



VCE



CLOUD SERVICE PROVIDER

■ CLIENT

8x8 Inc.

■ CHALLENGE

Develop cost-effective cloud computing services

Deploy a fully redundant and highly reliable platform to support mission-critical applications

■ SOLUTION

Kovarus designed a cloud solution built on Vblock Systems

■ RESULTS

Able to deploy a customer's virtual data center overnight

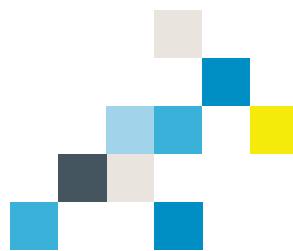
Attracting new customers by offering higher levels of security and trusted multi-tenancy

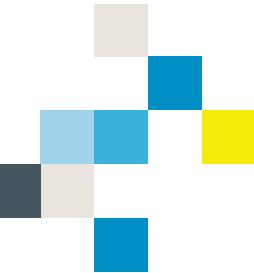
8x8 RELIES ON VBLOCK SYSTEMS FOR HIGHLY AVAILABLE CLOUD SERVICES

CLOUD PROVIDER CAPTURES NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

A leading provider of cloud-based communications and computing solutions, 8x8 Inc. has approximately 350 employees and is an established provider of cloud services to small and medium sized businesses. 8x8 made a strategic decision to expand its target market to larger enterprise and government customers. This would require the deployment of a new, more robust infrastructure that could offer enterprise-class reliability as well as ease of use.

The company found a solution in Vblock™ Systems from VCE™. As Andrew Schwabecher, general manager-hosting services put it, “Vblock Systems are ideal for a hosting infrastructure used for enterprise applications. The Vblock system ensures full symmetric fault tolerance with no single point of failure. That means we can offer customers a highly available cloud hosting solution that requires no code changes in their applications.”





Challenge

Founded in 1987, 8x8 Inc. transformed itself into one of the leading stand-alone voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) phone services providers and a leading provider of cloud services offering everything from unified communications to managed, dedicated hosting.

In late summer of 2011, 8x8 decided to expand its market from its traditional small to medium-sized business customers to larger enterprise and government customers. One of the major challenges for 8x8 was ensuring that it could offer customers a fully redundant and reliable platform, suitable for running mission-critical applications in a cloud environment. Additionally, as a service provider, 8x8 has hosting requirements that are continually changing. It was difficult to predict precisely what workload a customer would bring to the company at a given time. Individual storage workloads might require different drives or storage layouts to efficiently accommodate the data.

Solution

To accelerate deployment and expand the range of cloud hosting services it offered, 8x8 chose VCE and Vblock Systems. The company worked closely with VCE partner Kovarus—a system integrator that specializes in data center design, implementation, and optimization—to specify requirements. VCE then integrated, tested, and validated the Vblock Series 300 model GX—fully configured as required—in a controlled factory environment, before shipping the racks to 8x8's data center.

Kovarus managed the planning and configuration process every step of the way. In addition, once the Vblock system was reassembled in 8x8's data center, Kovarus prepared the infrastructure so it would be ready for 8x8 to use for its cloud hosting services. They used the VMware vCloud API to create needed middleware, and customize and deploy a variety of applications—from provisioning systems to billing.

"8x8 needed a broad base of experience such as in-depth VMware experience as well as expertise with converged switching infrastructures involving Ethernet and Fibre Channel and SAN storage," Schwabecher explains. "The Kovarus team helped us build and customize all the applications we required. We couldn't have done it without them."

Results

Virtual Data Center Virtually Overnight

Today, 8x8 can respond within 24 hours to customers by providing subscription-based, hosted virtual data center services on the highly available and reliable Vblock system. The ability to provision storage in real time on an as-needed rather than pre-allocated basis has proven to be a competitive advantage. Customers can deploy their existing Linux or Windows applications such as virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) or enterprise solutions such as MS SQL on virtual machines running securely in 8x8's data center.

"We know of no other service provider that offers similar subscription-based cloud hosting with so little lead time," Schwabecher comments. "We anticipate that these services based on Vblock Systems will help us meet the needs of a growing number of businesses of all sizes for hosted mission-critical applications."

Truly Trusted Security

To address multi-tenant environments, 8x8 also needed to ensure customers could count on trusted security, with no commingling of data. The Vblock system integrates many robust security features including RSA and other encryption technologies to safeguard data in motion or at rest; firewalls that incorporate sophisticated malware and intrusion detection; identity management and access control; and assured application separation.

"If you look at the design of EMC VNX storage arrays, which are a part of the Vblock 300GX platform, we have the ability to dedicate an entire spindle to a customer," notes Schwabecher. "That provides added security that customers really welcome. In addition, VMware offers security features that aren't available with any other hypervisor."

Key Name Recognition

Another important selling point for 8x8 is the trust its customers have in VCE investors. Cisco, EMC, VMware, and Intel are among the most well-respected names in compute, network, storage, virtualization, and management technologies.

"IT project managers and executive decision-makers who purchase cloud computing services recognize the VCE and investor company brands and know the high degree of integrity behind them," Schwabecher states. "Your job might be on the line if your hosted Microsoft Exchange server goes down. You're going to want to make certain you've selected a hosting service you can count on."

Schwabecher also had similar observations regarding the support he receives from VCE. Although 8x8 hasn't had any major issues to date, the company is pleased with how service-oriented VCE is. And 8x8 especially appreciates that VCE offers a single source of support regardless of where an issue may arise. That's simply not the case for traditional converged infrastructure solutions comprised of components from a number of different vendors.

"Vblock Systems represent the platinum standard for tier-one business applications and provides businesses with the confidence to entrust mission-critical applications to the cloud," says Bryan Martin, chairman and CEO of 8x8. "We view this partnership as a major steppingstone toward our goal of becoming the preferred provider for all types of cloud services for businesses across the United States."

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About 8x8 Inc.

A pioneer in the development of cloud-based VoIP, video, mobile, and unified communications solutions, 8x8 leverages its patented software technologies to deliver industry-leading SaaS and IaaS applications to businesses of any size with employees in any location. The company provides integrated business communications and cloud computing services designed to meet the highest levels of availability, reliability, and scalability. Businesses can reduce costs, improve productivity, and enhance their competitiveness by choosing 8x8 for their mission-critical, cloud-based communications and computing needs.

About Kovarus

Kovarus focuses on increasing IT efficiency for their clients by architecting and integrating business-aligned IT solutions. The company's holistic approach to helping customers deliver IT-as-a-Service (ITaaS) focuses on the people, process, and technologies for enabling IT management and service delivery. This includes deep expertise in data center technologies, including: virtualization, server, storage, networking and cloud computing. Kovarus enables its customers to dramatically simplify their IT operating model and cost-effectively deliver the resources their organizations need to succeed in today's highly competitive environment.

**For more information, please visit
www.Kovarus.com.**

About VCE

VCE, formed by Cisco and EMC with investments from VMware and Intel, accelerates the adoption of converged infrastructure and cloud-based computing models that dramatically reduce the cost of IT while improving time to market for our customers. VCE, through the Vblock systems, delivers the industry's only **fully integrated and fully virtualized cloud infrastructure system**. VCE solutions are available through an extensive partner network, and cover horizontal applications, vertical industry offerings, and application development environments, allowing customers to focus on business innovation instead of integrating, validating, and managing IT infrastructure.

**For more information, go to
www.vce.com.**



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