



Professional Services Helps the State of Michigan Build an Agile Virtualized Data Center Environment

INDUSTRY

State and Local Government

LOCATION

Lansing, Michigan

KEY CHALLENGES

- Implement datacenter virtualization to support agile IT requirements
- Overcome limitations of a siloed IT organization
- Deliver cost effective solutions

SOLUTION

- Enterprise TAM to maximize the value of the VMware investment

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Significant cost avoidance
- Reduced deployment time for new applications by 35%

The Challenge

The Michigan Department of Technology, Management, and Budget (DTMB) delivers vital administrative, technology services and information to the agencies of the State of Michigan. By doing so, it impacts every area of Michigan government in a broad spectrum from financial services to public safety communication systems. With its centralized IT organization, it provides citizens and businesses with more than 300 e-services while supporting approximately 55,000 desktops, 5,000 servers and 8,000 applications in exceedingly diverse software and hardware environments.

While the organization was focused on developing agility in solution delivery, DTMB was a siloed organization that often lacked consistent communication across business units. There were frequent delays to projects resulting from the left hand not knowing what the right hand was doing. This impeded the development in the data center of a comprehensive virtualization solution, which required integration of packages from many different vendors and a clear understanding of the needs of the various business units.

The Solution

The State of Michigan first engaged VMware Professional Services in 2008 as part of an enterprise license agreement (ELA) to support the implementation of VMware's data center virtualization technology. After assessing the environment, the VMware Technical Account Manager (TAM) identified the existence of silos in the organization that prevented the State of Michigan from attaining their IT goals. The TAM worked to bridge the communication gap across business units. As an advocate for virtualization at the State of Michigan, he strategized with C-level State executives on a broad range of virtualization issues.

Additionally, he helped the State to resolve technical issues and assisted with technical escalations. The TAM ensured that the State received the most value possible from their VMware investment.

“Our VMware TAM helps bridge gaps within and across department silos. He brings in the right resources at the correct level to market our services and overcome obstacles. He engages the right resources within VMware to address any technical issue we have. He has been able to navigate the political boundaries and showcase the value of VMware services across the State of Michigan. TAM services are vital to the success of a Virtualization team using VMware. He has access to internal VMware resources we might not find online and bridges boundaries across department. He is an advocate of virtualization across the organization.” (Paige Parker, Manager, Enterprise Virtualization)

The TAM worked extensively with the IT department to collect and consolidate best practices and deliver installation guides for the wide variety of software and hardware used by the State. Although every new application needs the approval of the Enterprise Architecture Group, the IT department now has best practices and support statements provided by the TAM that help counter the uncertainty that may come from changes in a virtualized environment.

By transferring significant knowledge to the IT staff, the TAM helped the CTO bring “galvanizing clarity” to their “Virtual First” policy. This mandate stipulates that any time a server is needed it must be a virtual machine (VM) unless it can be shown it is not technically possible as noted:

“Server virtualization is a proven technology, which saves money and resources. Server virtualization enables the near-full utilization of server hardware resources (processor and memory),

“VMware virtualization is like a train...running on steel rails, the iron horse of modern times; it’s bulletproof, fast and reliable.”

Eric Haas, Enterprise Virtualization Architect, State of Michigan

thereby saving on capital cost(s), power consumption, environmental conditioning costs (HVAC), and hosting center space.” (DTMB Technical Standard 1345.00.51)

The TAM was instrumental in helping the State’s IT systems successfully meet the continuous, expansive needs of the business. The TAM implemented a standard engagement life cycle that delivers optimized IT operations via strategic insight and planning to better align with growing and changing business needs. In addition, he improved operational efficiency by proactively managing and reporting progress against plans and conducted an educational assessment to ensure that the staff has the necessary skills to support the virtualized environment. In completing the assessment, the TAM held multiple one-day classes for a broad number of IT staff to become trained on VMware technology.

Since engaging with Professional Services, the State has grown the use of VMware products from the basic vSphere package to the full vCloud Suite. Components of the vCloud Suite (vCNS) allowed the State to meet PCI requirements for hosting a mixed mode environment. In addition, the vCenter Operations Manager helped provide comprehensive visibility into the performance and capacity of the infrastructure.

Business Results and Benefits

Not only has the State of Michigan achieved their objective of agility in delivering solutions, improving communications across business units and establishing a comprehensive virtualized data center, they have also reduced costs – an important factor for a financially-strapped state budget. In fact, an investment of \$1.6m from 2009-12 yielded \$5.25m in CAPEX savings and over \$850k in labor costs. The time to get an application into production was reduced by approximately 35%. Through a complete examination of the provisioning process, the TAM recommended products

they already owned—further reducing provisioning costs. Virtualization is now seen as a cost-saving technology.

The State increased the Tier 1 applications services that are virtualized including business critical and sometimes life critical applications. Among these applications are first responder and child protective services applications. The Secretary of State’s Business Application Modernization system that includes an automated driver’s license system runs on a VMware virtualized backend. The unemployment insurance system is also being rewritten to enable it to move to the virtualized environment.

As a result of this virtualization technology strategy and implementation, the State of Michigan has been voted as a leader in digital government across the United States. Virtualization is a key part of the innovation that characterizes what Governor Rick Snyder calls “Michigan 3.0”.

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About VMware Professional Services

VMware Professional Services transform IT possibilities into business outcomes. Our comprehensive portfolio of consulting and education services help you uncover and exploit the unique opportunities made possible by VMware technology and solutions. Drawing on our unparalleled expertise and customer experience, we collaborate with your team to address the technical, people, process and financial considerations for your VMware solution to deliver results that are positive, tangible and material to your business. www.vmware.com/services

Source: VMware Professional Services, 2013

