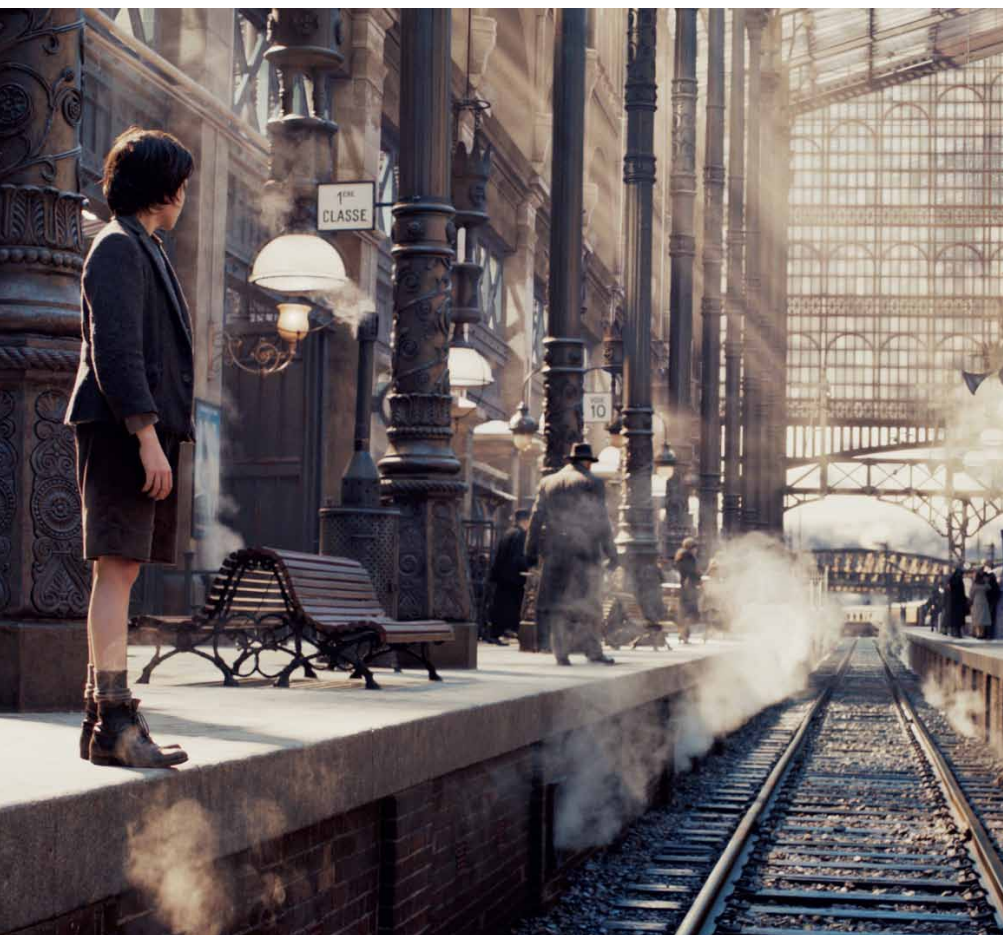




Visual effects victory for TV blockbuster

Leading visual effects company in Germany flourishes in Hollywood and successfully works on Game of Thrones blockbuster with global IT infrastructure



Customer profile

PIXOMONDO

Company	PIXOMONDO
Industry	Media and Communications
Country	Germany
Employees	670
Website	pixomondo.com

Business need

Pixomondo needs highly available IT to produce visual effects. It looked for a partner to develop an IT infrastructure for continued success in the world of TV and movies.

Solution

Pixomondo uses a complete Dell solution, including Dell™ PowerEdge™ servers, and Dell storage, workstations and switches.

Benefits

- Game of Thrones project is a success using Dell PowerEdge servers
- Business drives growth with up to 20 per cent more computing density
- Pixomondo stays agile to deliver excellent customer service
- Staff maximise efficiency with highly available IT worldwide
- Company sees future success in Dell hosted and cloud services

Solutions featured

- End-User Computing
- IT Support Services
- Networking
- Server
- Storage

“Due to the lower energy costs of our Dell PowerEdge R620 servers, we can afford to run up to 20 per cent more servers in our infrastructure. It means our server farm can support even more customer projects.”

