Datacentres Ideally Placed to Support Virtual Becoming a Reality

Written by Greg McCulloch
15 April 2016

The datacentre industry has the potential to be the biggest benefactor from the rise in virtual reality (VR), representing a significant driver for business growth, according to Greg McCulloch, CEO of Aegis Data. But to achieve this potential, hosts will need to have confidence that their infrastructure is able to support the highest levels of connectivity, storage and qualities of service these new, immersive experiences are going to require.

Virtual reality has very much been one of the hot topics of 2016. In light of ever-growing demands from consumers for richer audio-visual experiences, combined with increased competition from big industry players keen to capture a market very much in its infancy, research predicts that VR will reach US$6.7 billion in 2016 and potentially US$70 billion by 2020.

As seen with the likes of streaming services and online gaming, organisations are increasingly under pressure to supply and meet ongoing demands for compelling digital content across a wide array of mediums, such as TVs, computers, mobile, gaming consoles and tablets. The rise in virtual reality represents the next stage in this evolution and in order to manage the increase in consumption, content providers will turn to the data centre industry for support:

It seems that we are very much in the midst of a VR revolution. As a concept, its presence has been felt for a long time but limited computing power combined with slow connectivity speeds means there has always been a cap as to what can be achieved.

Fast-forward to today and now that we have the technology in place it looks like early visionaries for VR are starting to see it come to fruition. This in large is being helped by a significant number of industry players such as Facebook's acquisition of Oculus Rift, HTC's

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Vive, PlayStation's Morpheus projects and Google's Cardboard all making virtual a reality for a new generation of gamers, applications and enterprises."

Initially, it will be the gaming market to benefit most from the rise in VR but we expect this to rapidly progress to other industries such as entertainment, healthcare, military services, machinery, manufacturing and aerospace, as well as a host of others. For the data centre industry, VR's emergence represents a huge business growth opportunity and in order to capture this it's imperative that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support this flourishing marketing.

Understanding the culture of the technology, its consumption patterns across different sectors as well as assessing key security concerns will be critical to this process. From an infrastructure perspective speed and connectivity will be essential – historically, one of the criticisms levelled at VR has been its inability to handle the demands placed on it. Having dedicated fibre connections to key Internet Exchanges will enable customers to benefit from high connectivity and speeds, allowing the user to have a seamless, unhindered experience."

Additionally, as data streams created by VR continue to rise, we'll likely see a greater emphasis on organisations needing high performance computing (HPC) capabilities in place, to ensure applications are able to run efficiently, reliably and quickly. By having the necessary data halls, which are able to deliver the high density power and cooling required for the next generation of platforms such as HPC, customers can be reassured that the right capabilities are in place to grow their estates and help safeguard VR's early promise, ensuring it becomes a reality.

The CEO of Aegis Data since May 2015, Greg McCulloch brings 19 years of data centre experience across Europe and Scandinavia and is responsible for accelerating the growth of the company, shaping its future and maintaining the core strength and focus of the business. Greg previously held roles as COO at DigiPlex, as well as MD of Interxion (UK).

Aegis Data provides highly resilient and optimised data centre environments for its customers' mission critical IT. Its state of the art data centre aims to significantly reduce IT expenditure by delivering greater cooling efficiencies across all power densities as well as having the power headroom to allow for IT consolidation and growth.

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With increasingly more customers seeking a road map to increased IT efficiency and value for money, Aegis Data aims to provide the technology and knowledge needed to build and develop and successful colocation and data centre strategy.

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