



## Thal Limited Reduces Costs by Streamlining Server Management

Founded in 1966, [Thal Limited](#) is a Pakistan-based manufacturing conglomerate established under parent company the House of Habib. It employs about 4,500 executives and workers across six business divisions that specialize in the production of jute goods, paper sacks, laminate sheets and engineering products.

### Industry

Manufacturing

### Partner

[Jaffer Business Systems \(JBS\)](#) is a leading IT Solutions provider and system integrator in Pakistan. It aims to improve business processes through its diverse suite of solutions in a creative way, both locally and globally.

### VMware footprint

- VMware® vCenter®
- VMware ESXi™
- VMware vSphere®

Thal Limited grappled with substantial revenue losses amidst Pakistan's political and economic crisis, which brought about rising taxes and new import restrictions. Besides needing to cut costs to keep its business afloat, Thal Limited had to maintain a high availability of services to support its business operations. With limited resources to manage its physical servers, the company adopted VMware vCenter to streamline server management while virtualizing its IT infrastructure. As a result, Thal Limited achieved 99.9 percent uptime while reducing costs by 15 percent. Looking ahead, it plans to strengthen efficiency by introducing VMware solutions to other companies in the group.

### Investing in the growth of Pakistan's economy

Thal Limited was first established in 1966 under the House of Habib as a jute mill. Today, it has grown into one of the largest manufacturing conglomerates in the country.

The company is engaged in the manufacture of automotive parts such as car air-conditioners, radiators, wiring systems and engine components and is also engaged in the manufacture of jute and paper products that provide a wide range of high-quality packaging solutions to various industries. Moreover, Thal Limited manufactures high pressure laminates, technical laminates and laminated boards for stunning residential and commercial spaces.

In addition to its core business, Thal Limited invests in strategic partnerships in the energy sector that help fuel the growth of the local community.

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## Revenue hit by political crisis in Pakistan

Despite making positive strides in its business in previous years such as increasing revenue for its automotive businesses, jute exports and improving margins for its papersack and laminates business, Thal Limited was not immune to the effects of Pakistan's economic crisis.

This ongoing upheaval brought about nationwide challenges such as import restrictions, currency devaluation and increased tax and inflation rates, which led to overall financial losses for Thal Limited.

"Our revenue dropped drastically because of the current economic and political climate in Pakistan," says Noor us Samad, CIO, Thal Limited. "We can't import any raw materials because of customs restrictions, and with the rising dollar-rupee disparity, we're unable to manage the cost of production."

To cope with revenue challenges, Thal Limited had to prioritize maximizing cost efficiency across its business functions, while optimizing internal operations.

"We realized that a major concern for us is having 24x7 availability of our systems to support our business operations. Every time one of our servers goes down, it leads to a costly loss of productivity. It's now more important than ever to increase availability," says Samad.

Home to about 20 physical servers, the Thal Limited data center was not just expensive to manage. It also took a lot of time for the tech team to fix and recover its systems whenever a server crashed. The longer the downtime is, the more vulnerable the company becomes to data breaches and virus attacks.

Thal Limited needed to streamline its server management so that it could gain more centralized control and minimize disruptions to the business.

## Managing multiple servers from a single virtual console

The team at Thal Limited knew that they needed to virtualize their IT infrastructure and consolidate their hardware onto a single platform. Among the various server management products they reviewed, VMware vCenter stood out.

"We couldn't go on managing our hardware efficiently with limited resources," says Samad. "When we started looking out for a server management solution, we found that VMware vCenter was faster with unmatched performance."

Thal Limited has been using VMware ESXi since 2018 and now have eight ESXi hosts supporting about 700 end users. Integrating VMware vCenter, a platform to manage all host and virtual machines, was thus a natural progression for the company.

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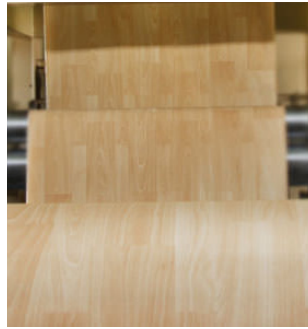
Jaffer Business Systems (JBS), which has been a trusted partner of the company for more than 10 years, carried out the design and configuration. "We knew we could rely on the JBS team to provide us with a cost-effective solution," says Samad. "As an existing partner, they had a deep understanding of our business requirements, and our teams have been working well together for many years."

The solution allowed Thal Limited to roll out three virtual machines, and ensure that at least two servers are configured in High Availability mode with SAN connectivity.

## Delivering a seamless network for optimal productivity

One of the immediate advantages of deploying VMware vCenter was increased operational efficiency. "By working with VMware, we equipped our workforce with the right tools and resources to do their best work without disruptions," says Samad.

Minimizing system downtime also lowered the chance of losing business-critical data. With higher availability of services, 4,500 Thal Limited workers and executives were able to maximize their productivity. This in turn allowed them to deliver better customer experiences while protecting the company's reputation and reliability.



In addition, Thal Limited was able to shorten the lead time between failure and recovery of systems by about four hours.

“VMware vCenter allows us to see what’s happening in real time and simplify server management by consolidating multiple Operating System Instances on a single piece of hardware. This enabled us to respond to system failures and bring critical services back to our employees much faster than before,” says Samad.

Furthermore, it lowered their chances of facing any unplanned service downtime, which might have led to revenue-affecting consequences such as production delays and customer attrition.

Simplifying their server management also freed up the Thal Limited IT team for more strategic projects that are crucial to growing revenue for the business.

Samad explains, “Not only does my team now have more time and bandwidth for other areas of work, but they are also becoming more innovative as well. In the past, they would focus all their energy on maintaining our server hardware. Now, they are going beyond their routine tasks and coming up with new ideas for the business.”

In terms of cost savings, deploying VMware vCenter had a healthy impact on the business’ bottom line. No longer needing to purchase and manage as many physical servers, the IT team was able to reduce its capital expenditure.

## Achieving higher availability with lower costs

By transitioning from standalone servers to the High Availability configuration in VMware vCenter, Thal Limited managed to increase its uptime from 95 percent to 99.9 percent.

With a higher availability of services, the team can now schedule planned server downtimes during the least disruptive times of the day, such as outside working hours. These periods of downtime are used to execute server updates, patches, maintenance activities and virtual machine enhancements, all of which are critical for ensuring that the risk of unplanned server downtime remains low.

Through building a more optimized IT infrastructure with well-maintained and smooth-running servers, the company’s overall downtime was also eventually reduced by 5 percent.

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Previously, Thal Limited had about 20 servers, each hosting a different service. With the introduction of virtual machines, the company’s tally of physical servers was reduced to about four or five.

Besides saving space, Thal Limited could, more importantly, save on future hardware purchases and operational and maintenance expenses. This amounted to an overall cost reduction of 15 percent, which helped to mitigate any revenue losses resulting from the national economic crisis.

## Centralizing operations across subsidiaries

The next step on the company’s journey towards IT optimization is to introduce the VMware suite of solutions, including VMware vCenter, to other companies within the business group.

“Our subsidiaries are currently managing their IT infrastructure in a decentralized fashion. Consolidating their systems onto one platform would help us to further synergize and save a lot of money on capital expenditure in the long run,” says Samad.

The team is also looking into incorporating SAP services, its main business application, onto the VMware platform.

With this roadmap, Thal Limited aspires to unlock long-term financial benefits and reinforce its commitment to operational excellence.