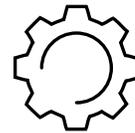




Increases operational resilience by delivering on 100 percent uptime SLAs



Accelerates some enterprise application performance by a factor of two or more



Significantly reduces technical debt and supports future direction toward software as a service

Bob Evans Farms Maximizes Resilience, Reduces Tech Debt with VMware and Expedient



For more than 70 years, Bob Evans Farms has made farm-fresh food sold in grocery stores all over the U.S., including sausages, liquid eggs, and other popular products. And today, the Ohio-based company’s brand mashed potatoes and macaroni and cheese products are the #1 selling refrigerated side dishes in the country.¹

As the business expands and adapts production to match consumer tastes, Bob Evans Farms relies on its technology infrastructure to support long-term growth plans. Until recently, the business managed its enterprise applications out of two data centers running VMware virtualization software. This configuration hosted about 140 applications, including all enterprise-level platforms.

The on-premises setup made it risky and time-consuming to undertake major technology refreshes. But an upgrade was due considering the aging, on-premises infrastructure and growing pressure to more quickly transform IT to support changing business strategies.

Mike Sullivan, VP-CIO, Bob Evans Farms, saw this as an opportunity to migrate to the cloud and significantly reduce risk across the business. “It gave us the chance to decrease technology debt and refresh our approach to disaster recovery,” he says. “It will also offer a way to scale with flexibility in response to growth in customer demand and future acquisitions.”

Bob Evans Farms, Inc. is a brand born and raised on the promise of farm-fresh goodness. For more than 70 years, the company has made delicious, quick-to-table, farm-fresh food sold in grocery stores across the U.S. The company is owned by Post Holdings, Inc., a consumer packaged goods holding company operating in the center-of-the-store, refrigerated, food service, food ingredient, and active nutrition food categories. Visit Bob Evans Farms at bobevansgrocery.com.

INDUSTRY

Food and Beverage

HEADQUARTERS

New Albany, Ohio

ABOUT EXPEDIENT

Expedient, a premier VMware Cloud Provider™ partner, helps companies transform their IT operations through award-winning cloud infrastructure solutions and managed services.

VMWARE FOOTPRINT

- VMware vSphere®
- VMware vSAN™
- VMware NSX® Data Center
- VMware Cloud Director™

PLATFORM

Expedient Enterprise Cloud

1. IRI scan sales data total U.S. 52 weeks ending December 29, 2019.



Migrating to the cloud with minimal disruption

Because most of Bob Evans Farms' applications were already successfully running in a virtualized VMware environment on premises, it made sense to move to a cloud configuration powered by VMware. This put enormous focus on the choice of migration partner. After researching the market, the Bob Evans team selected Expedient, a VMware Cloud Verified partner.

"Expedient guarantees 100 percent uptime as part of their service-level agreements, which was exactly the commitment to availability we needed," says Robert Merris, IT manager at Bob Evans Farms. "They also understood the licensing requirements around our enterprise platforms and how this could be optimized as part of a VMware-powered cloud solution."

Expedient proposed a cloud solution comprising VMware software-defined data center (SDDC) technologies, including VMware vSphere, VMware vSAN, and VMware NSX Data Center. The infrastructure was consistent with the company's existing data center setup and greatly simplified the migration.

But the Expedient and Bob Evans teams left nothing to chance, putting in the hours to make sure that the transition was as smooth as possible. This effort included migrating servers into a bubble test environment where Sullivan and his team could test system performance in the Expedient environment before switching over.

The joint migration team also ran a couple of dress rehearsals for the actual transition, which took place over one weekend. "Almost everything went according to plan. There was a relatively small list of follow-up actions on Monday, but nothing that prevented operations from continuing from one week to the next," Sullivan explains.

A step up in performance

Once the migration was completed, there was a significant performance improvement. "We saw the speed of many applications double, sometimes even more. For instance, there were some batch jobs that used to take hours, but now take minutes," says Merris. Feedback across the business has been very positive. Teams as diverse as finance and marketing have reported improvements in overall speed and productivity.

The business also benefits from a reduction in technical debt. "The problem with capital investment in on-premises systems is that it depreciates in value very rapidly. But working with Expedient, we can scale up and down as needed with best-in-class infrastructure so that we are future ready. It enables our team to support the strategic goals of the business in full," adds Michael Spaulding, director of IT operations, security and infrastructure services at Bob Evans Farms.

"Our team was already familiar with the VMware solutions, and the fact that we did not have to refactor our applications eliminated a lot of risk. We were simply lifting apps running on virtual machines in our data centers to the Expedient cloud environment."

MIKE SULLIVAN
VP-CIO, BOB EVANS FARMS

In addition, the Expedient migration greatly simplifies the organization's disaster recovery procedures. "In the past, it was time-consuming to test failover procedures and required scheduled, but disruptive outages," says Spaulding. "Knowing that we can now undertake a simple test with zero impact on availability means we will be able to tackle future incidents quickly and with absolute confidence."

Next steps

The expertise of the Expedient consultants plays an important role as Bob Evans Farms prepares for the future. “The Expedient team acts just like an extension to our own IT department,” says Spaulding. “For example, we needed faster network file performance, and they came up with a solution quickly. We also needed to improve our Oracle backup solution, and they were able to help with that, too.”

Other opportunities include moving productivity and other edge applications to the cloud in the pursuit of further operational efficiencies and risk reduction. “We’re no longer constrained by our on-premises configuration,” says Sullivan. “We can test new configurations and software upgrades with more ease and minimal disruption to daily operations. The moment we need to dial up capacity, we will be able to do it much faster than before.”



Maximizing resilience, minimizing technical debt: @BobEvansFarms migrates to @VMware cloud platform with support of cloud virtualization experts @Expedient #VMwareCloud
