



VMware virtualization solutions help innovative businesses to evolve towards production automation and smart working

INDUSTRY

Information Technology

CHALLENGE

- Greater agility, flexibility and control
- Cost reduction and process innovation
- Improved user experience on a range of workstations and devices

SOLUTION

VMware Horizon View provides a single platform for the distribution of desktops and applications, while VMware Airwatch provides enterprise-mobility solutions.

“We have embraced the philosophy of virtualization and we are applying it at all levels, from server systems to messaging and collaboration applications, from management and production systems to the Mobility and BYOD”.

Davide Bocchio
IT Manager, Metlac

Whether it's cans, boxes, tubes or capsules, supermarket shelves are constantly inundating us with colorful packaging and the brands they promote. To create and customize this packaging, industrial lithography techniques and special coatings have been developed for food containers, and the Metlac Group is a leading player in this industry, as well as one of the most important producers of coatings and inks for the internal protection and external decoration of all types of metal packaging.

Production is managed and controlled entirely by way of information systems, and the company's production facilities in Bosco Marengo (Alessandria) occupy over 80,000 square meters of floor space featuring the highest levels of industrial automation.

Mission-critical systems for highly automated industrial production

Davide Bocchio, IT manager, and Stefano Del Bino, IT architect, have been managing Metlac's information system for over 15 years, evolving it towards ever greater levels of business efficiency. The decision to virtualize the systems using VMware technology dates back to 2008 when the first server-focused project was launched. These servers are dedicated to database systems, ERP, and support systems for day-to-day worker activities, such as messaging and collaboration, and the project also extended to, more mission critical servers dedicated to production systems.

For Metlac, the decision to virtualize proved to be a way to acquire a mission-critical information system quickly and cost-effectively in order to support company operations, particularly with regard to production systems. “The organization of our production includes many critical phases, much like the pharmaceutical industry, given that the products are mostly destined to come into contact with food. Our high level of robotics and automation—one-of-a-

kind in our industry—gives us a special level of control over production,” said Davide Bocchio. “If the servers controlling this automation shut down, the entire production process shuts down, and that's something we can't allow to happen.” System virtualization made it possible to build an information system to support this next-generation level of industrial automation without excessive levels of investment in hardware and labor.

“The server-virtualization solutions that VMware provides and that we have chosen for Metlac also include system services that provide real benefits in terms of system security and maintenance,” added Stefano Del Bino, IT architect. “One example are the automatic backup services, which make it possible to take snapshots of the recovery points in order to return to precise configuration of data and applications.”

From desktop management to mobility and BYOD

The second stage of the project saw Metlac virtualizing around one hundred of the company's desktop workstations,

VMWARE CASE STUDY

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Stefano Del Bino
IT Architect, Metlac

SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY

- VMware Horizon View
- VMware App Volumes
- VMware Airwatch

shifting from terminal-server technology to VMware Horizon View, which has proven to be a successful alternative both in terms of performance and ease of management. “Security, ease of use, and cost reduction are the factors that led us to VMware solutions for desktop virtualization,” explained Davide Bocchio, IT manager.

Finally, the third stage involved sales personnel and their need for efficient, secure and controlled connections to the company’s systems, using both devices provided by the company and on a bring-your-own-device (BYOD) basis.

“With VMware Horizon View, users can access their desktops locally or remotely and have the same user experience regardless of the device being used to connect—zero client, PC, tablet, or smartphone,” said Del Bino. “In terms of the administration of mobile devices (smartphones and tablets), the VMware Airwatch solution makes it possible to deploy applications and track and manage mobile devices remotely. Users can access company resources securely, whether it be email or documents stored on various platforms, including SharePoint, for example.”

Towards the cloud

“We’ve fully adopted the philosophy of virtualization and we are applying it at all levels, from server systems to messaging and collaboration, and from enterprise and production systems to mobility and BYOD,” Bocchio concluded. “Thanks to VMware’s solutions, we can manage a complex, business-centric information system with minimal technical personnel.” The implementation of VMware virtualization solutions was done without the need for an integration partner, and Metlac personnel, on their own, carried out the various stages of this innovative company’s move towards an information system controlled entirely via software. And the evolution doesn’t stop there, because Metlac is now assessing a move toward a hybrid cloud solution, creating an environment based on VMware technology.

Outcome and benefits

- A single licensing system for the various in-house and mobility needs
- Creation of a mission-critical infrastructure supporting production and user operations
- Reduction of operating costs
- Greater control for IT administrators in managing resources
- Greater security and ease of system maintenance
- Unified, secure management of mobile and BYOD users

