Photo: Colt

colt
Data Centre Services

FNT Supports Colt Data Centre Services' Evolution to a Leading Provider of Hyperscale Data Centers

BACKGROUND

Colt Data Centre Services (Colt DCS) has been designing, building, and operating data centers in Europe and Asia and providing co-location services for more than 25 years. Over 1,000 customers in the world's most data-critical industries trust Colt DCS to secure their information.

In November 2021, Colt DCS sold 12 of its European co-location data centers to focus on the Hyperscale market. This case study explains the journey that Colt DCS has taken with one of its key vendors, FNT Software, and highlights the future collaboration between FNT and the team at Colt DCS.

Hyper Scale Data Centers
and Colocation
Industry

370+
Employees

14
Data Centers

CHALLENGES

When IT Director Hans Stiles joined Colt DCS in 2019, he saw several challenges with the company's central management system:

- **User Experience.** Several platforms were running on older versions and depended on legacy software that often had compatibility and functionality issues. These platforms resulted in poor user satisfaction and low engagement.

- **Performance and Reliability.** Although Colt DCS had already made the move to the cloud to host several critical business IT platforms, including FNT, few of these platforms had been deployed in an efficient and robust manner. Therefore, performance and availability of these platforms was inconsistent and below acceptable levels.

- **Functionality.** The Colt DCS Hyperscale strategy required a focus on B2B interfaces in addition to the self-service capabilities required by co-location customers.

- **Data Management.** Many legacy systems lacked the capability to implement granular segmentation of data, whether it be by region, country, or even customer.

Colt Data Centre Services

Colt Data Centre Services provide true service and operational excellence in the sustainable design, build, delivery and operational management of hyperscale data centres across Europe and APAC. We provide data centre solutions to hyperscale and large enterprise customers across 14 state of the art carrier neutral data centres spanning 8 cities.

Our Hyperscale and Colocation solutions allow our customers freedom to plan effectively for the growth of their business, knowing that their data centre strategy is ready for the demands of tomorrow.

We have over 25 years of experience in the industry, delivering on our vision of being the most trusted and customer centric data center operator in the market. We put environmental awareness at the heart of everything we do because we know it's the right thing to do for our planet. That's why we're taking the ownership to reduce our environmental impact globally and make sustainability a key strategic driver. As part of our sustainability journey, Colt has set comprehensive near-term Science Based Targets to cut our emissions, and we are working on developing our long term targets and Net-Zero strategy.

Photo: Colt

SOLUTION

Colt DCS selected FNT Software in 2014 to replace their homegrown, legacy inventory system. Over the course of five years, Colt DCS and FNT successfully delivered several enhancements to the platform and expanded the DCIM (Data Center Infrastructure Management), self-service, and data transformation capabilities. The new business strategy required closer relationships with a small number of strategic suppliers, including FNT, to help transform Colt DCS' business and IT architecture.

FNT and Colt DCS established a comprehensive plan to migrate the FNT platform to a brand-new multi-cloud environment based on Microsoft Azure and Oracle Cloud Infrastructure and leverage the strategic partnerships between both organizations to deliver a secure, scalable platform and a low latency, resilient database. After the entire FNT platform was upgraded, FNT's mandator functionality was utilized to divide customers into market segments and comply with strategic data privacy requirements without the need to duplicate application platforms provision. Finally, FNT's functionality was extended to include DCIM, connectivity, and Enterprise IT and provide a consolidated, integrated approach to data center management.

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>
> Terry Lee-Blay, Technical Specialist (DevOps), Colt DCS

"Mandator functionality is one of the most powerful features of FNT Command when it comes to data segregation," said Terry Lee-Blay, Technical Specialist (DevOps) at Colt DCS. "We have used it to control data access for teams, customers, and external partners. Now that the customer's Access Control List (ACL) has been assigned mandators, a customer portal user can access the specific data belonging to their individual mandators. We have also used FNT's mandator functionality to bridge the data separation gap between DCS staff and other parties while using the same instance of FNT's application."

RESULTS

Colt DCS' IT system performance has significantly improved as a result of implementing FNT's flexible management software on premise and in the cloud. FNT also provides Colt DCS with automated customer notifications, a major customer-centric development that allows Colt DCS to resolve incidents fast, efficiently, and aligned with a customer's SLA.

To support the sale of 12 colocation data centers in Europe to Atlas Edge in 2021, Colt DCS performed an extensive amount of data migration and segregation within the FNT platform to allow the acquired businesses to operate. The system now supports dual operations for Colt DCS' remaining facilities while supporting Atlas Edge sites through a managed service by Colt DCS. Clients have also retained the capability to link the users to their own assets via FNT's mandator function and Access Control List.

"FNT Command and FNT Staging-Area are key parts of our software stack," added Lee-Blay. "These products are reliable, scalable, and flexible enough to meet new re-

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quirements time and again in a constantly evolving environment, while being powerful enough to drive a multitude of applications and processes via easily configured REST API interfaces. We can always count on excellent support from the FNT team who work closely with our own people to resolve any issues we encounter, as well as helping us customize our deployment to meet our specific needs."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE DIRECTION FOR COLT DCS' IT SYSTEMS

FNT and Colt's partnership will continue to grow as Colt DCS expands its capabilities through its technology platforms.

"Having firmly established FNT as a robust, strategic platform within Colt DCS our focus is now on building on the rich functionality with the application and extending our use to include management of Data Centre Connectivity, Data Centre Infrastructure, IT and OT (Operational Technology) Infrastructure," said Hans Stiles, Director, It Operations and Delivery at Colt DCS.

About FNT

FNT GmbH, headquartered in Ellwangen (Jagst), Germany, simplifies the management of highly complex digital infrastructures in companies and public authorities with its FNT Command Platform. With the cloud-enabled "software made in Germany", IT, telecommunications and data center infrastructures can be efficiently recorded as digital twins and documented across all levels from buildings to digital services. The software also offers open interfaces and numerous functions for planning, implementing and automating transformations and changes in an integrated manner. FNT's customers include more than 500 companies and government agencies worldwide, including more than half of the DAX-40 listed corporations. FNT operates offices in several locations in Germany as well as in New York, London, Singapore and Timisoara and has an international partner system with market-leading IT service providers and system integrators.

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