



My VMware: Providing a World Class Customer Experience

vFabric delivers enterprise-class foundation for ease of doing business, reduced support and customer satisfaction

Business Transformation through IT Transformation

Business Need:

- Improved and simplified licensing entitlement management
- Modernize the information architecture supporting customer accounts and customer data
- Reduce customer support requests
- Enable customers to manage and organize their entitlements in a flexible, self-structured way
- Ensure great customer self-service experience

Challenge:

- As VMware grew, the information architecture for recognizing customer data did not scale
- High volume of service requests into VMware meant high support costs
- Escalation to IT of support requests involving unreliable customer data meant further costs and unsatisfied customers
- Needed to work directly with customers to validate solutions being built and assumptions about their data

VMware began by providing great solutions for small and medium-sized businesses. As it rapidly grew into a global company serving over 400K enterprise customers, its legacy processes for managing customer entitlements would not scale and needed to change. The handling of customer account data was becoming a central concern as shown in voice of the customer surveys, feedback and in the volume of services requests associated with licensing data.

VMware sought to unify and simplify the customer's experience of managing data with emphasis on licensing and entitlement information.

"Our information architecture for managing customer data and recognizing customers still had its roots in our beginnings with much smaller companies. We still relied on the customer's email domain for customer recognition and that just didn't scale," said Paul Chapman, Vice President, Information Technology. "The My VMware initiative was launched to deliver a seamless, end-to-end process flow of customer information and to ensure the positive ease of doing business with a great customer experience."

VMware – and its customers – needed a modern, enterprise portal experience that easily presented access to licensing and entitlement data. The answer: My VMware, a set of integrated customer processes, focused on improving the customer experience and making VMware an easy company with which to do business.

Launched in April 2012, the usage stats around My VMware attest to its power in offering a centralized way of conducting business with VMware. Over 400K enterprise entitlement accounts have been converted, daily there are over 40K unique user logins, 7K new user registrations, 65K product downloads and 1M system requests.

My VMware simplifies and streamlines customer interactions with VMware and provides an account-based view of license keys, support requests, contracts and other information. Customers can also download products, view order history and file support requests.

“Because of the more accurate and cleaner view of data, My VMware streamlines the maintenance renewals process, reducing the time needed to go from renewal quote to order conversion,” noted Chapman. Moreover, the new solution has dramatically improved customer satisfaction while reducing overall support costs. Accurate licensing entitlement data allows the sales team to easily identify which customers are due for renewal and become more proactive in the process.

VMware turned to customers and partners for direct, “voice of the customer” input on the My VMware solution. “We reached out to a large number of our customers, working with them one-on-one to understand their pain points in working with our systems and data and to validate the solutions being built,” said Chapman.

The VMware team worked directly with customers on proof of concepts for how the My VMware system would work. This close relationship with customers allowed VMware to vet its data conversion assumptions and beta test the user experience of the My VMware solution.

“We invited customers and partners to participate in voice of the customer and beta testing sessions which allowed us to get continual feedback throughout,” noted Chapman. “We shared with customers early and often what we were building.”

My VMware is a custom-built application utilizing the PAAS vFabric platform; the solution was built using Spring development frameworks, GemFire data caching, the vFabric tc server and monitoring using Hyperic. According to Chapman, “Leveraging the PAAS approach and the vFabric technology suite enabled us to ramp up very quickly, and leverage a very agile development process with at times two code base deployments a day.”

“Customers ask us frequently to show them how VMware leverages its own solutions to add value to our own business,” noted Chapman. “My VMware is a great use-case for sharing our own ‘VMware-on-VMware’ initiative with existing and potential customers.”