



“To roll out our new system, we could either use 100 physical servers, or 10 VMware ESX servers. Going with VMware was kind of a no-brainer: less servers to buy and manage, reduced power and cooling, smaller data center footprint—you get the idea.”

— Joe Brandley
IT Systems Manager,
Pechanga Resort and Casino

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Challenge

Reduce time required for rolling out new systems

Solution

VMware Infrastructure 3 creates a virtual infrastructure that is easy to deploy and easy to manage.

VMware at Work

VMware Infrastructure 3.5 Enterprise, featuring:

- ESX Server 3.5 with VMFS
- VirtualCenter 2.5
- VMotion
- Distributed Resource Scheduler (DRS)
- High Availability (HA)

Deployment environment

- Dell 2950 server with Intel Xeon processors attached to an EMC DMX4 storage array using about 7.5 TB of storage for VMware
- Guest operating systems: Windows 2003, Ubuntu, Red Hat
- Virtualized production applications: Core proprietary application that runs the slots and gaming operations, Microsoft Sharepoint, Cool Signs digital signage application, Radius servers, domain controllers
- Virtualized pre-production applications: Microsoft Exchange 2007

Pechanga Resort and Casino

Located in Southern California, the Pechanga Resort and Casino (Pechanga) employs approximately 4,200 people and features a 188,000 square foot casino floor and more than 3,600 state of the art slot machines amongst other amenities.

Pechanga's core gaming system interface handles over 250,000 transactions per day. Another main application running pushes monthly content updates to over 3,600 gaming devices, while Pechanga's slot and player reporting systems provide over 500 reports to internal users.

When Pechanga needed to roll out a new system to support this core gaming functionality, it decided that virtualization was the way to go. “Bringing in a new system has always been a bit of a pain because of the time it takes to rack and install the servers and bring them into production,” says Joe Brandley, IT systems manager at Pechanga. “Instead of implementing traditional servers, we decided to implement the entire system using VMware technology.”

Deploying VMware Infrastructure 3.5 has allowed Pechanga to greatly increase the efficiency of its IT operations, reducing the time required to go live with new systems. “With our VMware ESX hypervisors in place, we're able to roll out 40 to 50 servers very, very quickly,” says Brandley. “That helps the IT team to meet its deadlines so that it's business as usual at the casino and resort.”

Results

- Deploy servers in minutes, not hours. “A traditional server would take us anywhere from four to eight hours to provision, depending on whether or not it was storage-attached—never mind the four weeks it takes to get a server shipped to us,” says Brandley. “Now, we're getting it all done in under 15 minutes.”
- Avoid thousands of dollars in hardware costs. “From the infrastructure we've put in place, we would've needed 100 physical servers,” says Brandley. “Instead, we're able to do it with just 10 ESX hypervisors.”
- Strengthen business continuity capabilities. “If we have a physical hardware failure, it doesn't affect any of our systems at all,” says Brandley. “VMware Infrastructure 3.5 features like High Availability (HA) make sure we stay up and running.”

