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ENABLING GROWTH THROUGH GREATER IT FLEXIBILITY

Tokiwa in Japan provides employees with a more flexible infrastructure using hyper-converged appliances that deploy IT in minutes

TOKIWA   Manufacturing | Japan

Business needs

With the business continuing to expand, Tokiwa needed to refresh the back-end infrastructure supporting its virtual desktop users. Disk space and input/output operations per second (IOPS) for storage were impacting the performance of the virtual desktop infrastructure solution.

Solutions at a glance

- Software-Defined Data Center
- Networking
- Data Protection
- Cloud Client-Computing

Business results

- Highly scalable architecture enables continued expansion
- Virtualized servers ready in just five minutes
- Simplified management increases IT productivity

- 20-day deployment time for hyper-converged platform
- Comprehensive support helps guarantee high performance

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Shinji Sato
ICT Section Head, ICT Business Department, Human Resources & General Affairs Division, Tokiwa

Tokiwa is a leading developer, producer and marketer of cosmetics in Japan. The company's manufacturing locations are in Japan, and it also has marketing offices in the U.S, France, China, and the Philippines. The company also designs the outer packaging of cosmetics and supplies them to other manufacturers as an original equipment manufacturer.

Product development is key in the cosmetics industry, because of the frequent copying that goes on. Tokiwa focuses its resources on continually developing new designs that differentiate it from competitors. To streamline development processes and maximize the efficiency of the organization, Tokiwa has invested in IT. The company created a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) and rolled out Dell Wyse thin clients across its offices. For product designers, Tokiwa deployed Dell Precision workstations to give them as much support as possible and implemented the Dell Precision Optimizer to improve application performance.

Expansion prompts need to strengthen

The VDI reduced both hardware costs and management time, and Tokiwa virtualized a growing number of systems as time went on. Yet, as the company expanded and began opening more offices, stakeholders saw the need to strengthen the back-end infrastructure supporting its virtualized platform. Problems with the existing infrastructure included storage scalability and a lack of performance due to insufficient input/output operations per second (IOPS).

Time for a new approach

Tokiwa identified the Dell EMC XC Series Hyper-Converged Appliance with Nutanix™ software as a possible solution. With this technology, Tokiwa would gain the stability and high performance of an appliance built on a hardware platform based on Dell EMC PowerEdge servers. Additionally, with the XC series and Nutanix software, the company would be implementing a software-defined web-scale platform that enables storage and virtualized servers to be added quickly. These appliances consolidate compute and storage in a single appliance while offering scalability, ease of use and low total cost of ownership.

During tests of the Dell EMC XC Series Hyper-Converged Appliance, stakeholders identified how well Nutanix software worked with the VDI's hypervisor technology, VMware® ESIi. They also liked that Nutanix Acropolis Block Services provided native block-level storage access via the iSCSI protocol, eliminating the need for expensive fiber channel links.

"Compared to building physical servers, this is much more convenient. A hyper-converged server and storage system can be made available very quickly."

Shoichi Hasegawa
General Manager,
ICT / Secretarial Section,
Human Resources & General Affairs Division,
Tokiwa

Shoichi Hasegawa, General Manager of the ICT / Secretarial Section at the Human Resources & General Affairs Division at Tokiwa, says, "Our attention was drawn to the Dell EMC XC Series Hyper-Converged Appliance with Nutanix software because it was so highly flexible. For the appliance, we selected the Dell EMC XC730xd server with Intel Xeon E5 v4 processors." Tokiwa purposely waited for the Intel Xeon E5 v4 processors to be released before pressing ahead with the purchase. Hasegawa says, "There was an ongoing upgrade from v3 to v4, which meant an improvement in performance with lower power consumption."

In total, Tokiwa bought four Dell EMC XC Series Hyper-Converged Appliances to support the VDI. At the same time, it also bought a Dell EMC Networking N4032F switch to provide 10 Gigabit Ethernet iSCSI links between the nodes and deliver fast access to stored data. Tokiwa found the N4032F easily handled the Nutanix software.

Implementation efficiency meets deadline

Tokiwa wanted to deploy the Dell EMC solution fast and successfully met its objective with the assistance of Dell Deployment Services. With only 20 days to complete the implementation, it was going to be a challenge to install the solution on time, but Tokiwa did it. Shinji Sato, ICT Section Head of the ICT Business Department at the Human Resources & General Affairs Division at Tokiwa, says, "One of the reasons we managed to deploy the solution so fast was because the Dell EMC technician knew so much about storage. If it had not been a hyper-converged solution, we might have taken half a year to complete the deployment."

Close support keeps work on track

Despite a small, post-deployment challenge, Tokiwa avoided any delays in using the Dell EMC appliance platform. According to Futoshi Sagiyama, ICT Team Leader of the ICT Business Department at the Human Resources & General Affairs Division at Tokiwa, this was due to the work of ProSupport Plus.

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The company has a ProSupport Plus agreement with Dell EMC, which provides them with 24/7 assistance and a Dell Technical Account Manager to help coordinate support responses. Says Sagiyama, "We informed ProSupport Plus, and the support team resolved our issue straightaway. The instruction was clear, and that helped a lot. If we have any problems in the future, we know that we can rely on ProSupport Plus."

Company delivers IT faster to employees

Today, Tokiwa can respond quickly to changes in the IT needs of the business. They can make new storage and virtualized server resources available to employees in no more than five minutes. Hasegawa says, "Compared to building physical servers, this is much more convenient. A hyper-converged server and storage system can be made available very quickly." He also highlights the

reduction in labor costs and increase in IT productivity from implementing servers on the Dell EMC XC Series Hyper-Converged Appliance compared with a physical infrastructure. He says, "In a virtual environment, the work can be more easily managed."

Greater IT support boosts levels of service

Tokiwa employees deliver greater levels of service to customers using the VDI supported by the web-scale appliances. They access computer-aided design software through the VDI while visiting customer sites. Comments Hasegawa, "We like to bring tablets to our customer visits and often make small design changes for the customer. Structural calculations that are not possible using a tablet or notebook are available in VDI. No data is left on the devices, making the whole platform very secure."

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