Across its three global data centers, VMware vSAN has allowed the business to reduce its hosting footprint by up to 50 percent

ServiceTrak was deployed to 8,000 staff and 35 countries during 2018 using VMware Workspace ONE

VMware SD-WAN by VeloCloud helped secure a company-wide network with up to 3,000 percent more bandwidth for up to 50 percent of the cost

Smart Approach to Data Creates Platform for Service Agility at Rentokil Initial

Rentokil Initial is in the process of digital transformation, from workers in the field to new global services. Adopting VMware vSAN™ has transformed the company's storage position, cutting hosting space by 50 percent and creating a dynamic, global pool of data capacity. The move is part of a smarter, leaner approach to IT, geared around getting innovation to market faster.

The Rentokil Initial group is composed of a variety of businesses. Rentokil is the world's leading commercial pest control services company; Initial is the world's leading commercial hygiene services company; Ambius is the world's leading commercial supplier of plants and scenting. The group has over 1,800 local service teams operating worldwide.

The business is also extremely acquisitive. It has made more than 120 acquisitions over the last five years as it expands its service offering and moves into new geographies.

A smarter approach to data storage

Digital is at the heart of Rentokil Initial's growth strategy. It wants to digitize its back-office systems, create mobile applications to support its service teams out in the field, and deploy new software to increase sales and service productivity.

"We see digital technologies as an opportunity to serve and retain customers," says Ed Higgs, group director of IT shared services, Rentokil Initial. "We're happy to invest early in a technology, to take a calculated risk, if it's something we feel strongly about. Digital can drive revenues, save costs and keep us a step ahead of the competition."

Rentokil Initial

Rentokil Initial is a global leader in the provision of route-based services which protect and enhance lives. Operating in 80 countries, its core services are pest control and hygiene, and it also offers smaller specialist services including plants, property care, and workwear.
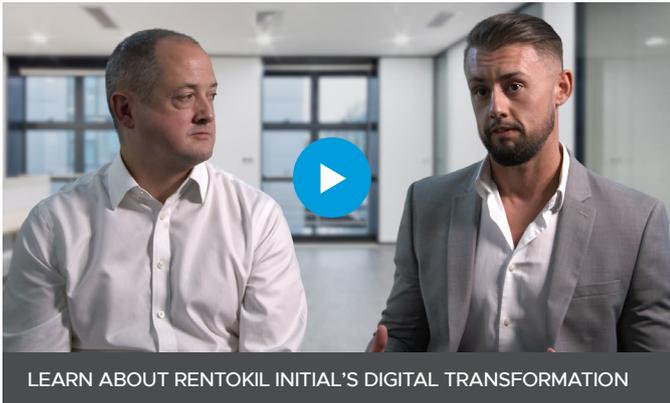
INDUSTRY
Service Company

LOCATION
Surrey, UK

VMWARE FOOTPRINT
VMware vSAN
VMware SD-WAN by VeloCloud
VMware NSX Data Center
VMware vSphere
VMware vRealize Network Insight
VMware Workspace ONE

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With the business expanding and data growing exponentially, Higgs wanted a smarter, more dynamic approach to data storage. Rather than managing and maintaining physical storage infrastructure, with the attendant drag on time and resource, he says the aim was flexibility: "We wanted to be able to scale up and scale down capacity as needed, and to move that capacity around the globe."

Moving to a hyperconverged infrastructure

Rentokil Initial first deployed VMware vSphere® to gain the efficiencies of server virtualization before extending these efficiencies to storage with VMware vSAN, allowing it to manage compute and storage with a single platform. It seamlessly joins all storage devices across a vSphere cluster into a shared data pool, allowing the business to easily scale up or down as needs change. Using commodity x86 server components, vSAN-powered hyperconverged infrastructure promises to lower storage costs versus traditional server and storage architectures.

"Once we started exploring options, we quickly leaned towards a hyperconverged solution," says Mike Howell, group head of infrastructure services, Rentokil Initial. "We could see VMware vSAN delivering a raft of benefits for us."

The solution means there is no need to deploy or maintain separate arrays and storage networking hardware with vSAN. Its policy-based management removes the burden of provisioning and modifying numerous LUNs (logical unit numbers) and data services. With its consistency and flexibility, VMware vSAN architecture provides the simplest path from server virtualization to hyperconverged infrastructure and a true hybrid cloud architecture.

"From an operational point of view, VMware vSAN's common set of management tools would make day-to-day administration much simpler," says Howell. "Convergence and simplicity are critical."

The vSAN project is the latest in a longer, broader engagement with VMware. Rentokil Initial has been using vSphere for almost a decade and uses VMware Workspace ONE™ to roll out applications to its 20,000 mobile devices.

To deliver the combination of simplification, standardization and bandwidth it uses VMware SD-WAN™ by VeloCloud®.

Scalability and digital transformation

vSAN has transformed Rentokil Initial's approach to storage, according to Howell: "We've consolidated our day-to-day storage management, globally."

