environments.

Exclusivity and integrity of the information is of the utmost importance; would any information leak out in any way, the damage could be extensive. Such would be destructive for the public image of Loyalty Lab as well as that of its A-brand customer...

## Terremark's solution

Terremark has developed a hybrid environment, specifically for Loyalty Lab: it consists of a front-end based on the Infinistructure® virtualised platform, plus a back-end based on traditional physical servers that hold the various customer databases.

The benefit of this design is that the public front-end segment gains maximal flexibility (a direct result of using the virtualisation concept) whereas the databases in the back-end segment have the full capacity of physical systems at their disposal. The back-end segment is kept secure using a firewall cluster that sits between it and the front-end segment.

## Maximal security

The data in these systems must be kept safe at all costs; in order to meet this requirement Terremark has deployed redundant firewalls in the environment. This results in optimal control of system access and renders it easy to fend off any attacks. Thanks to a dedicated IPsec VPN tunnel, Loyalty Lab's system engineers can easily access the systems while circumventing the (unsafe) public Internet.

## Maximal scalability

The Infinistructure® platform's main benefit is its scalability. Adding processors or memory to Loyalty Lab's front-end servers for instance is a simple endeavour, without having to wait for any hardware to be delivered. Instead, the company can instruct Terremark's engineers at any time to boost their servers' capacity on short notice - even within some hours time. Afterwards this capacity can be removed just as easily.

For this reason, adding a new customer to the infrastructure has become an easy task that is quickly completed; in the absence of hardware-related delays, Loyalty Lab bring a new sub-environment live in a matter of days.

## Smooth cooperation

Apart from technology, the service quality has been a major factor in deciding for Terremark. Around the clock and each day of the year, Loyalty Lab has a team of Terremark's specialists at its disposal. High availability is an integral part of Terremark's offering. The virtual environment comes under a hefty 99.8% monthly availability guarantee, meaning that they can rest assured they can run their marketing campaigns at any given moment... Which in itself is a form of flexibility as well.