

BFSI Provider Saves Rs1 Crore Annually with Virtualization

Industry: Financial Products and Services

Head Quarter: Bengaluru, India

Client: Leading provider of online trading offline trading products with over 7 lakh customers

Objective

- Network Manageability
- Reduce Hardware Downtime
- Cost Cutting
- Scalability

Solution

- HP BladeSystem c7000
- VMware's Hypervisor 5.5 Update 1
- VMware vCenter management server
- VMotion
- HP Virtual Connect
- VMware Clusters

Service Provider: Swan Solutions (Mumbai)

Results

- Single Point Management
- Easy Maintenance

A financial services provider with over 1,700 branches wanted to reduce costs through better use of processes, tools and people. By leveraging virtualization and blade enclosures, Swan Solutions helped a leading provider of financial products to cut costs, improve productivity and ensure data availability 24/7.

The enterprise is one of India's leading retail broking houses with over 7 lakh customers and a pan-India presence across locations. Being in the finance business, the enterprise understood that downtime is directly proportional to financial loss. Besides, there was a dire need to get its branches more connected, and in a less cumbersome fashion. The enterprise contacted Mumbai-based Swan Solutions to solve these issues without disturbing business continuity.

Challenges

High costs: The enterprise used 27 racks to run its systems and managed 390 servers. The budget kept aside annually for each rack was Rs7-10 lakh, which worked out to about Rs 2 crore annually. Faced with the spiraling cost of running the servers, the enterprise decided to turn to virtualization.

Maintenance: The enterprise used over 390 ports to access the server. Maintaining the vLAN configuration was a challenge in itself because of physical servers and network cable layout that were difficult to manage.

Hardware Downtime: In the current system, each server ran on a single hardware platform and if any server failed, it would take at least half an hour to rectify the problem.

Scalability: It wasn't possible to immediately add on-demand additional memory and hard drive to match the requirement. This was a lengthy process which involved getting approvals from the management and following prescribed protocols.

Swan Solution's Approach

Swan Solutions set up the whole infrastructure and run the virtual environment in a short period of time, i.e. 20 days. *"If the client demands a backup service or even a new virtual machine, it can be provided immediately,"* comments Altaf Hussain, Solutions Head, Swan Solutions. *"It is this capability to provide end-to-end solutions in a short period that sets us apart from our competitors,"* he adds.

HP BladeSystem c7000: Swan Solutions replaced 250 physical servers out of 390 by installing and configuring HP BladeSystem c7000 enclosure with 16 HP Blade servers. All the 250 physical servers were removed physically from data center, which gave them access to plenty of real estate space.

VMware's Hypervisor 5.1 update 1: With the update, VMware can run multiple applications on one server without any issues around operating systems, instead of running just one application as was done earlier.

VMware vCenter management server: This provides a centralized platform to manage, automate and deliver a virtual infrastructure with confidence. The enterprise can now configure, manage and monitor all the servers virtually over a single platform.

VMotion: A high-availability mode for the application and vMotion were added to avoid hardware downtime. This enables the live migration of running virtual machines from one physical server to another with zero downtime. vLAN environments were configured with eight cables - a steep fall from 300 cables - in redundancy mode.

HP Virtual Connect: This helped reduce costs up to 65 percent by converging and consolidating server, storage, and network connectivity onto a common fabric with a later topology and fewer switches.

VMware Clusters: Swan Solutions grouped hosts into three categories – Database, Applications and User Acceptance Testing (UAT). A VMware Cluster was created for each environment. Thus, if the database fails, only one cluster has to be checked and fixed.

Business Benefits

- The move from physical to a virtual environment helped the enterprise rid 20 racks from their premise. This results in cost savings of over Rs 1 crore annually - including maintenance cost, electricity bills and real estate.
- Hardware infrastructure reduced from 250 to 16 servers, and the rack space utilization has decreased from 20 to 3 rack spaces. This reduced the need for multiple cables, and planned downtime has also come down considerably.
- With the new system, they can focus better on network-manageability. With a single management console, employees are able to manage all sixteen blade servers and 250 virtual machines from one point.
- The system generates alerts in case of any hardware or virtual environment failure. This makes it easier to manage multiple vLAN environments.

- Reduced Downtime
- Minimized Hardware Infrastructure
- Lower Running Costs
- Unified Solution to Manage Entire Network Remotely
- Business Continuity
- Redundancy
- Threat Detection

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