Customer
Case Study

ADT Transforms Smart Home Ecosystem with VMware Multi-Cloud Solutions

Based in Boca Raton, Florida, ADT offers home and business security, smart home automation, life and senior safety alert systems, home solar solutions and identity theft protection. The company's 17,000 professionals serve 7 million customers across 200 locations. In 2022, ADT earned revenues of USD $5.12 billion.

Industry

Telecommunications & Services

Strategic priorities

- Cloud Infrastructure

VMware footprint

- VMware® Aria Operations™
- VMware Cloud™ on AWS
- VMware Cloud Universal
- VMware NSX® Advanced Load Balancer™
- VMware Site Recovery Manager™
- VMware vSphere®
- Google Cloud VMware Engine
- Azure VMware Solution
- VMware Professional Services

Based in Boca Raton, Florida, ADT offers home and business security, smart home automation, life and senior safety alert systems, home solar solutions and identity theft protection. To empower its strategy of continual innovation, ADT uses VMware solutions to support a hybrid, multi-cloud approach that improves service delivery, operational efficiency, and brings services closer to customers.

From traditional security provider to integrated smart home ecosystem

Founded in 1874 as American District Telegraph, ADT has led the security industry for nearly 150 years. Throughout its storied history, the company has demonstrated a strong commitment to innovation, from the invention of the first burglar alarm system to the introduction of the ADT Pulse smart home automation system.

Over the last decade, ADT has evolved from offering traditional security services to delivering an integrated ecosystem of smart home automation solutions, including the largest installed base of home solar solutions in the U.S. As a data-rich and data-driven enterprise, ADT operates a complex IT environment that supports a vast home security network and smart home systems, including cameras, thermostats, locks, IoT and other remote monitoring devices.

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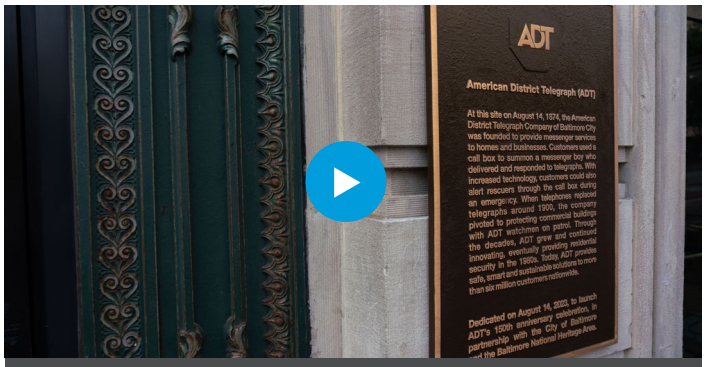

WATCH HOW ADT SUPPORTS CUSTOMERS WITH VMWARE CLOUD

Confronting myriad challenges stemming from rapid growth and a continually evolving business model, ADT recognized the imperative for a comprehensive IT transformation. Beginning with its on-premises data centers, the company virtualized nearly 95 percent of its server infrastructure on the VMware vSphere enterprise workload platform. The move from bare-metal systems to virtualized server technology cut deployment times for systems and services from months to minutes. This transformational change enabled ADT to operate its on-premises data centers with greater agility, dramatically reducing delivery times for customers, and confirming its commitment to excellence and customer satisfaction.

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Shifting to a hybrid and multi-cloud strategy

While virtualization provided ADT with a robust platform to address critical issues with its on-premises data centers, the company needed to exert greater control over capacity management. With so much vital data to store and analyze, ADT had quickly outgrown the capability and capacity of its onsite systems to support the innovative products and services that made it competitive.

Given the broad spectrum of its offerings, ADT required a hybrid, multi-cloud infrastructure strategy tailored to sustain its life-essential systems within its in-house data center, while simultaneously harnessing the strength of cloud platforms from industry leaders such as Google, Microsoft, AWS, and Oracle.

With on-premises workloads in virtualized environments, ADT needed to develop a hybrid infrastructure to bridge on-premises and cloud infrastructures. However, a multi-cloud landscape presented its challenges, requiring ADT to standardize across diverse platforms to facilitate seamless workload balancing within this hybrid, multi-cloud terrain.

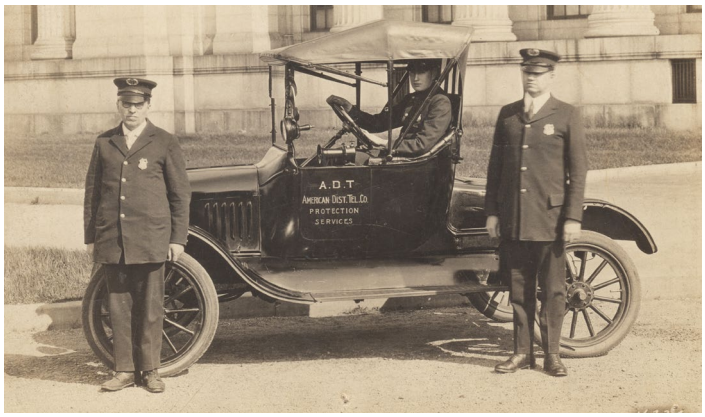
"We needed to harness the power of cloud computing," says Alexander Bingham, IT director, Cloud Services, ADT. "This was a strategic business decision in our quest to deliver outstanding service to our customers."

