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DICTU: Creating Sustainable Data Centres

Dienst ICT Uitvoering
Ministerie van Economische Zaken

Dustin

By 2030, the Dutch central government aims to emit 55% less emissions and by 2050 the Netherlands must be climate neutral. An important initiative is the Lower Energy Acceleration Program (LEAP), which aims to improve the energy efficiency of ICT services.

Who are DICTU?

DICTU is one of the largest ICT service providers within the Dutch government and has more than 1,800 professionals who work on IT systems supporting the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Climate Policy and Green Growth, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security, and Nature, including affiliated organizations.

DICTU has two data centers and is working on the most energy-efficient design of both locations as part of LEAP. To achieve this goal, DICTU commissioned a study to gain a baseline measurement of both data centers to determine the current energy consumption and emissions, followed by an analysis with recommendations for achieving the desired level of efficiency and sustainability.

Research and conclusions

The project team collected, assessed and processed all relevant data from DICTU's server estate. The data was analysed to assess all unique server configurations on their performance per unit of energy, the ITEEsv score. This key performance indicator then allows Interact to give a rating on a scale from A+ (high) to F (low), with a higher score indicating high work efficiency in terms of energy consumption and emissions. This provides a performance classification for the entire server environment of DICTU and supports the ecological IT footprint of both data centers.

The main conclusions:

- The IT performance score of both DICTU data centers is a B. That is a very good score, higher than average for organisations in the public sector
- The PUE (Power Usage Effectiveness) is 1.35, well below the industry average
- The server utilisation is average for the sector, this can be increased to improve efficiency
- DICTU's current procurement strategy is very effective. Newly selected configurations are all rated A
- Divesting hardware offers opportunities to improve the efficiency of the entire estate and save costs

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Next steps

The research and report offers DICTU the opportunity to achieve significant sustainability improvements in the short term. The results will also make it possible to meet future reporting obligations of the CSRD and the EED, the new European directive aimed at efficiency in energy-intensive sectors.

In order to achieve the long-term goal of optimally efficient data centers, Interact provides an annual check on the implemented IT performance improvement and identifies new opportunities to increase efficiency. Raising a datacenter to the level of a grade A requires continuous attention. Interact is committed to assist DICTU in this journey to optimisation.

Interact's unprecedented expertise and experience has provided valuable insights and actionable results for DICTU. It has brought our goal of sustainable data centers closer. This was possible thanks to the excellent cooperation and the great mutual trust.

Daniël Eshuis
Project Manager LEAP, DICTU

DICTU constantly showed an impressive commitment to providing highly sustainable digital services. Their clear expertise in ICT provision and management is matched by their willingness to constantly refine and improve their approach to to get the best outcomes for all their stakeholders.

Rich Kenny
Managing Director, Interact

Dustin and Interact

As an IT partner, Dustin wants to help it's customers make their IT organisation more sustainable. That's why Dustin has been working with Interact since 2022. Interact is an independent party that conducts scientific research into performance in terms of energy efficiency and emissions of IT hardware within data centers. Interact has a unique knowledge position and is able to advise on a more sustainable use of IT. Interact has advised hundreds of customers worldwide, including Fortune 200 and FTSE 100 companies, helping them save thousands tons of CO2, megawatts of energy and millions of dollars in costs.