

Heroix Powers Innogy

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Friday, 22 March 2002

THE SUBJECT: Innogy's IT department manages its own IT requirements and various power generators which it also manages. Notable amongst these is Drax power station, the largest coal-fired plant in Europe, which National Power sold in 1999.

THE PROBLEM: Running a three-tier support structure, Innogy's IT division provides complete hardware and application support to these businesses. Gary Green, Infrastructure Support Services Coordinator, is a team leader within the second line support team. "Our role is to handle all IT requirements and solve peoples' problems as quickly and effectively as possible. The users depend on IT to run the business, and so we have to react quickly to any problems."

THE ENVIRONMENT: In the past, National Power was a big user of the then DEC's OpenVMS platform, and today there are still many VAX and Alpha systems running within Innogy and at several of the power stations, including Drax. However, their forward strategy is to use Microsoft platforms, currently Windows NT with planned moves to Windows 2000 and/or Windows XP. Already their corporate messaging system is built on Microsoft Exchange, and other mission-critical applications run on the Windows platform.

THE SOLUTION: National Power bought RoboMon for their OpenVMS systems several years ago and it is still running there today. "RoboMon spots problems and informs us quickly and reliably," said Gary. Additionally, when RoboCentral was launched they decided to replace Polycenter Console Manager (PCM) with RoboCentral. "This was very easy," commented Gary, "as the PCM converter within RoboCentral took all our text scanning rules over without a hitch."

Drax power station, the largest coal-fired plant in Europe

For Windows NT, Innogy chose a combination of RoboCentral and RoboER. By using RoboER to access the Windows NT event logs, and then RoboCentral to consolidate them and scan them for useful text, IT staff is able to react to any problems quickly. "Our main issue at the moment," said Gary, "is to know how to deal with the events generated."

THE INSTALLATION: "We found RoboCentral to be a quick, easy solution for our needs. The ROI was easy to prove and we have been able to cost-justify it to our management very easily."

THE FUTURE: Innogy also uses several elements of IBM's Tivoli for Windows NT management, but has decided to keep the two management systems separate, despite the fact that RoboCentral can export its event into Tivoli's TEC. They are following a "best-of breed" model, choosing tools for individual tasks rather than a single all-embracing system.

Finally Gary commented that Heroix is an easy company to work with. "Heroix has always responded quickly to any problems and their support has been first class. We got masses of benefit recently when one of the support team came over for a day and helped us with our configuration. I would recommend Heroix and its software to anyone."

THE HISTORY: Innogy is a new name in the power market. Formed out of National Power in October 2000, it is one of the UK's leading integrated energy businesses, generating, trading and selling energy within the UK. Using its heritage of experience it also sells its expertise in power station operation and maintenance overseas. Innogy's retail business, npower, sells energy to over seven million customers. In the past, National Power essentially owned and managed power stations, but under new regulations this ownership has decreased. However, Innogy still owns and operates a flexible, cost-effective and highly productive 8,000 megawatts of generating assets.

ABOUT HEROIX: Heroix delivers award-winning software products that help organisations guarantee the availability and performance of their multiplatform infrastructure and applications. More than 1,000 customers in over 40 countries rely on the company's integrated management software to monitor and manage Windows NT, Windows 2000, Unix, Linux, OpenVMS, and Novell NetWare systems. Heroix products detect problems, report and graph performance data, and centrally monitor wide-ranging technologies such as Microsoft Exchange, Lotus Notes/Domino, Apache, IIS, WebLogic, Oracle, SQL Server, DB2, Sybase Adaptive Server, Citrix, Cisco, Compaq Insight Manager, service level agreements, and more. Founded in 1975, Heroix is an authorised Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, with EMEA headquarters in Welwyn Garden City, U.K. and U.S. headquarters in Newton, Mass.

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