Christian Vogt, Chief Operating Officer, Pixomondo

Pixomondo is a leading visual effects company. It provides post-production services for cinema, TV, commercials, interactive media, apps and live events. Established in 2001, the firm has 13 offices across Canada, China, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Its work has supported many Hollywood blockbusters, winning Pixomondo an Oscar in the category of Best Visual Effects for its collaboration on Martin Scorsese's Hugo Cabret. It has also edited the visual effects for the second series of the TV hit Game of Thrones.

The company employs creative people across the world. It has built a global IT infrastructure to support staff wherever they are and in whatever time zone. This flexibility is at the heart of Pixomondo's success, enabling the business to respond quickly to the changing needs of customers and deliver visual effects to tight timescales. Because of its global infrastructure, Pixomondo needs high performance IT. In many ways, its requirements are simple. The business wants standardised solutions that are reliable and easy to manage, and responsive services that ensure solutions are delivered fast, with support arriving quickly.

Firm establishes winning IT partnership, gains business agility

Pixomondo is delivering success and driving growth with the support of Dell solutions. The relationship with Dell has existed for many years, since Pixomondo decided to switch its IT to a Microsoft® Windows®-based platform.

Pixomondo's goal was to find an IT partner with which it could build a close working relationship. Christian Vogt, Chief Operating Officer at Pixomondo, says: "I can buy computers anywhere, but with Dell we feel like more than customers – we feel like partners. Dell listens to us, understands what we're doing and offers us solutions."

The Pixomondo infrastructure now includes an extensive range of Dell servers, storage, networking technology, workstations and desktop systems. The large number of Dell™ PowerEdge™ servers, including R410, R510 and R710 models with Intel® Xeon® processors, has grown with the expansion of the Pixomondo business. The company has also added

"We're always working under pressure to hit deadlines, but Dell finds a way to support us and make things possible. I don't have to worry."

*Christian Vogt,
Chief Operating Officer,
Pixomondo*

Technology at Work

Services

Dell IT Support-Services
– Dell ProSupport™ with Next Business Day Onsite Service

Hardware

Dell™ PowerEdge™ R620, R710, R510 and R410 servers with Intel® Xeon® processors

Dell PowerEdge C6100 servers with Intel Xeon processors

Dell EqualLogic PS6510E storage arrays

Dell PowerVault™ MD1000 direct attached storage

Dell PowerVault NX3100 networked attached storage

Dell PowerConnect™ 2824, 6248 and 8024F switches

Dell Force10 switches

Dell Precision™ T5500 workstations with Intel Xeon processors

Alienware desktops and 3D monitors

Dell PowerEdge C hyperscale servers with Intel Xeon processors, taking advantage of the machines' high density and excellent scalability. Vogt says: "Because of their high CPU power and small form factor, Dell PowerEdge C hyperscale servers are very attractive. We like the fact they can be easily expanded with graphics cards to support graphics processing unit (GPU) based visual rendering."

Game of Thrones project completed successfully with responsive support

Because the relationship works well, Pixomondo could meet the urgent needs of the makers of worldwide TV hit series Game of Thrones. There was a change to the work stream and Pixomondo suddenly faced new challenges for the visual effects work it was doing for the fantasy TV series. The news coincided with an event in Germany, attended by Michael Dell, to showcase the recently launched 12th-generation Dell PowerEdge server family. It was a Thursday night, and Pixomondo placed an order for 39 of the Dell PowerEdge R620 servers, each with two six-core Intel Xeon CPUs and 32 gigabytes (GB) of memory. The following Monday morning, Dell shipped the entire order to Pixomondo's studio in Frankfurt. "We're always working under pressure to hit deadlines, but Dell finds a way to support us and make things possible. I don't have to worry. The technology arrives, we enter it into our pipeline, and we continue working. This is very important to me and my business," says Vogt.

Business supports growth with up to 20 per cent more computing density

The company can deliver more projects with its existing environment as a result of implementing Dell PowerEdge 12th-generation servers. By deploying Dell PowerEdge R620 servers, which include Intel Xeon processors and offer up to 24 dual in-line memory modules (DIMMs) for computing-intensive tasks, the company has lowered power consumption across its server farm. As a result of the savings, Pixomondo can now operate more servers in the environment. Vogt says:

"Due to the lower energy costs of our Dell PowerEdge R620 servers, we can afford to run up to 20 per cent more servers in our infrastructure. It means our server farm can support even more customer projects."

