



JD'S SOLID IT FOUNDATIONS

FIVE YEAR CONTRACT AWARDED TO PASPORTE FOR DATACENTRE, DISASTER RECOVERY AND WAN SERVICES

UK, 26 March 2008 – Leading sportsfashion retailer, JD Sports, has entered into a 5 year managed service contract with Pasporte, the UK's leading provider of managed ICT outsourcing to the mid-market. The managed service will upgrade, future-proof and secure the retailers' IT infrastructure, and support JD on the journey towards PCI DSS compliance.

Inclusive of the £2m deal is the migration of JD's back-office applications and data, such as payroll and warehouse stock management, into a hosted environment; the implementation of a 24/7 disaster recovery programme to enable near real time recovery; and managed WAN between the retailers' 4 warehouses and head office.

Harry Willoughby, IT manager for JD, says, "As a leading high street retailer it's imperative our IT operations support JD's business development strategy. Our existing data centre infrastructure is no longer viable, and the potential for downtime too great a risk for the business. With our PCI DSS compliance programme underway, the opportunity to achieve a better foundation for our IT systems and accelerate our governance strategy made for a very compelling business case."

The migration of JD's applications was successfully piloted over the Christmas trading period, proving Pasporte's migratory approach at peak transaction volumes.

Willoughby adds, "Pasporte demonstrated significant expertise and efficiency during this first phase of migration, and in the overall design of the solution. Already, at this early stage, we're seeing the initial benefits in the rationalisation of our IT systems, meaning our IT team can start identifying new and innovative ways to support JD Sports' long-term business goals."

Using IBM's Softek – a non-intrusive and dynamically configured replication tool - Pasporte will complete the migration of JD's' estimated 3Tb of data in May 2008. Softek will also be deployed to synchronise all data between Pasporte's primary and secondary hosted datacentres in real-time, to ensure zero downtime for JD's operations.

“Mitigating risk is a core part of securing our business, and along with the disaster recovery programme, having a virtual IT team on hand means we’re also able to accelerate our PCI DSS accreditation. This level of governance and security is critical if we’re to safeguard the company and our customers, and ensure we can demonstrate our credentials as a responsible retailer,” concludes Willoughby.

Gary Woodward, CEO of Pasporte, comments, “The contract with JD reveals considerable investment in the future of their business, and demonstrates an increasing awareness amongst UK Plc’s that the value of a managed service lies in its ability to support and enhance existing resource or infrastructure. No longer a quick-fix or cost-cutting exercise, managed services should be considered as a strategic spend to help achieve long-term objectives.”

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About JD Sports

The John David Group Plc is the leading UK specialised multiple retailer of fashionable branded and own brand sports and casual wear over 350 stores.

John David Sports was founded in 1981 with one shop in Bury. It expanded into the Arndale Centre in Manchester in 1983 and consolidated its position throughout the 1980s with further openings, largely in the North and Midlands.

The first London store was opened in Oxford Street in 1989 and by the time of JD’s stock market flotation in 1996 there were 61 stores. Additionally, JD had already developed its reputation as the most innovative visual merchandiser of sportswear with the best and most exclusive and stylish ranges.

The business continued to grow organically until 2002 and then grew further with the acquisition of over 200 stores, further consolidating its position as the leading UK retailer of fashionable sports and casual wear.

About Pasporte

Pasporte is the UK’s leading provider of ICT outsourcing and brings on-demand IT expertise, experience and scale economies to mid-market organisations. Delivering on its promises, Pasporte forges strong and personal client relationships based on honesty and trust to guarantee a tailored solution that will meet business goals. Its services and solutions offer a tailored blend of: Managed Applications, Managed Hosting and Managed Networks.

In partnership with IBM Global Services and award winning global communications provider Orange Business Services, Pasporte provides high quality hosting infrastructure and world-class networks, together with 24x7 services to deliver complete outsourced IT solutions.

As an IBM Premier Services Partner and Regional Systems Integrator, Pasporte is the power behind many of IBM’s major mid-market outsourcing projects. Pasporte was awarded the prestigious IBM Beacon Teaming Award for Consultants & Integrators 2006, and more recently winner of IBM’s Global Services Business Partner Leadership Award 2005, 2006 and 2007. Pasporte has also been awarded Orange Business Services’ Partner of the Year 2005, 2006 and 2007.

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