



OIL & GAS

■ CLIENT

Plains Midstream Canada, a leading midstream operator and marketer of oil and gas products

■ CHALLENGE

Rapidly integrate assets and systems from a major business acquisition and deliver on objectives to improve performance, agility and reliability for critical oil and gas applications.

■ SOLUTION

Vblock Systems

■ RESULTS

Transformed IT into a business enabler, accelerating acquisition completion and speeding deployment of new services while shrinking data center footprint and improving uptime

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PLAINS MIDSTREAM CANADA FAST FORWARDS INTEGRATION OF ACQUIRED ASSETS WITH VBLOCK

LEADING MIDSTREAM OPERATOR AND OIL AND GAS MARKETING COMPANY ACCELERATES DELIVERY OF CRITICAL NEW BUSINESS APPLICATIONS WITH IMPROVED PERFORMANCE, AGILITY AND RELIABILITY

When Plains Midstream Canada acquired all of British Petroleum's natural gas liquids (NGL) assets in Canada and the U.S, the move not only expanded its pipeline, distribution, and storage facilities but also created challenges for its overworked IT infrastructure. The success of the acquisition depended on Plains Midstream IT team's ability to on-board applications and data, as well as hundreds of employees, from the former BP assets.

In acquiring the BP assets, Plains Midstream took on a highly-connected, inter-dependent value chain of midstream assets with a comprehensive footprint linking key NGL supply centers in western Canada to large urban demand areas in Canada and the Midwest United States. The IT organization had to support the flow of business information underlying these assets without expanding its data center footprint.

To do the job, Plains Midstream consolidated its IT infrastructure on a Vblock™ System. The consolidation improved performance, enhanced IT agility, and afforded more uptime for critical field and back-office operations.



“It’s quite inspiring to see our vision of quickly provisioning services in response to the business become reality. Vblock Systems demystified our infrastructure, so we no longer talk in terms of servers, storage and networking. Instead, it’s all about business enablement, which wouldn’t be possible without this amazing technology.”

*— Dan Reinbold,
Director of Information
Services, Plains Midstream
Canada*

The Challenge

Plains Midstream’s acquisition of British Petroleum’s NGL assets required the integration of 250 new applications—more than twice as many as in its legacy infrastructure. Plains Midstream also had to provide hundreds of new employees with access to its email and file sharing systems within 24 hours of the close of acquisition.

The company had a broad mix of server, storage and networking technologies that lacked sufficient performance and capacity to support the predicted increased application demands. Data center real estate was at its limits, so scaling out with additional equipment was not an option.

The Solution

Following a thorough evaluation of HP and VCE offerings, Plains Midstream standardized on a Vblock System for all its core business applications. Plains Midstream engaged VCE Professional Services and VCE partner Long View Systems to assist with the design, procurement and implementation of a Vblock Series 300, which was deployed and operational in just seven weeks. Long View Systems also provides managed services for running Plains Midstream’s converged infrastructure in a co-located facility.

Vblock Systems provide the performance, flexibility and simplified management needed to support the expanded business operations. For data protection, Plains Midstream relies on EMC Data Domain deduplication storage systems and CommVault tape archive.

Plains Midstream has migrated Microsoft Exchange, SQL Server, SharePoint and Oracle databases and applications, along with pipeline management systems and several other applications. Test and development systems also run on the Vblock System. The remaining

applications, including SAP, LPG trading and crude oil marketing, will be migrated within the next year. The applications will be fully virtualized with VMware.

The Results

The Vblock Systems provide Plains Midstream with a flexible, efficient and highly available infrastructure to accelerate integration of acquired assets. Increased performance and agility allow new applications and services to be deployed more quickly. Plains Midstream is well positioned to transform IT into a business enabler and has:

- Reduced its data center footprint
- Cut power consumption to one-tenth that of the physical infrastructures inherited with the acquisition
- Enabled IT to double the size of its infrastructure with no additional staff
- Upgraded Exchange in less than three weeks to accommodate 500 new users
- Achieved zero outages for applications and services migrated to the Vblock System
- Improved performance for accessing files and archived emails
- Delivered a 90-day value proposition to support new business initiatives rather than being constrained by traditional five-year development cycles

Plains Midstream values the high level of expertise provided by VCE at every stage of solution development and implementation, and continues to rely on VCE for strategic technology advice. Through this trusted partnership, Plains Midstream is assured of having a converged infrastructure with the capacity, scalability and reliability to facilitate future acquisitions and drive business growth.



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