



## BELARUS' VELCOM UNLOCKS GROWTH WHILE ENSURING BUSINESS CONTINUITY

### CUSTOMER

VELCOM

### WEB SITE

WWW.VELCOM.BY

### INDUSTRY

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

### LOCATION

BELARUS

### KEY CHALLENGES

- Enable the business to integrate new acquisitions and provide headroom for organic growth
- Promote IT efficiency through better use of resources
- Simplify deployment and management of workstations across multiple locations

### SOLUTION

The solution is based on VMware Horizon 7 and VMware vSAN. It addresses issues around workplace mobility and data center efficiency

### IMPACT

- Faster access to IT resource. Servers spun up in hours, not days
- Less resource spent on maintenance of hardware, more on developing new services
- High availability between clusters ensures business continuity

velcom is the leading telecommunications provider in Belarus. It has ambitious plans for future growth, with regional acquisitions and a diversified roster of services. VMware is helping to create an efficient, flexible platform for business expansion, from mobile working to the onboarding of new acquisitions.

velcom is a mobile and fixed-line ICT service provider in Belarus. Among velcom's subscribers are the largest enterprises and organizations in the country, as well as representatives of small and medium-sized businesses. velcom has 87 branded sales and service centers in 32 locations across Belarus. Since 2007 it has been part of the A1 Telekom Austria Group.

### Challenge

The market for digital services in Eastern Europe is booming. As economies pick up, there are more consumers wanting more services, from mobile TV to shopping. In turn, this is creating a digital economy.

National governments are conscious they need to create an environment for growth. In Belarus, the government and telecom regulator has three five-year programs in place aimed at developing the telecom sector and digital economy. In particular, efforts have concentrated on enabling the mobile network operators to trial 5G services during the first half of 2019, while laying more than 10,000km of fiber cabling.

velcom has nearly five million customers, and a strong presence among the SME sector. But its ambitions are greater than the domestic market.

As part of its growth strategy, the business plans to acquire smaller, regional competitors and expand beyond mobile and fixed line business. velcom has opened Belarus' largest data center, launched Voka, an interactive digital TV business, and is behind Belarus' largest solar power project.

"The role of IT is to integrate acquired services as fast as possible, provide new services to subscribers and offer new cloud services," says Anton Lushchikov, Head of Infrastructure Development and Operations Department, velcom.

The IT team wants to create an infrastructure capable of scaling as the business grows, enabling rapid integration of new acquisitions. In addition, it wants to simplify device management across its operations, delivering a consistent user experience and paving the way for mobile working.

The aim is a more agile business, with simplified IT management, that's faster to deploy new services.

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ANTON LUSHCHIKOV  
HEAD OF INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT  
AND OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT  
VELCOM

#### VMWARE FOOTPRINT

- VMware Horizon 7
- VMware vSAN
- VMware vSphere 6.7
- VMware vSAN for ROBO

#### Action

velcom has relied on VMware virtualization solutions for a number of years. The most recent VMware engagement is based on VMware Horizon® 7, VMware vSAN™ and vSAN™ for ROBO. In addition, it has upgraded to VMware vSphere® 6.7 that addresses issues around workplace mobility, data center efficiency and faster time to market.

VMware Horizon 7 provides velcom end-users access to all of their virtual desktops, applications, and online services through a single digital workspace.

VMware vSphere 6.7 builds on the technological innovation delivered by vSphere 6.5. It provides exceptional management simplicity, operational efficiency, and faster time to market, all at scale.

VMware vSAN powers industry-leading Hyper Converged Infrastructure solutions with a vSphere-native, high-performance architecture. It is a core building block for the Software-Defined Data Center. In addition, vSAN for ROBO is a per-virtual machine licensing model. This model reduces the overall cost of the solution and provides deployment flexibility.

“VMware vSAN provides an infrastructure for monitoring and management, independent of the company infrastructure,” says Lushchikov.

“VMware technologies meet the highest requirements of the market. It offers the greatest opportunities compared to the competition. We now have the full stack of VMware products.”

#### Impact

Lushchikov says this latest extension to the relationship with VMware strengthens velcom’s position in the market: “We’ve been using VMware solutions for quite some time now. Our virtual infrastructure based on VMware vSphere has been in use for a considerable time already in both private and public clouds. Deploying vSphere 6.7 allows us to accommodate an explosive growth in quantity and variety of applications, from business critical apps to Big Data to new intelligent workloads.”

He says Horizon has made the deployment of workstations in all existing sales and service centers faster and easier, and simplified the task of managing future acquisitions: “The VMware Horizon solution caters for absolutely all the needs of velcom users. Horizon helps staff connect to their workstations from any location, ensuring total security and covering all our compliance requirements. We’ve been able to standardize across all locations, ensuring a consistent user experience.”

Deployment of a new machine, he adds, takes less than five minutes.

“In terms of a competitive advantage, after the implementation of VMware Horizon we can open a new store in any location in the country pretty quickly. In other words, before, we needed to prepare a fairly complex infrastructure on a local level, whereas now, we only need a communications line in the store, after which users can connect to the data center and launch sessions in the VDI infrastructure.”

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Lushchikov admits there was some initial resistance from engineers and management to the software-defined storage: “After we showed them that the cost of the vSAN was considerably lower than the hardware component we previously used in the company, the management’s skepticism simply disappeared. Then, after the introduction of vSAN and once we were operational, any mistrust on the part of classic storage administrators almost completely dissipated.”

velcom uses vSAN for VMware Horizon VDI, Management Clusters across two data centers and for acquisitions, where each site is equipped with a local VMware vCenter® and managed centrally from a single point.

Lushchikov says vSAN was chosen because it was the most flexible option, integrating transparently with the vSphere virtual infrastructure: “After this integration, servers were acquired, which helped cut costs, relative to the hardware part, compared with classic storage hardware and the deployed VMware vSAN infrastructure. This infrastructure means we can flexibly adjust policies pertaining to the fault tolerance speed of the virtual machines. It helps velcom remain a leader in the Belarus market among companies with a virtual infrastructure.”

### Looking Ahead

Lushchikov is confident velcom’s journey with VMware will continue to progress. As the business expands and develops increasingly distinct lines of business across multiple countries, he is exploring the impact of network segmentation.

“When it comes to future collaboration with VMware, I personally see the virtualization of network functions as especially promising. I’m particularly interested in VMware NSX® and VMware vRealize® Automation™ for process automation.”

