

**Objective**

- Ensure stability, availability, and scalability for a business-critical web presence

Approach

- HPE Helion CloudSystem provides a flexible, available, and scalable platform to ensure stability for HPE Partner Ready Service Provider Detron ICT Groep customers

IT Matters

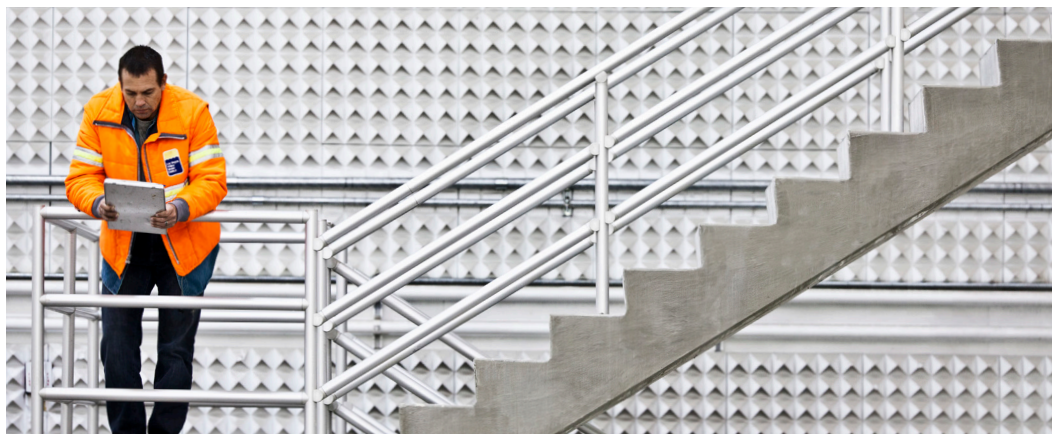
- Ensure a highly available web presence for business-critical services
- Provide superior reliability and scalability to meet peak usage demands
- Deliver 99.97% uptime including planned downtime

Business Matters

- Deliver a highly available platform to drive sales and support new channels
- Offer a superior customer support experience with a fast, stable web presence
- Maintain marketshare and growth with a stable, future-proof platform

Energy company builds business momentum with Detron Cloud Services

HPE Helion CloudSystem powers critical cloud services to ensure a continuous web presence



With over 400,000 customers and a rapidly growing share in The Netherlands energy market, De Nederlandse Energie Maatschappij B.V. (NLE) partnered with HPE Partner Ready Service Provider Detron ICT Groep to host their web presence on HPE Helion CloudSystem to improve performance, scalability, and availability.

Make a difference

“We’re the new kid on the block in the old fashioned energy industry,” says Eelco van den Hoek, Online Coordinator at De Nederlandse Energie Maatschappij B.V. (NLE). “When the energy market in The Netherlands was deregulated in 2004, we were one of the first companies to take advantage of the opportunity and shake up the market. Today we’re the largest independent player with a growing marketshare of almost 10% and over 400,000 customers.”

“But it hasn’t been easy,” reiterates van den Hoek. “We’re competing against established market players, so we have to do things differently in order to gain marketshare. There are three trends that are having a

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— Eelco van den Hoek, Online Coordinator, De Nederlandse Energie Maatschappij B.V. (NLE)

major impact on the industry—consumer expectations, digitalization, and data—and we have to target each one aggressively to ensure good customer service, drive innovation, and ensure competitive differentiation.”

Create customer intimacy

“Consumer expectations are also on the rise, and we need to evolve in line with those expectations. In today’s world, simply delivering cubic meters of gas or kilowatt hours of electricity is unsustainable. We would be out of business in 10 years or less,” explains van den Hoek. “Digitalization is revolutionizing the way we do things. We’re replacing traditional customer service channels—like phone calls—with social media and chat apps like WhatsApp.”

“We’re also leveraging data analytics to calculate the potential value of each customer, enabling us to create a personalized offer that extends the longevity of the relationship with mutual benefits,” adds van den Hoek. “When you put all of this together, it allows us to create a more intimate relationship with our customers in line with their expectations for the 21st Century.”

Innovate to drive efficiencies

“Innovation is also driving our market. By 2020, all homes in The Netherlands are expected to have smart meters,” predicts van den Hoek. “We’ll go from annual, to bimonthly, to—if the consumer agrees to it—daily meter readings. And daily doesn’t just mean once per day. It means every 15 minutes for electricity, and every hour for gas. That’s 96 and 24 readings per day respectively. And that has a twofold impact.”

“Firstly, the amount of data that we collect, store, and process will increase exponentially compared to today where 85% of meters in The Netherlands are conventional,” explains van den Hoek. “Secondly, the customer will expect something in return for allowing us to collect that data. We need to provide insights into usage together with options for how customers can reduce their energy consumption and specific offers to help them do that. That’s value-add for our customers. And all of this will be communicated via the new channels.”

