



Kaneka

Improving IT Management Efficiency and Up-skilling IT Staff: Kaneka Corporation Turns to VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite and VMware Professional Services.

SECTOR

Chemicals

LOCATION

Osaka, Japan

KEY CHALLENGES

- Build a “global-ready” enterprise IT infrastructure
- Adapt systems management framework to the specific requirements of virtual environments
- Manage complex virtualization projects despite limited in-house expertise

SOLUTION

- Deployment of VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite
- Best-practice guidance from VMware Professional Services

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Proactive identification of potential problems in virtual environment; rapid diagnosis and resolution when issues do occur
- Management of virtual environment is intuitive, with no specialist knowledge required
- Collaboration with expert consultants broadens and deepens virtualization expertise of in-house staff

VMWARE FOOTPRINT

- VMware vSphere
- VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite
- VMware Professional Services (consulting)

To support its global expansion, Japanese chemical manufacturer Kaneka Corporation decided to move to an integrated virtual IT infrastructure, managed via the VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite. Ongoing support from VMware consultants ensures any issues are rapidly resolved, while also helping to build the skills and knowledge of the company’s own IT staff.

A virtualized infrastructure for a global business

“In recent years, Kaneka has become an increasingly global company,” says Tetsuro Yabuki, the Senior Manager of the IT Application & Administration Team in the company’s Information System Department. “Currently, foreign markets account for about 30% of total sales and Japan accounts for 70%, but we aim to reverse that ratio by 2020.”

To achieve this, the company will need to put IT systems in place that can support both its domestic operations and group companies overseas. “We are moving to a cloud-based global IT infrastructure, as we believe this is the only way to achieve the business agility and robust disaster recovery capabilities we need, while at the same time keeping hardware costs manageable,” says Yabuki.

The unique challenges of virtual environments

Kaneka decided to pursue a virtualization strategy back in 2007, and given VMware’s impressive track record in this field, it was an obvious choice of partner. However, as the project progressed, it soon became clear that it would be more challenging than initially anticipated. In particular, from 2008 onwards, Kaneka encountered major challenges relating to disk input/

output in its high-end storage arrays.

“The original design, which was based on our operational experience of physical environments, proved unworkable,” says Yabuki. “And we were unable to model the requirements for memory, storage or CPU capacity in the virtual environment with any degree of accuracy. We knew we had a major problem, but we couldn’t work out the cause, and this really brought home the vast difference between managing virtual and physical environments.”

With neither the company’s own staff nor the system vendor able to identify the problem area, Kaneka sought assistance from VMware Professional Services. Keiji Fujimoto, an Assistant Manager in the IT Application & Administration Team, takes up the story: “With VMware’s assistance, we went through a month’s worth of historical data to identify the specific virtual machine that was causing the bottleneck. We then moved this VM to a new storage location and adjusted the overall workload, which



Tetsuro Yabuki
Senior Manager,
IT Application &
Administration Team,
Information System
Department,
Kaneka Corporation

VMWARE CASE STUDY

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Tetsuro Yabuki
Kaneka Corporation



Takanobu Yamamoto
Manager,
IT Application &
Administration Team,
Information System
Department,
Kaneka Corporation



Keiji Fujimoto
Assistant Manager,
IT Application &
Administration Team,
Information System
Department,
Kaneka Corporation

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Since demerging from Kanegafuchi Spinning Co. Ltd. in 1949, Japan's Kaneka Corporation has grown into a global technology-driven chemical manufacturer with multi-billion dollar revenues. Its products are used in such diverse areas as functional resins, foods, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, electronic components and synthetic fibres.

successfully restored normal performance levels.”

Based on these early experiences, Kaneka soon concluded it needed management tools that were specifically designed for virtual environments. In stage 3 of the virtualization programme, from 2012 onwards, the company introduced VMware's vCenter Operations Management Suite. At the same time, it is working to equip its own staff with the skills needed to manage the virtual environment effectively.

Rapid issue resolution while building in-house expertise

The introduction of VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite and the support from VMware Professional Services has delivered numerous benefits, as Takanobu Yamamoto, a Manager in the Information System Department's IT Application & Administration Team, explains. “We have greatly benefitted from support in areas such as resource planning and system design,” he says. “For example, VMware consultants showed us how we could use the Distributed Resource Scheduler to optimise the

performance of vSphere. They also pointed out a number of problem areas that we had overlooked. Having them helped us get more out of the system, and was very good for our peace of mind.”

Yamamoto also praises VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite: “The user-friendly interface and excellent system visibility enables us not only to diagnose issues, but to proactively anticipate potential bottlenecks, and manage capacity to prevent them.”

For Tetsuro Yabuki though, the VMware Professional Services support was as much about training as about troubleshooting. “Crucially, our own staff learned from working alongside VMware Professional Services, meaning that this project greatly improved their knowledge of virtualized systems,” he says.

As Kaneka continues to virtualize more of its core systems, the management framework it has created based on VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite and the knowledge it has gained through working with VMware Professional Services will prove invaluable. This will help it achieve its aim of becoming a truly global corporation.

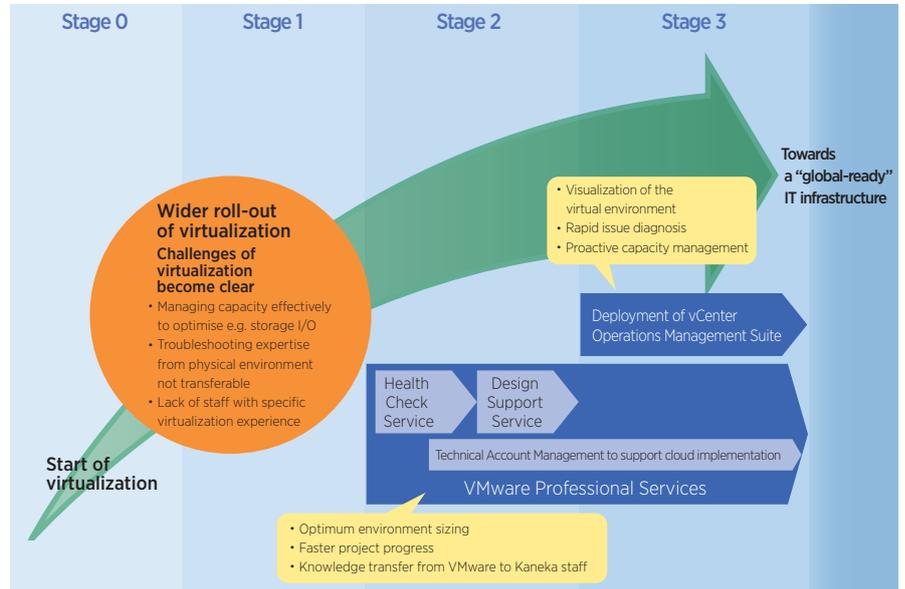


Figure 1: Roadmap for Kaneka's migration to virtualized/cloud infrastructure



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