Business challenge

Scott Equipment operates in volatile markets influenced by a range of external factors. The company needed to adapt its technology strategy to better respond to unpredictable demand.

Transformation

To make the most of evolving market opportunities, Scott Equipment needed to ensure its ability to respond quickly and more effectively to sudden increases in demand. Working with IBM Business Partner VSS to deploy VersaStack, the company deployed a future-proof integrated infrastructure solution that offers greater flexibility and performance, helping it gain an edge over the competition.

Aaron Coody
Systems Administrator,
Scott Equipment

Business benefits

Provides

unprecedented flexibility and scalability help meet unpredictable demand

Equips

employees with tools for greater productivity

Offers

a valuable competitive edge to help the company win new market share

Scott Equipment

Investing in versatility to help meet tomorrow's challenges

Founded by Tom Scott and his wife Mayme in 1939, Scott Equipment Company, LLC (Scott Equipment) offer sales, rentals, repairs maintenance and financing for heavy-duty equipment. The family-run company is headquartered in Monroe, Louisiana, and employs nearly 600 people to provide top-notch service from 23 locations in seven U.S. states.

"The biggest strength of the VersaStack is its versatility: it is truly a one-stop shop with everything we need to set us up for a successful future."

—Aaron Coody, Systems Administrator, Scott Equipment

VersaStack™ Solution
by Cisco and IBM

VSS

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Navigating an unpredictable landscape

Demand for Scott Equipment's services is dependent on a wide range of factors, including changes in the economic and political landscapes. The company must move quickly to seize new business opportunities or risk losing out to competitors.

Aaron Coody, Systems Administrator at Scott Equipment, explains: "One of our biggest challenges is the volatility of the markets that we operate in. Everything from the cost of oil to local politics can influence how many projects our customers undertake, which in turn affects how much equipment they purchase or hire. Since it is too complicated to predict the future, it is vital that we can react fast when demand suddenly goes up; if we don't, we can lose out on sales."

Technology plays a key role in Scott Equipment's ability to adapt to changing levels of orders. Turning its attention to its existing infrastructure, the company realized proactive change would give them a competitive advantage.

Building construction site

"As a whole, our industry has always been a few years behind others when it comes to making the most of technology," comments Aaron Coody. "It was time to evolve our technology strategy, catching up with the rest of the world while outpacing our competitors in the meantime."

Scott Equipment introduced a number of automated processes, including accounts payable and ordering, and a mobile-enabled application for its technicians to use while onsite at customer locations.

To support these innovations, the company began looking for a more flexible infrastructure solution.

Aaron Coody says: "Before, we relied on a VMware environment to support domain authentication, replication and files, with everything else running on IBM® i. While we transitioned from a mom-and-pop workgroup IT structure, with each branch acting as a single entity, to a more complex domain structure, we migrated more systems to VMware. As a result, the choice of underlying server, storage, management and networking components became increasingly important.

"When we decided to move our VMware environment from a solution in our corporate office to a colocation facility 500 miles away, the time was right to switch platforms. It was essential to choose one that could deliver sufficient performance to outweigh the impact of the added distance."

Platform for the future

Scott Equipment chose to deploy VersaStack, an integrated infrastructure solution from IBM and Cisco, to support its VMware environment, as recommended by IBM Business Partner and long-time collaborator VSS.

"VSS have been partners of ours for years now, and we implicitly trust their judgment," remarks Aaron Coody. "So when they made a compelling case for VersaStack, we were soon won over. For us, the critical factors in our choice were performance, scalability and support, and we felt confident that the VersaStack could deliver on all of these."

Donnie Williams, IT Director at Scott Equipment, adds: "For us, VersaStack offered us the best opportunity to deploy a solution from two technology leaders, offering a win-win situation from every perspective."

In VersaStack, Scott Equipment gained a preconfigured solution comprised of Cisco server, management and networking components, and IBM storage, enabling a rapid deployment. Aaron Coody recalls: "From our view, the VersaStack implementation was very simple. VSS handled all the planning—we simply told them when and where we needed it, and once in place, we migrated our VMs [virtual machines] over in no time. We were able to achieve such a smooth cutover that none of our users even noticed it was happening!"

Today, the VersaStack platform supports a variety of systems, including the company's directory service, file system, backup and replication processes and automated accounts payable solution. Scott Equipment has plans to expand the environment further.

"In just a few months, the VersaStack solution has grown to become just as important as our IBM i environment. It is so powerful that we are considering utilizing the platform for other systems, such as a new ERP deployment—something we would not have contemplated with our old distributed infrastructure."

Getting ahead of the curve

Situated at the company's colocation facility 500 miles from corporate headquarters, the VersaStack solution is delivering impressive performance results. By equipping employees with information systems running on a high-speed, ultra-reliable platform, Scott Equipment is setting the stage for greater productivity.

"It is testament to the superior performance offered by VersaStack that even though we moved the distributed part of our infrastructure to a location 500 miles away, we see virtually zero latency," says Aaron Coody. "We can be confident that

our employees have the tools they need to work productively, including technicians accessing our mobile app while in the field. And we are confident that VersaStack will provide the same exceptional performance for a wide variety of workloads."

Scott Equipment can now dynamically adjust and scale resources to meet peaks in demand, helping the company react faster to changes in the marketplace.

Donnie Williams elaborates: "One of the key advantages of the Cisco UCS Director software is that it separates the management of the hardware and software components of the platform. In stark contrast to our previous solution, the Director lets us easily replace or add hardware, so we can quickly extend the environment to act on growth opportunities."

Aaron Coody adds: "Watching VSS rack up VersaStack, we were amazed by how few cables it requires—another feature of the solution that makes working with the platform much easier."

"With VersaStack, we can easily replace or add hardware, and quickly extend the environment to act on growth opportunities."

—Donnie Williams, IT Director, Scott Equipment

In choosing VersaStack, Scott Equipment has succeeded in simplifying its infrastructure while adding to its capabilities, putting the company in a strong position to compete.

Aaron Coody concludes: "The biggest strength of the VersaStack is its versatility: it is truly a one-stop shop with everything we need to grab an edge over the competition and sets us up for a successful future. We feel assured that the roadmap for the solution is one that aligns well with our own, and that the VersaStack will continue to be a good fit for us for some time to come."

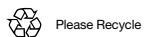## Connect with us

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