Omni Companies

ACUMEN

OMNI COMPANIES

Industry
Financial Services and Insurance

Corporate Headquarters
Vancouver, Canada

Employees
110

Website
http://www.omnicorp.ca

THE NUMBERS

- 30% of organization using virtual desktops
- 1:15 server ratio (only 3 hosts, 47 virtual machines, required to deliver services)
- $25,000 annual OpEx savings

IN BRIEF

Objective
Introduce a virtualized infrastructure for secure delivery of services to both employees and customers, while targeting compliance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) and minimizing complexity.

Solution
Traditional paper-based ordering and claims-management processes were replaced by a VMware cluster of servers hosted by a local datacenter service provider and secured by Trend Micro solutions for virtual desktops and servers.

Business Impact
- Flexible, easy, software-as-a-service solution for customers
- Centralized deployment, with lowered operating costs
- Low-impact and highly effective security, for minimized risk of data loss
- Transformational business model that sets the company apart from the competition

Financial Services Provider Target a Secure, PCI DSS-Compliant, Virtualized Environment for Online Services

"Our goal was to come up with a scalable foundation that was compliant with the standards required in the insurance and finance industries... The answer was a VMware cluster of servers hosted by a local datacenter service provider and protected with Trend Micro security."

— Jeff Jackson, Co-Founder & CEO, Acumen Technologies (Omni technology partner)

With an impressive list of blue-chip financial services customers, Omni sets high standards for securing its mission-critical infrastructure. The best-in-class business recently introduced an innovative new online delivery model for its warranty management services. Omni replaced its traditional paper-based ordering and claims management with a custom software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution.

"Dealerships can now log in and generate warranty policies online," says Jeff Jackson, Co-Founder & CEO at Acumen Technologies, who is responsible for deploying and securing Omni's new infrastructure. "To make that happen, Omni brought us in to execute a security, hardening and compliance project."

The technology partner faced the challenge of building a highly cost-effective and easy-to-manage virtual infrastructure, as well as securing that infrastructure.

VMware Cluster Introduces a Scalable Foundation

"Our goal was to come up with a scalable foundation that was compliant with the standards required in the insurance and finance industries," Jackson says. "The answer was a VMware cluster of servers hosted by a local datacenter service provider and protected by Trend Micro security. We gave Omni flexible access over an internal MPLS network. This would ensure an always-on service for dealers and employees."

The virtualized datacenter has greatly increased cost efficiencies at many levels. Three hosts currently support 47 virtual machines that service the entire organization and over 1000 dealerships, writing over 250,000 insurance policies per year. Virtual machines can be deployed from templates in minutes, and all servers are kept at the same specifications and patch levels.

"Omni has been able to avoid the cost of installing and configuring individual servers, which adds up to at least $6,000 right at the start," explains Jackson. "Consolidating on three hosts also trims down annual hardware maintenance costs by $18,000. This is just for hardware. Omni will also be able to greatly minimize licensing costs for various software solutions."

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> Acumen Technologies

The virtualized service delivery platform gives Omni invaluable flexibility, since clients can be moved between hosts depending on load and functionality requirements. The inherent redundancies of the virtual datacenter also allow them to deliver excellent service levels and take advantage of disaster recovery capabilities offered by the datacenter provider.

"The VMware cluster is a real plus—Omni's clients will enjoy increased performance and improved security, and Omni as a company benefits from the lowesr cost of ownership and faster time to value for the service," says Jackson.

Securing the Virtual Environment

"We wanted security on a level that would give confidence to Omni underwriters and customers, on par with PCI DSS compliance," Jackson notes. "The datacenter already had physical security; what we needed was a shield around the servers. Trend Micro Deep Security, with several layers of protection for virtual servers, fits very well into our customer-facing infrastructure."

The new solution has also been carefully evaluated in terms of performance. "As important as security is, it absolutely cannot interfere with business transactions," explains Jackson. "This is a production environment, and you can't have security slowing down your database management systems. Trend Micro Deep Security, with its agentless architecture designed for a VMware environment, is very lightweight in a virtual server infrastructure. And we can tailor policies to each virtual server's requirements based on the applications. It is a very efficient and flexible solution."

Since virtual desktops can still introduce threats, Omni wanted to harden its infrastructure all the way out to each remote site. Jackson says, "Trend Micro Enterprise Security for Endpoints complements our datacenter security and extends protection out to virtual desktops for employees and customers."

The combination of datacenter and endpoint security lets Omni scale protection as the infrastructure and customer base grow. "Trend Micro's datacenter and virtual desktop infrastructure security solutions keep security scalable and simple and fit our centralized managed services model," says Jackson. Acumen provides full-time onsite IT support, IT governance and project portfolio management for Omni. "Without adding any new hardware, we can have new endpoints up and running securely in minutes."

In-the-Cloud Protection

The Trend Micro solutions at Omni leverage the threat intelligence of the Trend Micro Smart Protection Network infrastructure. This next-generation innovation combines sophisticated cloud-based reputation technology, feedback loops and the expertise of TrendLabs researchers to deliver real-time protection from emerging threats.

"The way that Trend Micro approaches security, with the Smart Protection Network infrastructure, was the reason we chose Trend Micro solutions," Jackson says. "Trend Micro is more proactive in understanding the security landscape and knowing how cybercriminals are working. To predict and preempt threats, you have to have this understanding. Trend Micro does, and as a result, the Trend Micro solutions can detect threats very quickly."

The Trend Micro solutions proved to be very easy to implement. "Trend Micro keeps the interfaces as simple as possible and gives us the support we need to get up to speed on the solutions very quickly," says Jackson.

Competitive Strength with a Secure, Innovative Services Model

Today, Omni has confidently introduced its transformational online services. "Omni executives are now very appreciative of the benefits of virtualization," Jackson says. "The company has virtualized approximately 90 percent of its servers now, because of the success of this service delivery model. Overall, Omni can now deploy servers very quickly without having to wait for hardware or get into the datacenters. Within the VMware cluster, clone servers can extend applications very quickly or shrink them down to avoid wasting hardware resources. And migrations can be accomplished very quickly and cost effectively with the minimized hardware environment."

The strength of the Trend Micro solution also raised confidence levels within Omni's executive team.

"We needed to secure a complex production environment—servers, endpoints and virtual desktops," notes Jackson. "Security had to support the latest operating systems and the most current virtualization technology. Trend Micro met the requirements of our virtualized service delivery infrastructure. They think about security in a way that makes us feel more confident; they understand virtualization and threats, and they give us the visibility we need to do business in the online world.

"Deep Security preempts and really shuts the doors on threats for virtual environments. The Trend Micro solution also gives us really good reporting and status updates. With Trend Micro security, we have great visibility over our total environment.

"Partnering with Trend Micro really helped make this project a success. We have been able to build a secure private cloud for Omni's business, and this will continue to grow in pace with the business. Data security also scales, which is vital since this financial services company has to comply with Canada's privacy regulations surrounding customer information."

IMPLEMENTATION OVERVIEW

VMware Products:	Applications:	Platform:
VMware ESX® servers	Warranty orders and claims processing (custom SaaS solution)	3 HP DL380 dual quad servers for service delivery
VMware vSphere™ 4.1		Brocade SAN switches
VMware vCenter	**Partner:**	IBM SAN
VMware vShield™ Endpoint	Acumen Technologies	**Security:**
		Trend Micro Enterprise Security for Endpoints
		Trend Micro Deep Security