# METROBANK CARD CORPORATION BECOMES PREDOMINANT CREDIT CARD PROVIDER IN THE PHILIPPINES WITH VMWARE'S VIRTUALIZATION AND CLOUD SOLUTIONS

**Metrobank Card**
*A joint venture of Metrobank and ANZ*

**INDUSTRY**
FINANCIAL SERVICES

**LOCATION**
THE PHILIPPINES

**KEY CHALLENGES**
• New products and services required physical servers, leading to slow time to market
• Physical servers were unreliable with frequent network disconnections, taking up space and utility
• Vulnerable security that may result in breaches

**SOLUTIONS**
• VMware vCloud® Suite Enterprise
• VMware NSX® Enterprise
• VMware vCenter™
• VMware Technical Account Manager (TAM)

To better engage its customers, Metrobank Card Corporation implemented VMware's comprehensive suite of Software-Defined Data Center (SDDC) solutions to speed up its processes. As the first bank in the Philippines to adopt VMware NSX, it achieved significant improvements in security, resource optimization and application availability amongst others, making it a leading credit card provider in the country.

Founded in 1985, Metrobank Card Corporation (MCC) was then known as Unibancard. In 2003, a joint venture between Metrobank, one of the largest banks in the Philippines with multiple subsidiaries, and ANZ, a leading credit card brand in Australia and New Zealand, led to the relaunch of MCC. The top card issuer in the country, MCC has issued nearly 1.5 million cards as of June 2017.

## The Challenge
Despite a population of over 100 million people in the Philippines, less than eight million are active credit card users. For MCC, this is an opportunity to attract more users to its financial cards and grow market share. To do so, the company needed to create greater awareness of its offerings by engaging consumers better through accelerating the time to market for new products and services.

For over six years, MCC experienced major delays in initiating new applications and it took three months to provision each new product or service. New application launches were often postponed as it usually took up to 35 days to integrate a physical server into existing processes. As MCC continued to roll out new initiatives, the company had to acquire more physical servers, resulting in over 100 physical servers at one point.

Substantial manpower was also required to operate MCC's physical servers, which were prone to reliability and availability issues. Network disconnections were a source of daily frustration. The cumbersome process of working with physical servers obstructed MCC's operations and impeded the company's ability to stay ahead of competition.

Over the years, MCC's traditional network hardware also began slowing down the IT team's provisioning process, and the legacy approach limited workload placement and portability, directly impacting application availability and resource utilization efficiency. Security was another priority that MCC had to address as its network refresh initiative did not have a positive impact on its

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FRANCIS DE LOS SANTOS,
FIRST VICE PRESIDENT – CHIEF BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY OFFICER, METROBANK CARD CORPORATION.

**BUSINESS BENEFITS**
- Improved time-to-market for new card products and services
- Reduced physical servers from 100 to five
- Significant time, utility and manpower savings
- Leaner IT team

**APPLICATIONS VIRTUALIZED**
- TSYS PRIME Core Banking Application
- Collection System
- Greenplum on VxRAIL
- Falcon Fraud Management System

**PLATFORM**
- Oracle Exadata for TSYS Prime Oracle Database

**PARTNERS**
- ICS
- Trend Micro
- DellEMC

security measures. The IT team was also keen to integrate more firewalls as its current firewall platforms were reaching capacity, however that would result in additional capital expenditure (CAPEX).

## The Solution

To increase its market share and to grow the number of MCC credit card users in the country, the firm embarked on a digital and cloud transformation journey for its IT infrastructure between 2012 and 2017.

VMware proposed its Software-Defined Data Center to support MCC's goals of driving innovation, accelerating business velocity, establishing competitive advantage and reducing total IT expenditure. The solutions included the VMware vCloud Suite®, VMware Site Recovery Manager™, VMware NSX® and VMware vCenter™. In addition, the company relied on the technical experience of VMware's dedicated Technical Account Managers (TAM) to achieve best results and coordination for MCC's operations and processes.

With the VMware vCloud Suite, MCC can leverage on the market-leading VMware vSphere® virtualization with VMware's hybrid cloud management platform, VMware vRealize™ Operations™ to effectively address operations requirements for compute, storage, network and application level resources.

As MCC's virtual infrastructure grew, they did not lose sight of their Business Continuity strategy and employed VMware Site Recovery Manager (SRM) as their disaster recovery solution.  This enabled the bank to perform frequent non-disruptive BCP testing and automated orchestration.

MCC also deployed VMware NSX®, a network virtualization and security platform that enables the creation of entire networks in software, allowing MCC to provision network components in minutes. Separately, MCC integrated the VMware vCenter Server®, which provided a centralized platform for managing its suite of VMware solutions to deliver virtual infrastructure seamlessly.

"MCC has come a long way with VMware's solutions. Six years ago, we faced several challenges which negatively affected our business operations. Then, we placed fourth in the market but thanks to VMware, we have become more competitive and are now the predominant credit card provider in the Philippines," said Francis De Los Santos, First Vice President, Chief Business Technology Officer, Metrobank Card Corporation.

## Business Results & Benefits

MCC's digital and cloud transformation journey has resulted in significant business benefits including space, time and cost savings, the fulfilment of recovery point objective (RPO) and recovery time objective (RTO) targets, compliance with regulatory provisions (Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas), an efficient IT team, enhanced security and an overall improved customer experience.

With VMware NSX, MCC can now reduce time spent on its disaster recovery testing from two days to under four hours, achieving significant time savings. By consolidating and migrating its physical servers to the cloud, MCC effectively reduced its total server footprint from 100 to five servers. This led to space savings, increased operational efficiency and reduced operational expenditure on power, cooling, and hardware maintenance.

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Since virtualizing its servers, MCC also attained financial leverage against its hardware providers during hardware refresh cycles. Beyond attaining its RPO and RTO targets, VMware SDDC solutions also helped MCC facilitate server consolidation and virtualization, enabling substantial reductions in capital and operational expenditures.

In utilising the VMware NSX solution, MCC was able to leverage the security blanket provided and reduce CAPEX by refreshing its firewalls instead of purchasing additional firewall platforms.

Having an automated virtualized system in place, MCC now operates with an efficient IT team of 5 members to manage the needs of its 16,000 employees. This frees up manpower resources to focus on more critical issues at MCC.

Service disconnections are now a thing of the past since integrating VMware NSX and customers can log onto the MCC website securely anytime with no interruptions. The solution has enabled MCC to significantly strengthen its security measures and minimize the attack surface and cost of a breach.

Through micro-segmentation, MCC's IT team can isolate each workload with its own security policy that includes threats, as well as block lateral movements. VMware NSX also helps defend MCC against external threats and eliminates external data sharing. With the solution's enhanced security features, MCC staff are immediately alerted to cyber fraud, allowing MCC to deliver a deeper level of security to its customers.

Most importantly, MCC customers can enjoy enhanced customer experience and faster time-to-market for new products and services. MCC now requires just one month to launch new promotions with the majority of that time dedicated to market preparation. In fact, MCC is now the first in the Philippines to launch premium credit cards and is in the lead for offering new promotions in the market.

"We are confident that with VMware NSX, we will soon attain the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) which is an industry accepted set of policies to optimize the security of credit card transactions and to protect sensitive cardholder data," said De Los Santos. The PCI DSS was set up in 2004 by four major credit card companies, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.

## Looking Ahead

As MCC continues to gear up and push out credit card promotions ahead of other card providers, the company has plans for complete integration before the end of 2017.

"VMware has been a valued partner in our digital transformation journey. As MCC continues to gain new ground, we look forward to integrating new technologies and solutions from VMware," said De Los Santos.

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