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Supporting managed services with speed and simplicity.

How **Basefarm** expanded its data center footprint with Lenovo ThinkAgile VX Series appliances powered by VMware vSAN™ to bring high performance and availability to clients for less.

Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions for The Data-Centered

Lenovo

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Background

Basefarm is a leading European managed service provider (MSP) for mission-critical IT. The company offers strategic advice, architecture, and implementation services together with management and operation of solutions on multiple cloud platforms such as Basefarm Cloud, Microsoft Azure, and Amazon Web Services (AWS).

Founded in 2000 in Oslo, Norway, Basefarm was acquired by telecom operator Orange in 2018. The company continues to scale and develop its capabilities to deliver enterprise-level managed services and solutions to businesses. Today, its 700+ strong team serves global clients from offices and data centers across Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany.

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Challenge

As the strategic IT partner for hundreds of companies all over the world—including many large transportation, retail, e-commerce, finance, and public sector organizations—Basefarm provides true peace of mind, so that its clients can focus on running their business and delivering world-class customer experiences.

These companies count on Basefarm to deliver top performance and availability for critical systems and processes at a competitive price. It's a tall order, which makes having a rock-solid IT infrastructure and the right management tools one of Basefarm's biggest priorities.

As business expanded, Basefarm needed to scale up data center resources to meet the demand. The company looked for an infrastructure partner that could meet its needs for cost-effective performance, reliability, and availability—a search that ultimately led it to Lenovo.

" "As an MSP, it's important to have a vendor that is easy to work with and understands our company. Lenovo make it easy to be a customer: they keep things simple for us and we know we can count on their technology to do the job."

Espen Riis Andersen
Head of Server Hardware, Basefarm

Why Lenovo? Trusted technology from a true partner.

As a first step, Basefarm introduced Lenovo ThinkSystem servers to its data center. After thoroughly testing the hardware for build quality and performance—which the ThinkSystem servers passed with flying colors—the company added several Lenovo ThinkAgile Integrated Appliances to the mix.

Lenovo ThinkAgile Integrated Appliances are hyperconverged systems with software from industry leaders such as VMware, Nutanix, and Microsoft pre-loaded on Lenovo platforms. The Lenovo ThinkAgile Series consolidates compute, storage, and virtualization software into a single resource pool. It's all easily managed in scale-out clusters through a single interface.

Espen Riis Andersen, Basefarm's Head of Server Hardware, explains: "We really put the Lenovo ThinkAgile Series appliances through their paces, stress-testing the central processing unit [CPU] for seven days straight. The CPU never exceeded 67ºC and the server temperature did not exceed 30ºC while the fans never went above 30% load. We even tested what would happen when the fans and power supply unit were removed—and the answer is nothing! The servers kept running without fans for five minutes before shut-down. The stability and reliability of the Lenovo servers out-class other vendors' offerings."

With Lenovo, Basefarm doesn't just benefit from tried-and-tested hardware—it has also gained a true partner, who makes it easy for the company to get the most out of its technology investments.

Andersen explains: "Unlike other vendors who require us to go through many layers of approval when purchasing new kit, Lenovo's process is very straightforward. When we need a quote on a new configuration, the Lenovo team makes it happen very quickly and we usually agree on pricing in one to three days. That's a huge bonus as we can get back to our clients with a response fast, and keep the process moving smoothly on our end."

"We like how Lenovo works as a company. They have the size and scale to deliver fast, and they also make it easy to find the right people to talk to. Our main contacts are two people in Norway—that's all we need to do business. We don't have to jump through hoops to get the support we need. Lenovo understands our business and the team has always been very responsive to our needs."

Espen Riis Andersen
Head of Server Hardware, Basefarm

Embracing hyperconverged infrastructure.

Basefarm continues to expand its Lenovo footprint. Most recently, based on the success of its initial Lenovo ThinkAgile HX Series roll-out, the company worked with Lenovo to establish a VMware vSAN™ hyperconverged architecture using Lenovo ThinkAgile VX Series appliances. As the Lenovo ThinkAgile VX Series arrives with hardware already configured and software installed, it was quick and easy for Basefarm to integrate the new platform into its data center. Expert advice from the Lenovo team made the move a cost-effective one too.

Andersen recalls: "We came to Lenovo with a certain vision for Lenovo ThinkAgile VX in mind. They ended up recommending a different configuration that offered us a better price-performance ratio than we had anticipated. We were happy to take their advice. We've continued to scale the infrastructure as our needs grow and we now have more than 20 ThinkAgile VX Series nodes."

He adds: "Lenovo ThinkAgile VX Series fit perfectly into our data center, as VMware vSAN integrates seamlessly with VMware vSphere®—one of the primary hypervisors used across our entire server estate."

Today, Basefarm's data center is home to around 325 Lenovo servers and counting. Crucially, the company can manage them all—both ThinkSystem and ThinkAgile systems—with a single tool: Lenovo XClarity. In addition to providing centralized monitoring of Basefarm's Lenovo landscape, XClarity makes it easy to manage firmware updates and compliance, schedule maintenance windows, provision new systems, and check configuration settings.

"We're big fans of Lenovo XClarity," confirms Andersen. "It gives us a single point of control for all our Lenovo systems. The infrastructure team are very happy with how it works. They can start a job in XClarity, move on to something else, and come back to find it completed successfully. It saves a lot of time on administration. The fact that VMware vSAN integrates so smoothly with Lenovo XClarity means that we can keep on top of software and firmware updates with ease."

"The strong integration between Lenovo and VMware is a big plus for us. It makes it easy for us to set up and manage the environment. We can also count on the platform to deliver the high performance and reliability that our business demands."

Espen Riis Andersen
Head of Server Hardware, Basefarm

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Results

With Lenovo and VMware vSAN technology delivering high availability and stability, Basefarm can ensure predictable performance and maximum uptime for its clients. Alongside this, the company benefits from rapid time-to-production for new systems, thanks to the easy configuration and management offered by Lenovo XClarity.

Andersen says: "The faster we can set up new server instances for our clients the better, and Lenovo XClarity definitely helps with this. It currently takes us around five hours to provision a new system from scratch, which makes it easier for us to stay on top of our clients' demands."

In addition, the Lenovo hardware has proven to be cost-effective and energy-efficient, helping Basefarm run a leaner, greener data center.

"The design of the Lenovo servers allows us to run them cooler than other vendors' hardware," notes Andersen. "We save around 50 watts of energy per server, which adds up to around 7% lower power costs overall. It's good for our bottom line and the environment too."
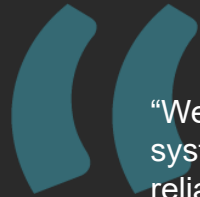
basefarm

✓ **7% lower power costs compared to other server platforms used by Basefarm**

✓ **~5 hours to spin up a new server, driving fast response to business demands**

✓ **Highly available, resilient infrastructure keeps operations running reliably around the clock**

"We're very pleased with the performance and stability of the Lenovo ThinkAgile VX system. High availability is built into the VMware stack and the Lenovo hardware is very reliable. It translates into minimal downtime, which is critical for us as an MSP."

Espen Riis Andersen
Head of Server Hardware, Basefarm

What will you do with Lenovo software-defined infrastructure solutions?

The Data-Centered meet the needs of an ever-growing client base with Lenovo smarter infrastructure solutions, powered by VMware.

Explore Lenovo Software-Defined Infrastructure Solutions

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