Liberty Latin America easily handles data center expansion with HPE OneView

Improved system management results in greater insights and cost efficiencies

Liberty Latin America (formerly Columbus Communications) is part of Liberty Global, one of the world’s largest providers of television services, digital video, high-speed internet access, digital telephony, and corporate data services. They also provide telecom capacity and IP services to large international telecom carriers, internet service providers, and other value-added service providers.

Challenge

Implement a solution to efficiently manage a growing infrastructure

In 2014, Columbus Communications (now Liberty Latin America) defined a two-fold goal—to offer customers an ever-increasing portfolio of high-quality products and services, and to deploy and manage stable server installations in remote and unreliable power environments.

“In the regions we operated in, we didn’t have the resources to help manage our environment in the right way,” explains Sebastian Rodriguez, Senior Manager, Back Office Engineering, Liberty Latin America. “Management wise, it was chaos. We used Excel sheets to get all of the IPs. It was manual and time consuming to get all the information compiled for different operations we have to manage on-site, and that time we spent could have been better dedicated to other IT matters.”
They evaluated several major technology providers and narrowed its real-time tests to Hewlett Packard Enterprise, determining that HPE resources would best strengthen its market position against larger competitors. The evaluation team learned that HPE was the only vendor that had the technology and services to bring multiple locations across different countries under one reliable and easy-to-manage technology umbrella.

"Initially, we wondered how can we find or develop a tool to manage our entire infrastructure," says Rodriguez. "With HPE OneView, we started to see the benefits instantly."

The solution

A better view across the entire IT environment

HPE OneView provides a simple, automated management solution of their hybrid infrastructure, so Rodriguez and his team can view the status and manage any server at any location. For a growing company like Liberty Latin America with locations across multiple geographies, HPE OneView has provided a more efficient way for their IT team to overcome their infrastructure management challenges.

Initially, as Columbus Communications, they implemented three sites using HPE OneView: Jamaica, Curacao, and Trinidad and Tobago. "I called HPE, who has our cookie-cutter configuration ready to go, and HPE sent the system to the three island sites," he recalls. "Our local staff easily set up the server package, and then the magic happened. Although the systems were in the south Caribbean, I was far away in Bogota, Colombia. I connected to each site through HPE OneView and it took only an hour per site to fully implement."

Since first utilizing HPE OneView, Liberty Latin America has continued to add hardware to its existing infrastructure. Thanks to HPE OneView's ability to create server profiles, Liberty Latin America is able to standardize how they set-up, configure, and manage new and existing systems—making it easier than ever to have the right systems provisioned when they need them.

"Everything that I do is dictated by a server profile and that is standardizing everything we do," explains Rodriguez. "Server profiles are really useful in terms of getting everything to a baseline, then allowing everyone to deploy tasks the same way no matter the geographic location of the servers."

"HPE OneView has been a terrific tool for providing the status of my data centers throughout the network," he continues. "With this tool, I am in control of everything. This has been facilitating the way I manage the technology for the company. It's not easy to make decisions if you don't have accurate information from all of your data centers. But with OneView, I just click a report and it will gather the information in real time, and I can create reports that show the entire status in a snapshot. It's great to have this level of control."

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Benefits

Higher efficiencies, better control, lower costs

Prior to using HPE OneView, managing remote servers was hardly a simple task. It required extensive and costly travel, sending qualified IT personnel on-site to deploy a solution. As Liberty Latin America expanded their reach, deployment was time-consuming and costly, and required key, qualified IT teams to be out of the office for extended periods of time.

Today, Liberty Latin America is a leading operator in Latin America and the Caribbean, operating in 21 consumer markets and over 30 B2B markets. They also feature an extensive and unique subsea network—connecting over 40 markets with more than 50,000 kilometers of fiber optic cable. As the company continues to expand its services and offerings for its customers, it relies heavily on its infrastructure to deliver those services without interruption.

“We have a huge portfolio of services today that are all based upon networking, so everything that we do is based on something related to our network,” confirms Rodriguez. “That is gigantic. Our network extends everywhere from Europe to the American continent.”

“The first step to be in a different market required a lot of traveling because there wasn’t an easy way to deploy anything,” says Rodriguez. “Everything had to be done in baby steps, and it was not a repeatable process, so we had to repeat the process for every location. It was not easy to get there, it was not easy to configure, it was not easy to manage, it was not easy to keep control of our inventory, it was not easy to see the status of our infrastructure. Everything was manual and you had to go piece by piece.”

Rodriguez estimates that the travel costs alone were extensive. “Every time we had to implement a new project, 10% of the project budget was dedicated just to traveling. So, for a million-dollar project, $100,000 was spent on traveling. It was not cost-effective.”

HPE OneView is the perfect tool to enable Rodriguez to remotely manage and provision his HPE ProLiant-based solutions, wherever he is. In fact, Rodriguez says that since using HPE OneView, travel costs have been reduced by up to 60%.

“Today, we have everything so orchestrated and automated that we do not need to send our team into the field,” he says. “We just need someone to plug in cables, and that’s it. We have all the orchestration and management covered.”

The benefits of using HPE OneView have also extended beyond the IT department. It’s also provided the operations team with more streamlined support.

According to Rodriguez, “Operations is happy with the way this OneView is integrated with remote support. OneView does all the work of creating support cases based on the HSM and AHS logs. If anything is failing, it automatically creates the support case, and HPE ships the replacement part we need.”
In addition to HPE OneView, Liberty Latin America also utilized HPE Proactive Care Service to facilitate the support process. From an operational readiness and human resources standpoint, HPE Proactive Care Service provided access to additional technical resources, allowing Rodriguez and his team to do more with less.

He also indicates that the benefits of using HPE OneView even reach to the customer level. “If I have my SLAs in a healthy state,” says Rodriguez, “I am helping my customers on their overall experience. If I have issues in my platform or in my infrastructure, our customers would be affected instantly. HPE OneView helps me to make sure our infrastructure is working the way it should.”

Yet despite their growth and implementation of newer technologies, with HPE OneView, the impact on their IT staff is negligible. “When we started, we had 100 servers,” says Rodriguez. “Today, I have 500, and my role is still the same. You might think I would need five times more people to manage that additional infrastructure, but that’s not the case because we have a better, more efficient way to handle our infrastructure management—both today and in the future.”

An eye on the future

Liberty Latin America’s growth continues to this day—more services, more locations, and more hardware requirements are constantly being added to their portfolio.

Rodriguez explains: “We have a lot of different services for customers. They all use different technologies. It’s not the same infrastructure for running a mobile network as it is for broadband or for running TV services. That’s what we are testing now—how can we put mobile service, broadband service, and TV service in a way that all of them can coexist together and be on demand as we grow, and that’s why we are considering a migration to the HPE Synergy platform.”

Learn more at hpe.com/oneview

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