



LEADING CLOUD SERVICES PROVIDER USES VMWARE VCLLOUD DIRECTOR SOLUTION TO FUEL RAPID GROWTH BY PUTTING AUTOMATION AND CONTROL IN CUSTOMERS' HANDS



INDUSTRY

IT INFRASTRUCTURE AND
PLATFORM SERVICES

LOCATION

NEW ZEALAND

KEY CHALLENGES

- Meet customer requirements for self-service IaaS capabilities.
- Meet government and customer security, compliance, and audit requirements.
- Support rapid growth with minimal staff increase.

SOLUTION

Revera deployed the VMware vCloud Director platform, providing self-service capabilities to customers through both an API and a portal, delivering strong security and compliance. Regular upgrades provide new and enhanced services.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Accelerated availability of IaaS capabilities
- Supported 45 percent annual growth with minimal increases to IT head count
- Provided customers with new services that power growth and retention

In 2011, Revera won a significant contract to supply cloud IT services to New Zealand government agencies. The company needed to add self-service capabilities to its infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) offerings to meet customer requirements. Revera deployed the VMware vCloud Director® cloud management platform and enabled self-service capabilities to customers with a user-friendly portal and API access. The solution helped Revera get to market nearly a year faster than other options and allowed the company to manage 45 percent annual growth with minimal additions to head count.

Revera's success is built on 15 years of managing critical data and systems for New Zealand's most important organizations. In 2002, the company started with large mainframe computers to store data for banks and government customers. Excelling in enterprise data and storage networks, Revera parlayed its services to include data centers, high-speed networks, and a cloud-provisioning platform. Today, Revera's core services platform, the Revera Homeland Network, comprises five interconnected data centers with a shared VMware-driven architecture.

The Challenge

In 2005, Revera offered New Zealand's first enterprise-class IaaS, which was initially built on the VMware vSphere® virtualization platform. In 2011, when Revera won the contract to supply cloud IT services to government agencies, it needed to add self-service capabilities to its VMware vSphere-based enterprise IaaS offering. According to Mike Walls, national manager of portfolio and professional services at Revera, the company needed to find a way to offer customers a user-friendly self-service portal; and it also wanted to provide API access to support customer demand for automated cloud systems, primarily for powering on-and-off development and test environments.

A potential solution also needed to satisfy Revera's security, compliance, and audit requirements. Like most leading service providers today, Revera counts easy-to-implement advanced security capabilities as a top priority for both the company and its customers. "We needed technology that could securely segment multitenant environments so customers can't see each other's workloads or impact each other," Walls explains. In addition, as part of winning the government contract, the company had to meet a range of new government certifications.

At the time, the company was growing at a brisk pace and wanted a solution that wouldn't require significant increases in IT support staff. In other words, Walls wanted an automated and highly efficient cloud management platform with an easy-to-use self-service portal and API access.

“vCloud Director was one of the key enabling technologies in our portfolio that enabled our growth from an NZ\$18 million company five years ago into a NZ\$100 million company today, and it continues to enable that growth.”

MIKE WALLS
NATIONAL MANAGER, PORTFOLIO AND
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
REVERA

VMWARE FOOTPRINT

- VMware vCloud Director
- VMware vSphere

The Solution

Walls evaluated his options, but there were few viable commercial cloud management platforms that offered robust self-service user access in 2011, and even fewer that came from reliable vendors. The exception was the VMware vCloud Director solution, which was available to VMware service provider partners. The fact that Revera had built its existing cloud business on the VMware virtualization stack was a strong influence that led the company to consider and ultimately choose the VMware solution.

According to Walls, “The main reason we decided to implement vCloud Director back in 2011 was for its ability to provide a self-service capability, whether by user interface or API, so clients could provision their own infrastructure services.” Other reasons, he says, included the multitenancy focus of the vCloud Director solution that allows the company to offer pay-as-you-go pricing at a more granular level, down to a per-hour basis.

Even as early as 2011, deploying vCloud Director version 1.5 was reasonably straightforward and took just a couple months for Revera’s team, making the company an early adopter. Walls explains, “Considering the capability that we got out of vCloud Director, standing up the technology was pretty easy. We got it to market quick. I’d have to say it was pretty seamless.”

Today, Revera is running vCloud Director 8.1, and the team is already testing and looking forward to version 8.2, with its VMware NSX® network virtualization integration and additional service enhancements.

Business Results & Benefits

After deploying the vCloud Director platform, Revera found itself well-positioned for new clients and rapid growth. As Walls explains, “vCloud Director was transformational for Revera because it allowed us to grow with market demand and better service customers.”

Walls believes that the vCloud Director solution enabled Revera to deliver self-service capabilities to customers at least nine months faster than any other option, accelerating revenue flow from the government contract. “The fact that the vCloud Director suite came ready to run out of the box with a familiar technology stack made it easier to deploy and faster to market compared to other options available to us.”

Since Revera launched the vCloud Director solution, the company has grown 45 percent year over year. “vCloud Director was one of the key enabling technologies in our portfolio that enabled our growth from an NZ\$18 million company five years ago into a NZ\$100 million company today, and it continues to enable that growth,” says Walls.

While supporting this growth, Revera’s IT operational support staff head count grew modestly, adding just a couple seats a year. Walls says this is due in part to the easy-to-use self-service capabilities of the vCloud Director solution that puts control directly into the hands of customers, without requiring provisioning support or intermediation by Revera staff.

The vCloud Director solution has also improved Revera’s security posture without staff overhead. “vCloud Director is built with multitenancy in mind, which means we don’t have to spend as much effort and time on securing tenant workloads,” explains Walls. Regarding new government compliance requirements, Walls says,

“vCloud Director has a strong security model baked into its architecture, and this made it much easier for us to meet government compliance requirements.”

Walls adds that regular upgrades to the vCloud Director platform continually provide new self-service capabilities for customers, and that helps power Revera’s continued growth and customer retention. “Without vCloud Director’s ability to keep raising the bar, to keep adding new capabilities into our self-service offering, we would be at danger of losing customers to competitors.”

Looking Ahead

Revera is testing vCloud Director 8.2, and Walls is excited about its new capabilities. “The NSX integration will enable self-service network provisioning that is of massive value to us and our customers. It doesn’t just free us from a lot of work; it has the potential to offer our customers great value.”

Walls concludes, “We’re continuously wanting to provide more and more self-service capability into the hands of our customers; and we’re relying on our relationship with VMware to continue making this possible.”