This has made long-term forecasts around, and investments in, storage much simpler, he continues: "Previously we were having to invest in storage based on five-year projections. That's impossible. Now, we have storage capacity on tap to support any new initiatives. Effectively it's a single pool of storage to use as we see fit."

vSAN is a perfect example of how Rentokil Initial is constantly challenging itself to investigate how IT can perform better, and deliver better value for money.

"With VMware vSAN we have storage capacity on tap to support any new initiatives. Effectively it's a single pool of storage to use as we see fit."

MIKE HOWELL
GROUP HEAD OF INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES
RENTOKIL INITIAL

Across the group's three global data centers, vSAN has allowed the business to reduce its hosting footprint by up to 50 percent. Administration time has also been halved. This is time and money that can be directed into more value-add projects.
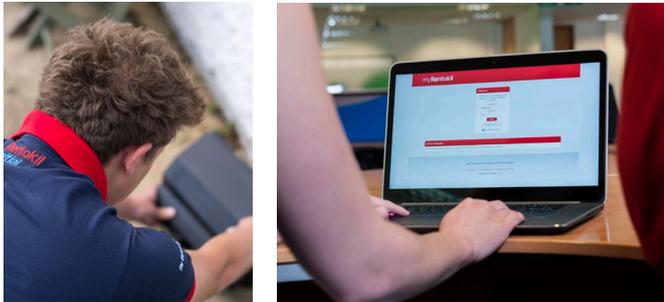
"We can move capacity around globally, as needed," explains Howell. "It's an extremely modular solution."

The company is already seeing results from its digital transformation program. For example, ServiceTrak, a field service app integrated with the master record databases, was deployed to 8,000 staff and 35 countries during 2018 using Workspace ONE. Users have access to files, media and reporting tools; management can better schedule efficient work rosters. Consistency and standardization mean service costs have fallen sharply and productivity for field workers has risen.

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SD-WAN by VeloCloud helped the company secure a company-wide network which resulted in up to 3,000 percent more bandwidth for up to 50 percent of the cost in some sites. This means the business has the capacity to absorb new acquisitions or can be faster to start operations in new countries.

In addition, the use of VMware NSX® Data Center simplifies the management of different segments of the group network, particularly new acquisitions. This means Rentokil can better ringfence the services, applications and data within a new acquisition, keeping it separate from the group until such time industry regulators greenlight the deal.
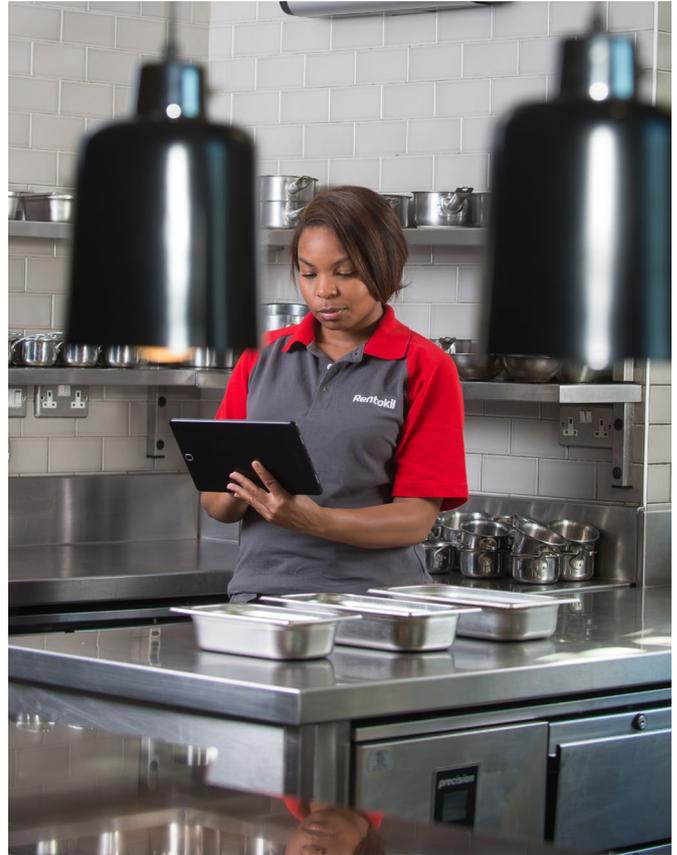
"It means we can maintain not only an application layer of separation but a network layer," says Howell. "VMware NSX Data Center is a fundamental technology underpinning our complete security posture. Being able to micro-segment the network significantly reduces our attack surface."

Looking ahead

The Rentokil Initial of the future, says Higgs, will feature location-based services, digital sensors and automation. The immediate future will see a roll-out of new IoT services, says Howell. The company is already running 'smart traps' for pest control, with alerts sent once the trap has been activated. Similar services are being explored in the hygiene services team. All of this will generate significant amounts of new data, data that needs to be understood and used to inform the business.

"The goal for data is for those who need it to be able to access and analyze from any device, in real-time," says Howell. "VMware solutions are a fundamental part of our future."

@RentokilInitial leverages **@VMware** hyperconverged infrastructure to reduce its hosting footprint and support digital transformation **#VMwarevSAN**

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