



An industry focused IT partner to match future growth and strategic goals

Aerion Fund Management is one of the UK's largest in-house pension fund managers, acting exclusively as the Principal Investment Manager to the National Grid Pension Scheme. Originally the pension investment department of British Gas, Aerion now has a total of over £15 billion under management. Based in the City of London, Aerion's aim is to be recognised as the leading multi-market integrated asset manager.

Business Challenge

Aerion wanted a major new approach to its IT infrastructure. The pension fund manager required an up to date and forward looking technology service that could meet its ambitious growth plans, support a diverse investment portfolio and be more closely aligned with its industry.

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Benefits

A Painless Process: "The project management process has been undertaken by Lanware in an exemplary manner. Their consultants kept us informed at every stage; the whole process was well documented and they demonstrated outstanding skills. The project was as painless as possible which is important given our operating model," states Susan Cave.

Positive User Experience: Aerion now has a robust IT infrastructure which is fully available and is being managed on a daily basis. The user experience is more positive, where senior managers are now able to control data with greater efficiency, and remote users achieve the same level of productivity as when in the office.

Minimal IT Involvement: For Aerion, outsourced IT services means a minimal IT involvement. "This is critical as it allows us to concentrate on our core business while overseeing the performance of Lanware through robust SLA and KPI reporting," highlights Susan Cave.

A Cost Effective Service: A key benefit of the new relationship with Lanware is the cost-effectiveness of outsourced technology services. "We don't perceive Lanware to be an expensive option," continues Susan. "Aerion has got a vastly improved service for, effectively, the same budget. It's updated, scalable and future proof."

Controlled Budgeting: A knock-on benefit of this new approach has been more control with the overall budgeting. Everyone knows exactly what they're paying for and how much it costs. This makes it much easier to plan for the future.

Selection

Aerion's policy on outsourcing all non-core business activities initiated the search for an industry focused IT partner that would satisfy all its technology needs. The management team talked to industry peers, such as fellow hedge funds, pension funds and suppliers for recommendations. A short list of three potential providers was drawn-up and a scoping document sent.

Susan Cave comments; ***"The Lanware proposal was very detailed and addressed Aerion's requirements. We then took references from its fund management clients who gave us a full appreciation of its services and technical capability."***

Stuart Waldron, Chief Operating Officer of Aerion Fund Management goes on to say, ***"Aerion was specifically looking for an IT partner that had a strong cultural fit, and experience in the investment management sector. Lanware stood out in this regard."***

Aerion decided to appoint Lanware as its IT partner. ***"A key reason was Lanware's***

ability to hit the ground running. We also wanted an IT provider that gives strong advice, but isn't dictatorial. This is a difficult balance to achieve," adds Susan.

From the outset the two organisations quickly formed a close partnership, working collaboratively to agree strategy, establish precise business requirements and fully document the existing landscape. This resulted in a smooth transition and the project completing within pre-agreed timescales.

The Service

Lanware has transformed Aerion's entire technology, packaging the desktop and applications into a secure virtual desktop service delivered on demand from Lanware's private cloud. Aerion now takes advantage of a full range of IT services covering office productivity, trading technology, mobility, unified communications and security.

"Thanks to Lanware's focus on the financial sector, the service is designed to operate within FCA regulatory guidelines on outsourcing arrangements. There are robust disaster recovery capabilities, we have full

confidence in our security management, audit processes and have an exit plan in place," says Susan Cave.

Lanware's management information brings a wide range of benefits for Aerion. For instance, Lanware's advanced service management and reporting tools are cued to meet the fund manager's specific requirements. ***"Before Lanware, our servers were managed from a technical rather than business application point of view,"*** continues Susan. ***"This was very frustrating because we had limited visibility regarding the performance, availability and capacity of our services."***

The entire IT landscape is now consolidated under a single provider and as a result is quicker, more stable and has stronger functionality with a common audit trail. The platform includes a Cisco IP telephony system with call recording, high definition audio and more advanced features such as unified communications. The virtual desktop functionality is important to a company where up to half the staff can either be working from home or travelling at any given time.



Conclusion

"The Lanware relationship is a very good one for us. It is a strong partnership and they are an integral part of our team, not just an outsource provider. A key part of this is down to cultural alignment and their industry focus. The whole migration of Aerion's IT platform has been tremendously successful. To move to a completely new IT infrastructure without drama or fuss in just a six month timeframe speaks volumes about Lanware's hard work and the appropriateness of its cloud based technology," says Susan Cave.

"Lanware has met all of our needs in an all-encompassing service, changing the way Aerion engages with technology for the long term," highlights Stuart Waldron. ***"It has freed staff up to focus on our core business – investment management."***

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