

GreenField grows geographically and technically via partnerships

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GreenField Software, an India-based datacenter infrastructure management (DCIM) vendor, was founded in 2010. Since then, the company has partnered to expand geographically in Europe and the US, and is building up its business in India. In addition, GreenField has technical partnerships with VMware and metering firm Packet Power.

The company's DCIM focus is (currently) mostly on the server end, gathering asset and status information, and providing configuration and change management tools. Its approach to DCIM through the extended use of algorithms (see below) remains unusual. With most other DCIM products, the user needs to manually submit scenarios for analysis. In GreenField's DCIM offering, GFS Crane DC, users input their requirements for the datacenter and the optimal solution is proactively calculated.

The 451 Take

GreenField remains focused on the Indian market, where it is shielded from competition. The company still has plenty of opportunity in India for GFS Crane DC. However, it is now partnering to increase its geographic reach and expand its technical capabilities. These partnerships are a way for GreenField to grow sales. GFS Crane DC's use of optimizing algorithms is a differentiator, although such approaches are increasingly common. The company's challenge is to articulate this difference clearly to customers and tie it to a value proposition. One issue that GreenField may need to address more explicitly is that GFS Crane DC's live monitoring capabilities are limited due to its Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP)-based approach – many devices do not support SNMP and therefore some extra work or add-on tools may be needed to access key data.

Context

Kolkata, India-based GreenField Software was founded in 2010 by Shekhar Dasgupta. The company's angel investor is UD Marketing, an India-based engineering firm with a large client base in the manufacturing sector. UD Marketing gives GreenField access to its customers and passes on qualified sales leads to Greenfield's sales team. Together, Dasgupta and UD Marketing have invested \$500,000 in GreenField.

The company has expertise in enterprise software business management. Dasgupta cofounded Oracle India in 1993 with Anil Kaul, who is now the founder and chairman of GFS Europe, a GreenField partner.

GreenField focuses its sales efforts on enterprise datacenters (more than 2,000 servers or 200 racks), especially those undergoing a significant change such as a consolidation project, moving into a new datacenter or migrating to third-party datacenter services.

The company's partnerships are intended to broaden its geographic reach and expand its technical capabilities. It has two partnerships to reach potential customers outside of India: GFS Europe; and ServiceWRx for market development and product implementations in the US. GFS Crane DC has been available in the US and Europe since April 2012. GreenField also recently added HCL, an India-based systems integrator, as a partner. This integration broadens the company's reach both within and outside India. These partnerships are also a way for GreenField to increase sales.

To expand GFS Crane DC's technical capabilities, the company is partnering with VMware, [Nextgen Networks](#) and [Packet Power](#). For GreenField's customers implementing server consolidation, the company is a VMware consulting and integration partner. This partnership means that GreenField can deploy VMware and GFS Crane DC together to assist with server virtualization and consolidation projects. For customers considering migrating to third-party datacenter services, GreenField has a partnership with Nextgen, an Australian colocation provider. Greenfield's customers that use Nextgen can see their off-premises infrastructure with GFS Crane DC.

Packet Power supplements GreenField's monitoring capabilities with meters and smart cables for devices that do not use the SNMP protocol. GreenField is a reseller of Packet Power's products in South Asia. Customers that use Packet Power to add monitoring capabilities will get a more complete, accurate and real-time view of their datacenter's power infrastructure.

GreenField currently has less than \$500,000 in annual revenue, 12 employees and nine product installations ([up from six in January](#)). All of its paying customers are currently in India. The company is one of more than 50 DCIM vendors vying for a small but growing market. We estimate that the [DCIM market is growing at more than 40% per year](#) and will reach \$1.8bn in 2016. Many smaller firms are [struggling to establish a profitable business](#).

Technology

GFS Crane DC monitors the datacenter through SNMP – an approach that works well with servers but can be limited when it comes to meters, sensors and other devices. The software also manages assets, performs scenario planning and provides dashboards with customizable metrics. Additionally, GFS Crane DC has a virtualization planner that suggests consolidations with application awareness. The connections between VMs, physical servers and applications are manually entered, imported from spreadsheets or established through integration with an IT service management (ITSM) offering such as HP's OpenView or IBM's Tivoli.

Most DCIM tools include some form of asset management and monitoring. GreenField uses its GFS Crane Manufacturer Repository (MR) for asset management. GFS Crane MR is a library of datacenter asset types with information about the assets' performance, efficiency and cost. This library can help users identify inefficient equipment and possible replacements for both IT devices and non-IT equipment such as power and cooling hardware.

There are multiple ways to monitor assets in a datacenter. GFS Crane DC employs SNMP polling and SNMP traps for monitoring. Using SNMP to poll live data every five to 10 minutes can be taxing on the network.

Once a datacenter's assets are managed and monitored with GFS Crane MR, GFS Crane DC provides extensive simulation for moves, adds and changes. GFS Crane DC treats the datacenter as an optimization problem. It uses algorithms to proactively find the combination of operational choices that best meet the user's objectives. This approach does not require the user to manually enter different scenarios trying to find the best one. The software optimizes the datacenter scenario based on the user's requirements.

Competition

GreenField faces competition from companies that do major datacenter builds, have a strong presence in India and also have their own DCIM software. One such company is Emerson Network Power with its DCIM offering, Trellis. Schneider Electric also has strong global presence, as well as its own DCIM suite, StruxureWare for Datacenters. Other large players could help bring competing DCIM suppliers into the Indian market as well. For example, ITSM provider BMC Software has a presence in India, and it could bring DCIM vendor Nlyte Software into projects via the technical partnership between the two companies.

Other rivals for GreenField focus on planning and optimization of datacenter cost and performance. These firms include UK-based Romonet with its Romonet Suite; US-based Lumina Decision Systems with its Analytica Data Center Capacity Planning Tool; and US-based Sentilla with its Data Center Performance Management platform.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Customers of GFS Crane DC can input their requirements and use the software's algorithms to find

Weaknesses

The company's SNMP-based monitoring is not advanced

the best simulated state for their datacenter. This approach eliminates the trial and error of other scenario-planning offerings. Besides its product, Greenfield has the advantage of being on the ground in India with experienced Indian management.

Opportunities

Many DCIM firms have yet to take root in India. GreenField could grow in its home territory with less competition than it would face in the more crowded US or European DCIM markets. This may allow breathing room to expand before it fully internationalizes.

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enough for all environments. In dynamic datacenters, GFS Crane DC will need some additional technologies for monitoring.

Threats

GreenField is one of few DCIM providers focusing on India, but this geographic advantage will wane over time.