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CASE STUDY

SERVICE PROVIDER MOVES TO CLOUD SERVICE DELIVERY AND REDEFINES BUSINESS

Enspire creates a new business model based on the
Vblock™ Infrastructure Platforms

Executive Summary

Enspire Australia Pty. Ltd.
IT Services Provider
Melbourne, Australia

Challenge

- Existing infrastructure could not scale to support cloud offerings
- Bringing a new client on board took 10 to 13 weeks
- Manual management and provisioning was time-consuming, difficult, and frustrating

Solution

- Vblock™ Infrastructure Platform
- VCE Seamless Support

Results

- Increased staff morale by eliminating manual management and provisioning processes
- Reduced provisioning from 13 to six weeks, with a goal of achieving two-week deployments
- Gained new service opportunities by offering Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) solution

Challenge

Established in 1999, Enspire Australia Pty. Ltd. began as a traditional system integrator and ISP. The company specialized in strategy, planning, deployment, and maintenance of servers and desktops for small and mid-tier businesses. In 2006, Enspire recognized that companies were moving toward hosted solutions and aligned its data center and services to providing hosted desktop services, primarily for financial services clients.

Over the next several years, Enspire's customers and the number of applications they required grew. Growth demanded additional infrastructure and made provisioning and management much more complex. For example, some customers had more than 60 different applications, and Enspire was responsible for provisioning, maintaining, upgrading, and patching each. The company's existing infrastructure also lacked scalability. Everything done for one client had to be repeated for each new client—

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—Geoffrey Nicholas, Chief
Executive Officer, Enspire

procurement, building, and provisioning new servers; adding rack space; and conducting stringent user acceptance testing. With manual processes, it took 10 to 13 weeks to provision a new customer. Even with an existing client, it was difficult to accommodate growth.

"We understood the value of cloud computing and began to see growing acceptance for cloud in Australia," says Geoffrey Nicholas, chief executive officer of Enspire. "We also like owning the end-to-end processes in providing cloud-based solutions. However, our existing architecture did not support our vision or deliver the quality and reliability that we require."

Enspire significantly restructured its business and began evaluating infrastructure alternatives. At the time, the company had approximately 400 seats under management and set a new, highly aggressive goal of bringing 10,000 seats under management. In addition, Enspire had to be able to accelerate provisioning, deliver flawless service, and become operationally more efficient.

At about the same time, Enspire was working with Cisco, which shared market intelligence about IaaS opportunities in Australia. This new insight helped Enspire enhance its business plan by identifying target customers, types of services, and a continuous roadmap underpinned by innovation.

Solution

With the future firmly in mind, the Enspire team evaluated several infrastructure options, but the Vblock Infrastructure Platforms stood head and shoulders above the alternatives. The Vblock platform is the only platform that combines best-in-class virtualization, networking, computing, storage, security, and management technologies with end-to-end vendor accountability. When the Enspire team saw how VCE had integrated the Cisco, EMC, and VMware technologies, they were impressed with the ease of management and the advanced capabilities.

Enspire chose the Vblock 1 system, which is composed of the Cisco® Unified Computing System™, EMC CLARiiON CX4 unified storage, and VMware vSphere 4. The Vblock platform brings the benefits of a private cloud within reach of small to medium-sized businesses. In addition to integrated computing, storage, and virtualization capabilities, Enspire gained comprehensive business continuity and disaster recovery capabilities, high performance, and simplified management.

"We sell confidence and peace of mind so the solution had to be robust and almost bulletproof," says Nicholas. "We can take advantage of virtualization, fiber channel connectivity, and built-in redundancy—it was everything we were looking for. If anything does fail, our customers are not affected."

Logicalis installed Enspire's Vblock platform in just three weeks. VCE provided architecture and design guidance to help minimize risks and delivered outstanding support during and after implementation. VCE Seamless Support provides an ongoing central point of contact for all of Enspire's platform support needs moving forward.

"The Logicalis team was outstanding," says Nicholas. "I was really impressed with the quality of the staff—very helpful, approachable, and extremely accountable for what they were delivering."

Results

Enspire is the first commercial IaaS provider to offer the Vblock platform-based cloud solutions to the Australian market. The Vblock platforms support its flagship GoDesktop service—cloud-based delivery of the entire desktop to end users within client firms. Enspire also provides IaaS to key accounts, with one client already virtualizing its entire infrastructure on Enspire's new platform. The platform enables Enspire to expand the portfolio of services it can offer, which was not previously a possibility because the existing platform was so limited. Nicholas sees the Vblock platform as critical to gaining business advantage as the new services universe evolves.

"Cloud-based services are crucially important to helping clients maximize their IT dollars, but they also redefine how business is conducted," he says. "With a cloud model, we can save clients a lot of money, deliver significant productivity improvements, experience less downtime, and keep up to date easily. And we can usually achieve these goals for far less than it would cost to deliver services on site."

Increased Staff Morale

Staff morale is soaring as technical teams are freed from break-fix issues and manual processes required to keep dozens of different systems running. Virtualization vastly simplifies management, and the engineers enjoy working on clients' applications and environments running on the Vblock platform.

"To be successful, we need our people," says Nicholas. "People matter here and are key to everything, and they love working on this type of infrastructure."

Rapid Provisioning

The Enspire team almost immediately reduced provisioning time by half, provisioning customers in just six to eight weeks instead of 13. The company expects to further reduce the time to four weeks as its new processes become established. For example, engineers now engage with clients from the beginning of the relationship. When a client signs the agreement, the team already knows which applications they have and what they will need. The virtual environment can be created within a day or so, accelerating the application loading and acceptance testing processes. Enspire's ultimate goal is to provision new clients in two weeks, and the Vblock platform is expected to be an integral element in achieving that goal.

Scalability and Reliability

The new platform gives Enspire the high scalability and reliability it needs to successfully deliver high-availability, mission-critical applications and services for its clients. High availability also builds client trust, increases their productivity, and helps maximize their profitability.

Cost Savings

Prior to making the decision to purchase a Vblock platform, Enspire performed a return on investment (ROI) analysis to make sure that the investment would deliver a strong payback. The company projects support costs to be greatly reduced and the increased economies of scale to deliver further savings. By selling an incremental number of new client seats, Enspire quickly achieved cash neutrality.

The Enspire team also likes the small footprint. They continually strive to be an environmentally conscious company and view the new Vblock platform as a major step forward in achieving this goal.

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Product and Services List

- Cisco Unified Computing System B Series Blade Servers
- Cisco UCS 6120XP Fabric Interconnect
- Cisco UCS Manager
- Cisco Nexus 1000v Series Switches
- Cisco Adaptive Security Appliance
- Cisco SMARTnet Service
- EMC CLARiiON CX4-480
- VMware vSphere 4
- VCE Seamless Support

For More Information

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ABOUT VCE

VCE, the Virtual Computing Environment Company formed by Cisco and EMC with investments from VMware and Intel, accelerates the adoption of converged infrastructure and cloud-based computing models that dramatically reduce the cost of IT while improving time to market for our customers. VCE, through the Vblock platform, delivers the industry's first completely integrated IT offering with end-to-end vendor accountability. VCE's prepackaged solutions are available through an extensive partner network, and cover horizontal applications, vertical industry offerings, and application development environments, allowing customers to focus on business innovation instead of integrating, validating and managing IT infrastructure.

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