

# Antarctica New Zealand upgrades hardware to meet future business needs

Gen-i designs and delivers a state-of-the-art IT platform for Antarctica New Zealand's Christchurch and Scott Base offices in time for a busy summer on the Ice.

## Meeting business requirements

Antarctica New Zealand was established in 1996 and is responsible for the development, management and administration of New Zealand's activities in Antarctica and in the Southern Ocean. With the vision of ensuring this pristine environment is valued, protected and understood, Antarctica New Zealand needs to make certain that the hardware solutions at the Christchurch and Scott Base sites are not only sufficient to meet its significant data processing needs, but also meets the organisation's environmental goals.

## Challenging environments

With equipment dating back to 2002, Antarctica New Zealand required a major upgrade to retire its legacy hardware and provide the scalable and flexible architecture necessary to move it into the future.

Antarctica New Zealand's Corporate Services Manager, Peter Smith, engaged Gen-i to design a new hardware platform for both locations that would meet the current and future needs of this unique business.

Antarctica New Zealand has some unique challenges. It is an extremely seasonal operation, with only a small core group at Scott Base over the winter and numbers significantly increasing over the summer months. Planning was condensed into an extremely



tight timeframe as it was essential the upgrade was completed in time for the busy summer season. With limited travel options available, the flight date to Antarctica was set and could not be missed.

In addition, the project team needed to consider the limited technical support at Scott Base. A robust design that addressed this situation was vital.

Significant planning was performed up front to ensure the Gen-i team would be able to complete the build and necessary testing in time. Once into the design and build, regular communication with the team was vital as a number of major technical challenges requiring immediate resolution were discovered. This was only possible because the Gen-i and Antarctica New Zealand teams worked closely together, with regular team meetings and effective communications with the full project team.

## Servers upgraded

The solution had the following main components:

- Utilised and enhanced Antarctica New Zealand's existing VMWare server platform with a VMWare Vi3 solution to enable high availability options such as VMotion and Resource Management.
- Deployed two DL380 servers in Christchurch with VMWare to provide core applications to Antarctica New Zealand.
- Deployed four DL360 servers to replace the two existing servers at Scott Base.
- Desktop upgrade for all staff in both locations, including training in MS Office 2007 for Christchurch based staff provided by Auldhouse, Gen-i's certified training business.

**"We chose Gen-i because they could provide us with a one-stop-shop and delivered everything seamlessly to achieve an excellent result," said Mr Smith.**

## Getting ready for the summer

"The biggest challenge for the project was ensuring that the Scott Base server environment was ready to be shipped down to Antarctica and set up prior to the busy summer season," said Antarctica New Zealand's Corporate Services Manager, Peter Smith.

Detailed technical and project planning between Antarctica New Zealand and the Gen-i team ensured all critical milestones were met. A couple of sleepless nights for the technical team enabled the server equipment and software to be ready in time for the flight. All that remained to do was to install the servers at the Base, test and confirm that all aspects were operational before handing over to the appreciative Antarctica New Zealand staff.

## Continuing the good work

A post implementation review was held once everyone had returned from Scott Base. This confirmed that although there had certainly been some technical challenges, the communication and hard work by the team had helped ensure that the project was a huge success.

"We chose Gen-i because they could provide us with a one-stop-shop and delivered everything seamlessly to achieve an excellent result," said Mr Smith.

"This included desktop upgrades and staff training, all backed by sound project management and controls, delivered in a remote location and very short time frame," he said.

In addition, Gen-i has been able to provide suggestions for further potential projects for Antarctica New Zealand, building on and leveraging off the new platform that was successfully delivered.

