



VIRTUS Data Centres

London-based colocation provider VIRTUS Data Centres burst onto the scene in 2011 with its 4.2 MW LONDON1 facility featuring 32,000 square feet of technical space. Three years later, the first phase of VIRTUS LONDON2—which will ultimately offer 65,000 square feet of Uptime Institute certified Tier III space with a capacity for 11.4 MW of IT power—came online. Today, VIRTUS is one of London's fastest-growing colocation providers. With the launch of its free DCIM portal for customers, it may also be the most innovative.

VIRTUS Pioneers the Use of DCIM to Empower its Colo Customers

New iTRACS®-based DCIM portal enables VIRTUS and its customers to optimise capacity planning and efficiency

Over the past several years, enterprise data centres have begun to embrace the use of data centre infrastructure management (DCIM) as a critical tool for optimising their capacity, efficiency and availability. Colocation and multitenant data centre operators are now beginning to put DCIM technology to work as well. However, few, if any, are doing it quite like London-based VIRTUS Data Centres.



"We looked at 15 DCIM solutions before choosing iTRACS. Most focus on either facilities or IT. iTRACS was one of the very few who were able to combine both successfully."

Matthew Larbey, VIRTUS Data Centres

In July 2014, the company introduced the VIRTUS Intelligence Portal (VIP), a full-function DCIM-based portal that enables VIRTUS and its customers to visualise, manage and optimise their physical infrastructure. Access to the VIP system for rack-level information is provided free of charge to all VIRTUS customers, with the ability for them to extend this into the application and network stack through additional licensing. According to Matthew Larbey, director of product strategy for VIRTUS, the goal is to give customers greater transparency and control.

"The traditional colo model of having customers sign rigid multiyear contracts based on estimated capacity needs is no longer practical," said Larbey. "Cloud has changed all that. Customers need the flexibility to scale capacity as needed. Our DCIM portal is an essential tool in supporting that. It allows customers to manage their fluid, fast-changing capacity and resource needs based on empirical information—not guesswork—about current and future resource utilisation."

Turning infrastructure data into hard dollar savings

The VIRTUS portal is a full-featured DCIM-based solution that leverages the iTRACS® DCIM platform from CommScope. TDB Fusion, a London-based IT software and managed services company and certified CommScope PartnerPRO™ partner, adapted the iTRACS platform for use by VIRTUS.

VIRTUS has partnered with TDB Fusion, combining their Federos™ Unified Service Management platform with iTRACS' award winning Data Centre Infrastructure Management (DCIM) solution. This provides a highly flexible system, which integrates core information from the data centre, giving customers real-time data of the facilities, building management and business IT systems so customer visibility and control begins at the rack. Either web based interface, or browser based interface provides a holistic view of the IT and facilities infrastructure. From there, customers can monitor power consumption at the rack, environmental conditions, and the M&E chain providing services to their racks; run "what-if" scenarios; and map historical usage trends to project near-term capacity needs. The system also enables a full audit trail, helping VIRTUS customers manage the MACD (Move, Add, Change, Delete) process and allowing them to see where and how they can consolidate IT assets.

Perhaps most importantly, the new DCIM-based VIRTUS portal enables customers to confirm current capacity use and anticipate near-term capacity needs. Working with VIRTUS, users are able to scale resources up or down to better manage their capacity needs and budgets.

VIRTUS: Using DCIM for its own capacity planning

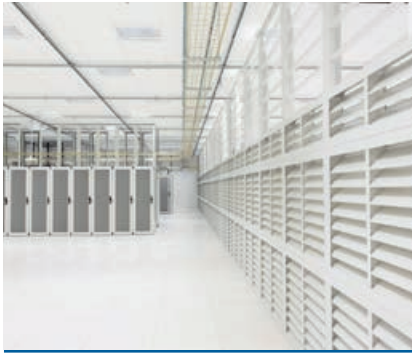
The VIP system offers the VIRTUS team critical insight into its own operations as well. It has become a key tool in helping the colocation provider improve efficiency, lower PUE, and better plan for its future capacity needs. Specifically, VIRTUS is able to use DCIM to manage its facility costs, growth planning and customer SLAs. Infrastructure data from all six halls flows into the VIP system, enabling VIRTUS to monitor and manage all aspects of their power and cooling systems. PUE at LONDON2 is now below 1.2 and total cost of service is among the lowest in the London marketplace.

The VIRTUS team can use the VIP system to validate planning models, coordinate preventative maintenance schedules, optimise tech refreshes and more.

"As fast as we're growing, capacity planning is tremendously important. The intelligence provided by DCIM enables us to plan based on verifiable facts, not assumptions. That's huge for us," Larbey explained. Built on an open framework. The VIP system's ability to integrate with Salesforce, Sage, etc is based on the Federos™ integration capability.

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VIRTUS and DCIM: Innovative, fast-growing and on the move

At VIRTUS, the investment in DCIM is paying big dividends for the relatively young company. In 2014, the company quadrupled its customer base. VIRTUS Data Centres now provides customers with access to more than 40 connectivity and cloud service providers, including six fibre providers, and demand is already leading the company to:

- Execute early build-out of VIRTUS' additional LONDON2 phases
- Finalise expansion plans for VIRTUS LONDON3 and beyond

The company's use of DCIM technology will continue to grow as the needs of its customers evolve.

"We've only just scratched the surface of iTRACS' capabilities. As our experience with it evolves, I'm sure we'll find new ways to use it to create more value for ourselves as well as our customers," Larbey added.

Larbey's outlook echoes that of DCIM users on the enterprise side as well. As CXO Today recently observed, "With increased data centres' complexities, CIOs and data centre managers are increasingly realising the benefits of a solution that will reduce cost, improve efficiencies and lower the risk of downtime while enhancing the flexibility and agility of operations—and DCIM can provide all that."

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