Pixomondo standardises on high performance

The organisation can also meet the growing demands for data storage using its flexible storage infrastructure from Dell. Storage requirements continue to increase, with the movie Hugo Cabret needing more than 3.1 petabytes of capacity alone. Pixomondo is meeting these requirements through Dell EqualLogic PS6510E storage arrays, Dell PowerVault™ MD1000 direct attached storage arrays and Dell PowerVault NX3100 network attached storage – linked with 10-gigabit iSCSI connections. For protection, Pixomondo is replicating data between storage arrays at different offices around the world. Vogt says: "Because of the simplicity of our Dell EqualLogic and Dell PowerVault arrays, we can manage our global storage infrastructure with just two storage administrators. Our capacity continues to grow, but our labour overheads remain constant, helping us keep down costs."

In addition, Dell makes sure that IT personnel are given support to maximise the performance of the storage from day one. For example, the main IT team in Germany attended a Dell EqualLogic training workshop organised by Dell, where it saw how it could use the built-in software for tasks such as snap-shotting and replication.

Business guarantees network stability

The company helps ensure reliable network performance across its infrastructure using Dell PowerConnect™ 2824, 6248 and 8024F switches. They deliver the speed and performance on which the company's global infrastructure depends. Plus, Pixomondo is now looking at deploying Dell Force10 switching technology. Vogt says: "We have standardised on Dell PowerConnect switches because of their reliability and performance."



Looking ahead, we will be evaluating Dell Force10 switching technology for enhanced performance capabilities.”

Employees collaborate worldwide with ease

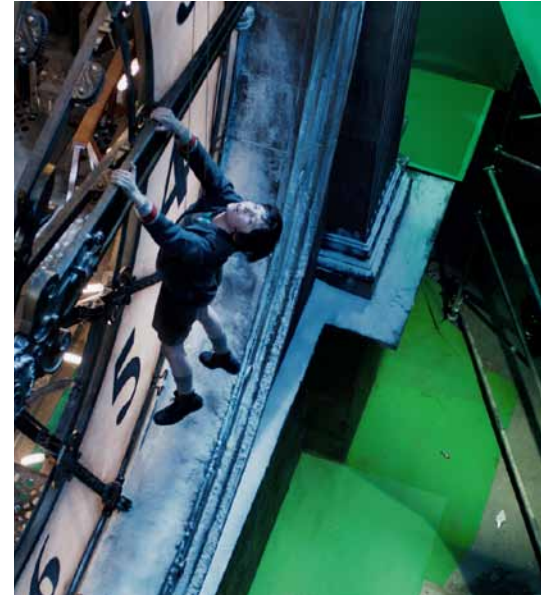
A visitor to any Pixomondo office will see that its personnel are collaborating across continents and meeting timelines using Dell client technology. Employees rely on Dell Precision™ T5500 workstations with Intel Xeon processors and many use Alienware desktops and monitors for working in 3D. Dell Precision technology has become the technology of choice for many visual effects and post-production studios worldwide. And Pixomondo is no exception, valuing the workstations’ professional-grade processors and graphics options. As with all its other Dell solutions, Pixomondo is reassured that a Dell Precision workstation will arrive anywhere in the world and still deliver the same high-quality performance. Vogt says: “We’re working with Dell Precision workstations in all of our offices worldwide. Our employees like the high performance and reliability of Dell Precision technology.” He knows that when one office closes for the day, staff can continue working on a project in an office on the other side of the world without disruption. “We have offices in 13 locations on three continents, but all sites have to work together on the same project to meet our deadlines,” he says.

Business ensures highly available IT with worldwide support

The company also knows that Dell’s global support is helping maintain the effective collaboration among offices. Pixomondo works with Dell ProSupport™ to provide high availability across the infrastructure. And with Dell ProSupport with Next Business Day Onsite Service anywhere in the world, the company can quickly address any issues. “Dell ProSupport gives us the support we need to run our business,” says Vogt.

Company sees future in hosted and cloud services

Vogt also knows that he has the support of Dell as Pixomondo comes to a crucial point in the development of its IT infrastructure. The business is looking to relocate servers and storage to a data centre with personnel working from virtual workstations. As a result, the company is currently talking to Dell about moving its IT to a Dell data centre in Germany, and from there delivering IT across IP connections to offices globally. “We see Dell data centres as an exciting proposition for Pixomondo to host its IT. This also gives us the opportunity to move to cloud-based services, without risking data security or secrecy,” says Vogt. It would take the agility of the business to a new level and deliver significant savings to the business. “We see our business continuing to grow with Dell as our IT partner because Dell provides us with end-to-end solutions,” says Vogt.



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