OMEGAFI EFFICIENTLY SCALES M&A ACTIVITY USING VMWARE CLOUD FOUNDATION

OMEGAFI®

INDUSTRY
FINANCIAL SERVICES/NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION MANAGEMENT

LOCATION
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

KEY CHALLENGES
- Efficiently and securely integrate IT environments of acquired companies
- Minimize complexity for one-person IT staff
- Scale cost-effectively with continuous M&A activity

SOLUTION
Growing rapidly through acquisitions driven by the launch of a new holding company for group management software (Togetherwork), OmegaFi needed an agile and secure infrastructure to quickly integrate acquired companies. VMware Cloud Foundation™ gives OmegaFi an integrated cloud infrastructure platform, helping the company become an efficient, cost-effective service provider delivering on mobility, cloud, and security.

For college fraternities and sororities, success means bringing in new members, fostering a dynamic social environment, and keeping in touch with alumni. OmegaFi helps them do this efficiently and cost-effectively by offering technology-based services to assist with financial management, fundraising, and communication. OmegaFi's chapter and alumni management tools enable customers to more effectively bill and collect dues and rent, manage rosters and records, pay bills, and file tax returns.

OmegaFi is growing rapidly through acquisitions. It recently launched Togetherwork, a holding company for businesses developing software to manage and collect payments from organizations such as museums, camps, and scouting troops. With a one-person IT department, OmegaFi needed a better way to integrate infrastructure from multiple acquisitions. The company chose VMware® Cloud Foundation because it offers the simplicity, robustness, and control to provide a secure multitenant environment and sustain future growth.

OmegaFi offers a suite of financial, fundraising, and communication products and services to help fraternities and sororities operate efficiently and achieve long-term success. Togetherwork is an emerging leader in software and payments for groups and organizations of all kinds, helping them grow, become more efficient, increase revenues, and provide excellent service to members and constituents. Both companies are owned by Aquiline Capital Partners.

The Challenge

Togetherwork plans to continue acquiring companies similar to OmegaFi but serving different markets. That means the organization must scale not only for mergers and acquisitions (M&A), but also to support the acquired companies as they evolve, grow, and become more successful. The only way to accomplish this with a single network administrator was an integrated cloud infrastructure platform that is simple to manage, agile to scale, and highly reliable and secure.

"It's important that all of our Togetherwork families have 100 percent availability, security, and reliability," says George Elliston, network administrator at OmegaFi. "With all the companies we're adding, we needed something that would be easy to manage and scale."

To be a customer service leader, OmegaFi must provide high availability and performance for business-critical apps such as payment processing while meeting changing customer expectations for mobility and anytime, anywhere access. It also must adhere to strict compliance in a highly regulated industry. The company wanted a simplified infrastructure solution that would provide a secure and PCI-compliant environment for multitenancy, allowing it to scale predictably to support growth while keeping service levels high.

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JOHN WOOLBRIGHT
CIO
OMEGAFI AND TOGETHERWORK

BUSINESS BENEFITS
• Easier management and scalability accomplished with just one network admin
• Enhanced security and simpler PCI compliance
• 2.5x higher productivity during lifecycle management
• 40 percent lower TCO compared to legacy three-tier environment

VMWARE FOOTPRINT
• VMware Cloud Foundation (on premises)
  -VMware vSphere
  -VMware vSAN
  -VMware NSX
• VMware Horizon

APPLICATIONS VIRTUALIZED
• Payment processing
• Microsoft Exchange Server
• Microsoft SQL Server

PLATFORM
• Dell PowerEdge (vSAN ReadyNodes, all flash)
• Cisco network
• 1 co-lo site, 1 rack, 119 virtual machines

PARTNER
• CDW

The Solution

Already a VMware customer, OmegaFi used VMware vSphere® in its data center to virtualize compute and VMware Horizon® to empower a mobile workspace through virtual desktops. Seeking to modernize its aging data center infrastructure with an integrated platform with compute, storage, and network virtualization capabilities, OmegaFi chose VMware Cloud Foundation.

"VMware Cloud Foundation stood out to us as the leading solution to meet our technology needs from the perspectives of architecture and price and also for the flexibility to change and adapt in the future," says John Woolbright, CIO of OmegaFi and Togetherwork. OmegaFi was impressed by the ability of VMware Cloud Foundation to bring together vSphere, VMware vSAN™, and VMware NSX® into a natively integrated stack through the lifecycle automation capabilities of VMware SDDC Manager, which simplifies day-to-day management and operations by automating initial bring-up of the cloud environment, ongoing provisioning of infrastructure pools, and updates/upgrades of the software stack.