About Detron ICT Group

Detron ICT Group is a leading service provider for medium-sized businesses in The Netherlands with a turnover of over €100 million in 2014. It offers the connection between traditional IT and managed cloud services with the philosophy that one size doesn't fit all, striving to accommodate the unique needs of each customer. Detron ICT Group offers a full range of IT and telecom solutions designed to provide customers with predictable costs, increased flexibility, and guaranteed continuity.

Be a technology company

"We're actually a technology company," states van den Hoek. "We don't produce or distribute energy. We just buy it and sell it. So everything we do is technology driven. That's why our web presence is critical to our business. It's our primary—and most cost-effective—tool for generating leads and sales. It enables our customers to subscribe to our services, view their statements, and update their contact and payment information. It's also our principal channel for providing customer service and answering questions. If our website is down, we can't sell our product or keep our customers happy. The call center ends up being flooded with calls, resulting in delays and customer dissatisfaction."

Choose the right partner

"We partnered with HPE Partner Ready Service Provider Detron to host our test, acceptance, and production environments. We previously ran on Amazon Web Services (AWS) but had higher aspirations for our business. We needed an established web development and hosting partner with good references that could support our goals," enthuses van den Hoek. "Detron were able to provide a stable environment with the performance, availability, and scalability we needed to meet consumer expectations."

"And it's that approach that makes the difference to NLE," states van den Hoek. "When we were running on AWS, we experienced a lot of downtime because of the lack of scalability. We can't forecast what peak usage will be when we run a TV commercial or an event generates a lot of support calls, but we need the head room to cope. Before we moved to Detron, that was a real challenge."

Choose the right platform

"We support all of our customers using HPE infrastructure. We were one of the first HPE Partner Ready Service Providers to deploy HPE Helion CloudSystem and take advantage of HPE Flexible Capacity in The Netherlands. We're also one of the first in Europe to deploy HPE Moonshot within our Detron Cloud Services platform," relates Emile Schouwstra, Director of Detron Cloud Services, enthusiastically. "The performance, reliability, scalability, and easy manageability of HPE compute and storage platforms has been critical to our being able to establish a significant footprint in the enterprise midmarket. It's also enabled us to grow our cloud services by over 30% in the last three years."

"Detron Cloud Services running on HPE Helion CloudSystem has given us the capabilities we require to become more agile and meet both our own and our customers' expectations. It gives us the stability we need to focus on our business without having to worry about IT," states van den Hoek categorically.

Customer at a glance

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Application

HPE Helion CloudSystem powers Detron Cloud Services platform, enabling them to meet the performance, scalability, and availability that NLE demands.

Hardware

- HPE Helion CloudSystem
- HPE ProLiant Gen8 BL460c Server Blades
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7200/7400
- HPE Moonshot System

Software

- HPE Helion CloudSystem Software

HPE Services

- HPE Flexible Capacity

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— Emile Schouwstra, Director of Cloud Services of Detron ICT Group

Run with confidence

“Hosting our web presence with Detron has definitely brought us peace of mind,” adds van den Hoek when asked about the value that Detron brings to NLE. “For instance, compliance requires that private customer data be retained in-country. Detron Cloud Services gives us that with their two data centers in the Amsterdam region. If we want to make changes of any nature, their experts are always knowledgeable and accommodating. If we want to run a new campaign, we don't have to worry about conflicting activities peaking at the same time and fighting for resources. We can tick off the checklist with full confidence that the resources will be there when we need them.”

“In turn, building our cloud services on HPE infrastructure gives Detron peace of mind,” says Schouwstra. “The performance and reliability of HPE servers and storage is something we've come to take for granted. We provide NLE 99.97 percent uptime—and that includes planned downtime! And our partnership with HPE allows us to take advantage of the expertise of HPE Cloud Specialists to identify new opportunities and expand our cloud services portfolio much faster than if we tried to do it on our own.”

Build for the future

“We've experienced benefits all around,” recaps van den Hoek. “Detron provides a stable solution that's good value for money. We have a fast, stable web presence that's strengthened our competitive advantage and—we believe—has increased confidence in our brand with both consumers and investors. We never experience bad press or have to report that we've lost sales or customers because the NLE website is down.”

“And we're ready for the future,” sums up van den Hoek in conclusion, “Our smart meter initiative is the largest one in the country, and we have the goal of being #1 when it comes to delivering valuable usage insights. In addition to adding users we'll experience an exponential increase in data volumes. But we have full confidence that our systems running on Detron's HPE infrastructure is scalable, reliable, and future-proof. That allows us to sleep at night.”