



IBC Bank Changes the Economics of Its VDI Environment with High-Performance, Cost-Effective VMware Virtual SAN Solution

INDUSTRY

Financial services

LOCATION

Laredo, Texas

KEY CHALLENGES

- Vendors withdrawing support from legacy operating systems, leading to heavier IT management burden
- Additional storage needed to accommodate heavy-duty I/O work that a VDI environment puts on the infrastructure
- Overprovisioned storage required to stay one step ahead of the VDI's demands, utilizing extra storage resources only under peak conditions

SOLUTION

By deploying the VMware Virtual SAN solution, the IT team at IBC Bank is able to realize significant cost savings by migrating data from more costly legacy solutions.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Completely changed the economics of IBC's VDI solution, enabling the company to add storage capacity in small, manageable increments
- Enabled the company to virtualize more than 90 percent of its servers
- Established agnostic environment for faster, easier, less-expensive upgrades in the future

With VMware Virtual SAN™ technology, IBC Bank realized significant cost savings by migrating data from more costly legacy solutions. The company also optimized the performance of VMware Horizon® View™ Standard Edition and VMware Mirage™ software, making it easier and more cost-effective than ever to manage and provision storage. As a result, IBC completely changed the economics of its environment by virtualizing 90 percent of its servers and converting 1,300 desktops enterprise-wide.

IBC Bank was founded in 1996 to meet the needs of small businesses in Laredo, Texas. Today, it serves as the flagship bank of International Bancshares Corporation, serving more than 89 communities throughout Texas and Oklahoma.

The Challenge

Like many regional banks, IBC supports a large community of users across a wide geographic area with a diverse array of servers, operating systems, and applications. In recent years, however—as key vendors began withdrawing support from older operating systems—the company took a closer look at desktop virtualization solutions to ease the growing burden of IT management.

At first, IBC Bank deployed VMware Horizon View Standard Edition on a relatively small scale, using the solution to deliver virtualized and remote desktops to a few hundred employees. That was a fine start, but IBC wanted to step up its virtualization efforts by deploying VMware Mirage software for unified image management across physical desktops, virtual workspaces, and mobile devices. The company also hoped to back away from its longstanding dependence on virtual private network (VPN) connections, liberating network personnel from the constant hassle of certificate management.

There was just one catch. Deploying Mirage software would require additional storage to accommodate all the heavy-duty I/O work that a virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) puts on the IT environment. That meant overprovisioning storage to stay one step ahead of the VDI's demands, utilizing those extra storage resources only under peak conditions—a tremendously expensive way of doing things, especially when most IT environments simply don't have the luxury of supporting idle resources.

"I approached one of our longtime vendors," says Chris Reynolds, senior systems engineer at IBC. "I asked how much it would cost to add another shelf with 20 terabytes of storage, and they told me it would be more than \$180,000. I immediately started thinking two or three years down the road, when we would need to do the exact same thing all over again. And I realized it just doesn't make sense anymore."

“Virtual SAN lets us buy what we need, when we need it. With non-disruptive scaling, we can add more capacity or increase performance at any time without interrupting our operations.”

Chris Reynolds
Senior Systems Engineer,
IBC Bank

VMWARE FOOTPRINT

- VMware Virtual SAN
- VMware Mirage
- VMware Horizon View Standard Edition

APPLICATIONS VIRTUALIZED

- Microsoft Office

The Solution

The IT team at IBC Bank was aware of other virtualized storage solutions on the market, but VMware Virtual SAN technology was the only one they seriously explored. They were attracted by the solution's price, simplicity, agility, and streamlined management, but one benefit stood out from the rest. "Considering the challenges we face in maintaining our heterogeneous environment, we've begun to see the value of minimizing the number of vendors we work with," says Reynolds. "In my experience, VMware solutions are rock solid. I simply have confidence in the company."

Deploying VMware Virtual SAN software was extraordinarily simple. And once the solution was in place, managing and provisioning storage for IBC's virtualized environment was easier than ever. "Virtual SAN didn't require much training for anyone on our team," says Reynolds. "They already knew how to provision virtual machines through the Web client, and this solution uses the same interface."

Virtual SAN technology enabled IBC to virtualize more than 90 percent of its servers enterprise-wide. In addition, the company converted more than 1,300 desktops with help from Mirage software. "We've virtualized just about every function, from marketing to wire transfers to accounting," says Reynolds. "In fact, we're ready to move all of our Test/Dev boxes to the Virtual SAN solution. That would've been cost-prohibitive before, but now we have more flexibility. And the price is absolutely stellar."

Business Benefits

By implementing Virtual SAN technology alongside Horizon View software, IBC Bank completely changed the economics of its VDI solution. When the company needs a little more storage, the IT team can add it in small amounts, smoothing out the cost curve associated with other storage management solutions. "Virtual SAN lets us buy what we need, when we need it," says Reynolds. "With non-disruptive scaling, we can add more capacity or increase performance at any time without interrupting our operations. Virtual SAN enables us to be far more responsive to the constant changes in our environment."

Because Virtual SAN software offers such a cost-effective, high-performance storage solution, IBC has achieved significant savings by migrating data from more costly legacy solutions. The long-term benefits are sure to be even more impressive. "When the time comes to upgrade our hypervisor, it won't be a rip-and-replace operation," says Reynolds. "Our VMware environment is agnostic, so we can just swap out nodes as necessary, even with technology from another vendor. Best of all, I can go to bed at night knowing that my hosts are OK and my infrastructure is solid. That's because I trust VMware 100 percent."

Looking Ahead

The IT team at IBC Bank is most excited about VMware technology giving more control to more people across the company. "These solutions are easy to run," says Reynolds. "We're ready to nearly double our Virtual SAN deployment from 60 hosts to 110. Pretty soon, our call center can begin deploying applications, and our PC techs will be able to handle upgrades. That'll give our IT team an opportunity to focus on more strategic projects, which will be a game changer for us."

