

LEAN IT SERVICE OPERATION STANDARDISATION OF DIFFERENT IT ENVIRONMENTS



PHILIPP SCHLATTER HEAD OF IT INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

Previously, separated IT environments co-existed at skyguide: mainly corporate IT and technical IT. Now the different IT environments have to converge by making use of standardized shared infrastructure services. The transition from the current mode of operation to the future lean IT is a move away from an equipment-based vertical structure to horizontal responsibilities, says Philipp Schlatter, head of IT Infrastructure Services at skyguide.

“REDUCING
MAINTENANCE
AND DOWNSCALING
SKYGUIDE’S OWN
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DRIVERS”

SKYGUIDE **What does “Lean IT” mean?**

PHILIPP SCHLATTER We have now organisationally merged several units responsible for operations of the different environments and technology layers. Each has its own operational processes that have to be aligned. “Lean IT” means trying to focus on value streams and defining where the bottlenecks and blockages are and how they can be removed. Skyguide documentation for example is still paper-based, not content-based, which hardly renders a consolidated view. Standardizing the way we document our services, processes and more while making use of a well-established documentation tool is the way forward here.

Is the move to horizontal structures a revolution or an evolution?

PS Evolution is the preferred approach as long as we get the necessary time for the implementation. We have to ensure safe operations and therefore cannot take any risks. The tuning of applications and shared infrastructure services is time consuming. In situations where we are constrained to react by a given deadline because of obsolescence, we are rushed to implement the changes needed to avoid creating technical deficits, which in return will affect our delivery capacity further down the line.

How does virtualisation contribute?

PS Virtual Centre (VC) is driving technical changes most importantly with the Service-Oriented Infrastructure (SOI) that VC Tranche 2 (VCT2) brought in. Thanks to VC we now have some shared infrastructure

services which can be leveraged to the legacy environment, speeding up standardization and consolidation. Server virtualisation is a core technology in terms of hardware optimization, availability and location independency. In addition, further layers such as storage, network, and application are integrated parts of a modern infrastructure, and virtualisation is evolving here as well. Virtualisation in many cases requires some refactoring of applications and does not come for free. Depending on the demand, we might virtualise the network but not the server or vice versa. On the other hand, a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) is very powerful technology for training and simulation.

Does “One data centre, one test centre” make sense?

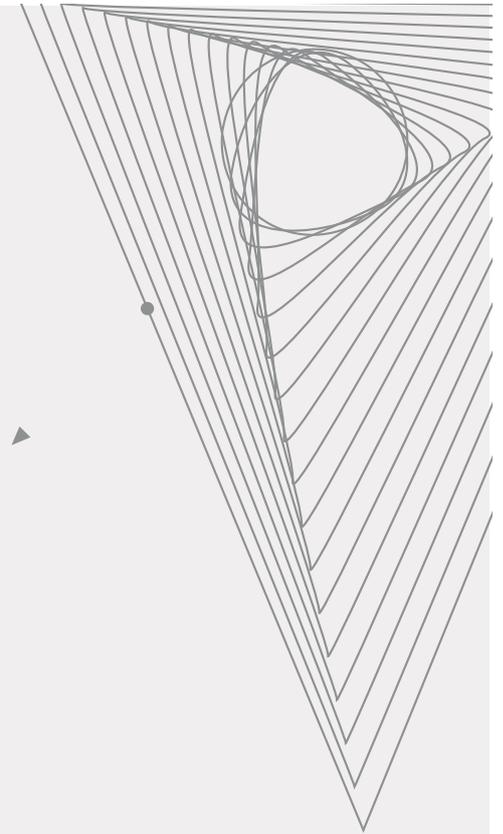
PS Yes, this is the most efficient way to assure a proper layout and stable service. This will take some time but thanks to virtualisation we will get there. I am convinced that we cannot duplicate the current layout. We have to simplify in one centre.

What do you provide with the new IT infrastructure services?

PS If the services are well designed, comply with best industry practice, fulfill skyguide’s demands and go along with a service description based on the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), they contribute decisively to simplifying the IT environments. We can provide Active Directory, Antivirus, Public Key infrastructure and many others. Most of the products are implemented and ready to be used widely. However, the integration of these standard products must be driven by the application owners.

How can cloud services help?

PS Cloud services are well established and a valid technology that skyguide can use. Very good experiences with some skyguide internal services, like Skype for Business for instance, have been had. In constant exchange with the legal and security department, we examine further possible business cases. Reducing maintenance and downscaling skyguide’s own infrastructure are the main drivers.



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