

NAVAHO BUILDS PRIVATE CLOUD IN FRANCE WITH HELP OF TWO VBLOCK™ INFRASTRUCTURE PLATFORMS

VCE enabled Navaho to build one of the first operational private clouds in France, dedicated to public-sector use

Executive Summary

About Navaho

Launched in December 2011, Navaho became the new trading name of Risc Group IT Solutions. For more than 10 years, Navaho has been offering a complete range of IT services to businesses, including networks and telecommunications, hosting and cloud computing, off-site backups, collaborative messaging, and digital trust solutions. Navaho's majority shareholder is the STS Group, Europe's leading digital trust software provider.

Challenge

- Implement an ultra-secure private cloud

Solution

- Two replicated Vblock™ Infrastructure Platforms split across two data centers

Results

- Industrialization of the infrastructure
- Simplified administration
- Rapid deployment
- Increased security
- Better control of the management of allocated resources

Challenge

Taking advantage of the change of ownership, Navaho decided two years ago to rework its obsolete infrastructure from scratch. The company chose to move from the two data centers it had in the past to four, all located in Paris or in the surrounding region. Two of these data centers are dedicated to unified communications services; the other two have been promised for the company's new activities focusing on cloud computing. Served by dark fibers, they offer a throughput of 800 gigabits per data center.

Solution

Implementing an Ultra-Secure Private Cloud

In 2010, the ongoing overhaul coincided with an invitation to tender from the DGME (the Directorate-General for State Modernization), which wanted to have an external private cloud established for its major project for online procedures (service-public.fr). The DGME wanted to keep control of its own infrastructure, but it did not want to

"The Vblock platform was quick to get into production and features full integration of all components, security, and simplified administration. These are all major benefits for this industrialized approach to converged infrastructure that let us build a genuine private cloud, marking a watershed in the history of our company."

*Pierre Fort
President and CEO
Navaho*

handle the management itself. Navaho won the project, particularly for its innovative approach and the level of reliability it offered.

“This project marks a real watershed in the history of our company. It has let us put flesh on the bones of our rationalization work and makes our production infrastructure compliant with market standards,” explains Pierre Fort, president and CEO of Navaho.

Thanks to this project, the company has become one of France’s private cloud pioneers and now has the privilege of leading the way in cloud computing for public services.

Central Administration and Rapid Deployment

To meet the requirements of the DGME, Navaho quickly looked into a converged infrastructure based on Vblock™ Infrastructure Platforms proposed by VCE, the company formed by VMware, Cisco, and EMC. A Vblock platform integrates all the layers needed for creating a private cloud: network, server, storage, and virtualization are all in a single block. Unified infrastructure management completes the set.

Before choosing VCE, Navaho had already considered building this private cloud using exactly the same hardware components, but it would also have had to handle the integration itself. “For reasons of efficiency and simplicity of control, the turnkey approach of the Vblock platform was more relevant,” Fort recalls.

The main trump card of using this kind of building block is having only a single point of contact. “It was one argument that changed the baseline for ensuring a high-quality private cloud,” adds Fort.

Another advantage is the size, the “industrial” nature of this infrastructure building block. In fact, each Vblock platform can be installed quickly. “VCE guaranteed there would be no more than four weeks to the start of production, a perfect amount of time to meet the expectations of the DGME,” explains Fort.

In the end, the Navaho private cloud has been based on a fully redundant Vblock platform split across two data centers in the Paris region.

Results

Unified Administration and Flexible Resource Management

In just a few weeks, Navaho was able to put its private cloud into production. The teams from VCE and Systemic, the integrator, were able to assist with the project. “The bar was finally set pretty high from the outset. Although we were pioneering a private cloud like this one, we went straight to the heavyweight production version, because the applications of the DGME were highly critical. There were no intermediate stages,” recalls Fort with delight.

One of the most popular features is the fast, dynamic allocation of RAM to each virtual machine, depending on what is needed.

A Robust and Scalable Private Cloud

The end result is that Navaho is one satisfied service provider confident about the future. If the needs of the DGME increase, all it will need to do is start playing with blocks, so to speak, adding an extra Vblock platform in each data center.

Building on this success, other projects for the same type of private cloud should follow shortly. Two redundant Vblock platforms are already coming to join their counterparts comprising the offering provided by the public cloud service provider. This public cloud can offer resources on demand to any provider or company that wants to test the cloud and allow access to virtual machines from time to time without having to invest too heavily. A more entry-level offering without systemic redundancy is also envisioned in the future, in order to meet more modest requirements.

On the DGME side, the private cloud is now running full steam ahead. It has been in existence for barely one year, but nearly 3 million accounts have been created and more than 3,000 forms are uploaded hourly.



ABOUT VCE

VCE, the Virtual Computing Environment Company 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 platform, delivers the industry's first completely integrated IT offering with end-to-end vendor accountability. VCE's prepackaged 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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