Moving workloads to the cloud

ADT turned to VMware Professional Services to help design and execute its multi-cloud transition. Using VMware Cloud solutions enabled ADT to move its applications running on vSphere seamlessly to its new cloud environment, eliminating the necessity to rearchitect VMware workloads, and ensuring smooth interoperability with incumbent systems.

To move VMware workloads to their respective cloud platforms, VMware Professional Services project engineers equipped ADT with the essential knowledge, skills and support to execute the integration smoothly and swiftly, migrating to Google Cloud VMware Engine, Azure VMware Solution, VMware Cloud on AWS and Oracle Cloud VMware Solution.

"Enlisting VMware Professional Services was a game-changer. Their valuable knowledge and robust capabilities saved us precious time and resources," says Bingham. "VMware Professional Services provided the catalyst for our accelerated progress, reinforcing the concept that leveraging external expertise is the key to successful, efficient operations."



ADT moved workloads seamlessly between on-premises and the cloud—and between different clouds—enabling the company to maintain IP addresses, DNS, and load balancing configurations without interruption, thereby predicting application performance and smoothing the transition to the cloud. The optimized licensing model of VMware Cloud Universal made the transition more economical.

ADT realized considerable benefits by using Google Cloud VMware Engine to transition and run its VMware environments. ADT migrated multiple data centers in just under 90 days and scaled the VDI environment in 10 days to enable 20,000 global employees to work remotely. ADT was able to spin up the new environment and accelerate disaster recovery cutover times from five hours to 15 minutes, a 95 percent improvement over previous operations.

In addition to using VMware virtualization and cloud solutions to modernize its applications for a multi-cloud platform, ADT also adopted VMware NSX Advanced Load Balancer for distributing workloads across multiple clouds, to virtualize firewalls and adding a secure layer to the entire IT environment.

"In addition to using the core VMware vSphere capabilities, we are leveraging VMware NSX Advanced Load Balancer in addition to virtualizing the firewall and providing protections within our environments," says Bingham. "NSX provides both networking and security for us, providing protection for edge firewalls around our data centers, the edges of all our clouds, and for east-west firewall traffic.

"VMware NSX Advanced Load Balancer enables us to standardize and balance workloads across multiple clouds to provide even higher levels of redundancy and business continuity, supplementing our use of VMware Site Recovery Manager."

"Our commitment to innovation hasn't wavered as we transitioned into the cloud. Instead, we enhanced it, bringing in advanced load balancing to create a more streamlined and efficient cloud environment. Far from being an add-on, this technology is now an intrinsic part of our CI/CD pipelines. We've moved away from fragmented systems and environments to a unified, cohesive structure."

Alexander Bingham, IT Director, Cloud Services, ADT

Using a multi-cloud approach to edge closer to the customer

Adopting VMware Cloud products and services delivered tremendous benefits to ADT. Among the most significant of these was a dramatic reduction in delivery times—between 90 to 99 percent—allowing swifter provision of resources and capacity to prioritize applications and customer delivery.

"Our commitment to innovation hasn't wavered as we transitioned into the cloud," says Bingham. "Instead, we enhanced it, bringing advanced load balancing to create a more streamlined and efficient cloud environment. Far from being an add-on, this technology is now an intrinsic part of our CI/CD pipelines. We've moved from fragmented systems and environments to a unified, cohesive structure."

Today, ADT continues to leverage VMware Aria Operations technology, automating processes within the VMware space, even as the company forges ahead on its journey in the cloud. "We're not just delivering; we're pioneering, leading the way to a future where technology and innovation are intrinsically linked," says Bingham.

With VMware workloads deployed on any cloud, in any

location, ADT gains geographic agility, enabling the company to offer services closer to customers to enhance performance. This flexible cloud infrastructure enables dynamic resource allocation for optimal efficiency, enabling ADT to scale operations based on demand and retract during lower resource requirements.

"Adopting a multi-cloud strategy enables us to bring our services and systems closer to our customers. This expands our reach significantly," says Bingham. "While we maintained numerous on-premises data centers, their locations didn't always optimize access for our customers. Now, we are positioned to bring our customers as close to the edge as possible."

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Looking to the future to support customers long-term

The migration to the cloud promises to increase customer satisfaction, improve service reliability, and reduce operational costs. Through this innovative approach, ADT continues transforming its operational model, providing a robust, scalable, and resilient infrastructure.

"As we approach the end of this year, we foresee about 80 percent of our IT assets transitioning to the cloud," says Bingham. "While we look forward to this transition, some capacity will always remain on-premises. Our life safety systems require a significant degree of redundancy, a level of assurance that one singular cloud service may not provide. And we have regulatory requirements that mandate the maintenance of these systems on-premises."

By adopting a multi-cloud strategy, ADT can leverage multiple technologies for the right workloads, the right cost, and the best benefits. The company's varied cloud platform empowers business units and stakeholders to drive IT capacity consumption and build applications in cloud native environments. And using VMware solutions supports ADT with its environmental sustainability efforts by shifting capacity to the cloud, reducing its carbon footprint through the closure of data centers.

"One of the important things to understand about ADT is that the trust our customers place in us requires that we invest in our resources to ensure that we can serve our customers appropriately," says Bingham. "Because many of them will need us at one of the most vulnerable moments in their lives. And we need to be there for our customers when that happens."