Reduced Provisioning Time from Days to Minutes

More Reliable, Scalable, Flexible and Secure Technological Infrastructure

Better Quality of Life for the Academic Community

Acceleration of the Digital Transformation Process

UNIMINUTO Chooses VMware Hyperconverged Infrastructure to Enhance the Academic Community Experience

As part of its digital transformation strategy, UNIMINUTO trusts in the hybrid cloud and has laid the foundation with VMware Cloud Foundation™, which offers agility and availability, guaranteeing service availability for students, teachers, and the administrative staff of the Institution.

History

The Minuto de Dios University Corporation, UNIMINUTO, has among its goals to promote a digital culture, which is the basis of its five-year plan.

With this as the backdrop, the technology department has made it a priority to ensure that the digital transformation elements materialize in its service delivery, with more efficient processes that connect with students throughout their educational career with the institution; as well as facilitating the administrative management of the Institution and supporting all academic processes.

For three years, UNIMINUTO has invested in its digital transformation by updating its information, infrastructure, and telecommunications systems, providing students, teachers, and administrative staff access to modern and automated platforms in hybrid cloud environments.

The architecture, design, acquisition, configuration, and start-up of a hyperconverged infrastructure of servers, storage, licenses, and associated professional services were evaluated under a consulting process.

The Minuto de Dios University Corporation "UNIMINUTO" was founded in 1990 as an innovative educational project, seeking to guarantee a supply of quality higher education to most Colombians, particularly those with difficulty accessing it.

Currently, UNIMINUTO has more than 101,000 active students, residents of 63 municipalities spread across 24 departments and served in 11 locations, distributed in five rectories and six regional vice-rectories, covering a large part of the national territory.

INDUSTRY
Education

LOCATION
Bogota, Colombia

ABOUT THE PARTNER
The purpose of GREEN is to support customers in their hybrid cloud integration process to maximize on-premises infrastructure benefits with the optimizations and efficiencies of public clouds, leveraged by Dell EMC and VMware - the leading vendors in these architectures. Additionally, GREEN helps companies take advantage of the power of data through the creation of data lakes and analytical processes that guide decision-making for the clients' business.

SOLUTION
VMware® Cloud Foundation™
Dell EMC VxRail

The Technology Committee decided to select VMware and its partner GREEN, based on the software company's reputation and past successful experiences with the brand, as well as GREEN's technical qualifications and teamwork alignment. "We have been evaluating many platforms and, basically, due to the technical review and trust that we had in VMware, given the relationship for many years, we opted for the best player. Furthermore, having a partner like GREEN, with whom we had worked with, gave us confidence, because the two of them have always worked together with UNIMINUTO," said Saul Antonio Reyes A., Director of Technology and Information Systems, UNIMINUTO.

"UNIMINUTO bet on strengthening its platforms with hybrid clouds. In that sense, the aim was to strengthen and increase service levels and provide high platform availability while streamlining our processes. Regarding the provisioning issue, it was key to consider the management of the platforms within the Institution and make deployments in the cloud to have the information systems, upload them to the public cloud, and download them to our private cloud. Basically, we look for continuity and availability of our platforms," explained Saul Antonio Reyes A.

The primary challenge met with this kind of project is to be able to show how UNIMINUTO advances in the area of digital transformation in order to be much faster, expeditious, and more effective in providing platforms that demonstrate that the investment made generates value to the educational community. "UNIMINUTO serves the neediest in Colombia and, therefore, everything that the Institution invests in, whether it is technology or anything else, has to be reflected in the delivery of higher quality education," highlighted the Director of Technology.

"One of the important requirements of the Minuto de Dios University Corporation - UNIMINUTO - was the implementation of the new hyperconverged infrastructure with the integration of public clouds. Thanks to the features offered by VMware Cloud Foundation on Dell EMC VxRail, a hybrid cloud architecture was implemented, which facilitates the cloud adoption process. The main benefit with this VMware solution was increasing productivity and efficiency of its virtual infrastructure by integrating monitoring and automation benefits," added Ricardo Sosa, GREEN Innovation and Development manager.

"This project was supported by data analysis, reports of system crashes due to malfunctions, and the long periods of time it took for service requests to be solved. This served to make a business case based on the deficiencies that they had. Also, we made recommendations based on what could be improved and how what was being built today can be leveraged, building a foundation for what is to come in the future," said Saul Antonio Reyes A.

MAIN CHALLENGES

- Renewing virtualization infrastructure including VMware vSphere® and VMware vRealize® Operations™, taking advantage of new virtualization technologies under a modern hyperconverged infrastructure.

- Consolidating IT services for the student community and operations, currently made up of 297 virtual machines and supporting the growth projection of 385 virtual machines.

- Having a storage virtualization environment and network services virtualization on a single platform.

- Offering integrated cloud infrastructure services to run business applications in hybrid cloud environments.

IMPACT ON THE BUSINESS

- Reducing provisioning time, from days to minutes, depending on the server configuration.

- Increasing the quality of services by guaranteeing the continuity and availability of the infrastructure.

- Implementing a scalable, reliable, flexible, and secure technological infrastructure.

- Connecting and integrating the different information systems to make them available on a hybrid cloud infrastructure and meeting the 2020-2025 development plan.

- Advancing in the appropriation and use of technology to contribute to the digital transformation of UNIMINUTO and particularly in the improvement of the quality of life of the academic community.

Based on the circumstances, the Institution brought its technology platforms up to date. "We got into a big bang because in one year, we released four world-leading and robust information systems: 'Banner,' the academic system with five subsystems that this application has; Success Factors; OpenText, and the update of some SAP modules. These were great challenges, but the Institution got up to date with its transactional systems," explained Saul Antonio Reyes A.

Another element supported by UNIMINUTO is Digital Culture, embodied in the training and technology adoption process for teachers, students, and the entire administrative staff. "This transformation process was not because of the pandemic, but rather it is part of the institution's pre-defined journey toward digital transformation, in which UNIMINUTO has been working on for several years that has allowed us to maintain - despite the global pandemic and local isolation - continuity of operations, given that we had the skills and technology in place to address what we are experiencing," said Saul Antonio Reyes A.

Lastly, regarding the solution benefits, the manager noted: "I always measure it by stress level and sleep hours, because before there was stress when having the information in an infrastructure that was suddenly not adequate and complex. With the VMware Cloud Foundation solution, stress was lowered from 98% to almost 0%. Another significant benefit was provisioning, whereas before response times took days when today it only takes minutes. We improved service level agreements since we deliver infrastructure in a day or a day and a half. Moreover, the agility and speed we have gained, the type of transactions we can do, that is measurable through the tools that VMware and GREEN also provided us, and it is a significant percentage".

Looking Ahead
The next step in the development plan is data analytics. "UNIMINUTO underwent a complete restructuring, not only in the technology area but across the entire Institution, in order to make us much more efficient - and in this new digital culture, UNIMINUTO seeks to make decisions based on data. These are very complex and challenging steps, but with the help of technology and the VMware platform, we created the foundation upon which to build the vision we have," explained Saul Antonio Reyes A.

"VMware Cloud Foundation is a robust and comprehensive solution that is ahead of its time, enabling us to move in an agile, secure and simple manner, between the public cloud to the private cloud and vice versa."

SAUL ANTONIO REYES A.
DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS, THE MINUTO DE DIOS UNIVERSITY CORPORATION - UNIMINUTO