OmegaFi had been interested in implementing VMware virtualization capabilities beyond those delivered by vSphere such as vSAN or NSX for some time. However, with Elliston as the single network admin for the whole environment, most of his time was dedicated to keeping the lights on, leaving no time for innovation and modernization. Thanks to the automation and standardization of VMware Cloud Foundation, OmegaFi was able to deploy a complete SDDC in just three days. OmegaFi implemented VMware Cloud Foundation using Dell PowerEdge R630 all-flash servers. "The implementation of VMware Cloud Foundation was seamless, and we're not locked into anything," says Elliston. "When we need to scale any part of the infrastructure, we simply add servers."

When OmegaFi acquires a company, it now uses VMware SDDC Manager to create an isolated workload domain for the newly acquired organization, enabling software multitenancy. The use of workload domains together with the network virtualization capabilities from VMware NSX allows Elliston to separate all the companies to enhance security and compliance. With SDDC Manager, he can quickly carve out infrastructure for new businesses and apply distributed firewalls to each workload domain. "SDDC Manager makes my life a lot easier," says Elliston. "With VMware Cloud Foundation, we can better secure all of our environments with network micro-segmentation."

By using the vSAN capabilities in VMware Cloud Foundation with commodity solid-state drives in standard x86 servers, OmegaFi moved to an all-flash storage environment to keep performance brisk and its footprint small. "With the compression and deduplication features of vSAN, we drove down the cost per terabyte for flash storage," says Elliston.

Business Results & Benefits

With VMware Cloud Foundation, OmegaFi gained control over and visibility into its multitenant environment, helping it get new businesses up and running quickly and securely. "We built a payment processing platform made possible by VMware and have already integrated a handful of our companies," says Tara Pepper, COO of OmegaFi and VP administration of Togetherwork.

Says Woolbright, "One of our leading values is trustworthiness, and by providing a very secure platform with VMware Cloud Foundation, we can deliver that to our customers in a way that they could not achieve on their own."

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Scaling a Data Center with One Admin

Even with certain growth ahead, Elliston remains the sole IT admin, and he's confident that with VMware Cloud Foundation, he can scale the SDDC environment without assistance. Upgrading the environment takes 60 percent less time than before. Elliston can upgrade the entire VMware Cloud Foundation stack with a single click, and the upgrade completes within 10 hours. That represents a 2.5x productivity gain during lifecycle management operations.

"VMware Cloud Foundation makes managing our VMware infrastructure a lot easier by bringing the SDDC toolset together into a unified infrastructure platform," Elliston says. "It gives me the agility and manageability I need as the sole network admin supporting a growing portfolio of businesses."

Integrating New Acquisitions Quickly

When Togetherwork acquires a new company, making sure that customer data is secure and PCI compliant is a top priority. VMware Cloud Foundation makes this easy by enabling secure multitenancy in a private cloud. Togetherwork can quickly onboard users and roll out new technology faster, helping to keep employee morale high at acquired companies. In many cases, acquired businesses were operating on outdated systems, and Togetherwork is able to offer users much better performance.

"VMware Cloud Foundation increases our ability to meet regulatory requirements while moving acquired companies onto our infrastructure quickly so they can deliver better client experiences," says Woolbright.

An Economical Solution for M&A

For OmegaFi and Togetherwork, VMware Cloud Foundation proved to be a cost-effective way to achieve a software-defined architecture that scales as the business grows, reducing total cost of ownership (TCO) by 40 percent compared to the legacy three-tier infrastructure.

"By modernizing our architecture, we pulled costs out of commoditized IT activities and moved that into a place where we can direct that energy toward higher-level business processes and solutions," says Woolbright.

Looking Ahead

With VMware Cloud Foundation, OmegaFi and Togetherwork can grow their market share in group management software and respond quickly to changing customer demands. In the near future, the organization will move its VMware Horizon virtual desktops to VMware Cloud Foundation for easier scalability. It also plans to use VMware vRealize® Automation™ to automate application provisioning for even easier onboarding. "VMware Cloud Foundation is outstanding. It offers an all-in-one solution that enables us to grow and scale to meet our business needs," says Woolbright.

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