



Driving High Availability and a Better Customer Experience Through Custom Applications for VMware's Service Cloud

Business Transformation through IT Transformation

Summary

In order to deliver a world-class service experience, VMware moved its Global Services Support (GSS) organization from an on-premise legacy solution to Salesforce.com's Service Cloud. Both GSS and IT immediately saw the benefits of a hosted solution: a highly agile, on-demand system that tightly integrated email and other web-based applications with the support application - all with minimal IT overhead for VMware.

The Journey

Two issues arose, however, that IT moved quickly to address with custom applications. One was the need to deliver business continuity for GSS — and ultimately, VMware's global customers — during SFDC's planned, and occasionally unplanned, downtimes. The other need was to ensure that VMware's Technical Assistance Managers (TAMs) from the sales organization were able to check the status of customer incidents.

"We needed to address the need for high availability in our customer support environment," said Ajay Sabhlok, IT Director, SFDC Technical Services. "In order for our own customers to experience us as highly available, our support people need business continuity. And TAMs need to see the entirety of a customer's status from all touchpoints and whether it took place in a sales or service encounter. And they need it on-demand."

IT created two custom applications to address these needs: eForms to provide business continuity during SFDC outages and SR Viewer, a read-only application, to allow the TAMs in the global sales offices to easily check the status of a customer incident.

VMware eForms is a web-based tool for tracking support delivery and customer relationship management and can be used by GSS staff to manage their cases during any disruption to the Service Cloud, noted Sabhlok. eForms ensures that VMware GSS provides 24/7 support in a consistent and reliable manner. eForms can be used to view the details of, or search for, any SFDC case and to also create new cases, which can then flow to the Service Cloud when available.

eForms becomes available within minutes of SFDC unavailability for any reason, noted Sabhlok, be it an upgrade, routine maintenance or a failover. It stays in sync with SFDC data through a 15-minute delayed data feed. eForms allows GSS staff to create new customer cases as well as update existing cases when a customer calls for support. It also helps GSS staff check the entitlements for a customer to provide the response times and level of service for which they've contracted.

VMware SR Viewer is a read-only, internal-facing application that facilitates the viewing of cases, or support requests, by non-GSS users. It is searchable by case number and contact or case owner email address, and it allows TAMs to easily view the status of an incident, even as they are on a call with a customer. When viewing a case, a TAM can see such details as the product(s) involved, the severity of the incident, the category and the customer's entitlement status. SR Viewer also escalates incidents to TAMs to alert them to incidents based on workflow rules they can customize.

The End Result

eForms and SR Viewer comprise portals built using VMware's SpringSource technology stack over a MySQL database. They are hosted on vFRED, VMware's internal private cloud. Because VMware IT is run on a private cloud, provisioning new applications is easy and can be done at a low cost. Scalability is ensured through the private cloud, helping IT to quickly deliver new services.