

Infrastructure Integrator Uses Cloud, Data Center Expertise to Grow Business



Forsythe doubles hybrid data center and cloud-related engagements as Cisco certified Cloud Builder.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Forsythe Technology, Inc.

Industry: IT Supply and Services

Location: Skokie, IL

Number of Employees: 900

Challenge:

- Capitalize on cloud market opportunity with new architecture, product, and service offerings
- Validate and refine hybrid data center and cloud offerings to better serve customers and grow business
- Expand knowledge of converged and cloud technologies and services within Forsythe

Solution:

- Cisco Cloud Partner Program delivers access to training and tools for partners building cloud practices
- Cisco Cloud Builder certifies skills in infrastructure, management applications, and professional services
- Cisco business planning tools help project revenues and profitability

Results:

- Doubled number of hybrid data center and cloud-related engagements, and developed more agile response to increased customer demand for cloud solutions
- Secured new business and grew Cisco UCS revenue 300 percent year over year
- Created competitive differentiation with higher-level engagements and skill sets above typical VAR capabilities

Challenge

Since 1971, Forsythe has helped customers optimize the cost, manage the risk, and improve performance of their information technology infrastructure through consulting services, technology leasing, and value-added reseller services for leading IT infrastructure manufacturers. With approximately 900 employees in 45 offices throughout the United States and Canada, Forsythe serves the IT needs of enterprises across all industries, including 30 Fortune 100 companies and many Fortune 1000 companies.

With customers relying on Forsythe as a trusted advisor for their IT infrastructure, the emergence of cloud computing presented the company with a significant growth opportunity. “Customers increasingly ask us to define the importance of cloud to their organizations, and how to best implement it within the context of a large-scale enterprise infrastructure,” says David Mossinghoff, 2011 managing director of the Forsythe IT-as-a-Service practice. “The timing was ideal to establish a business unit devoted to IT as a service, incorporating a cloud delivery model and a hybrid data center approach.”

At the same time that Forsythe was developing its cloud expertise and practice, Cisco introduced the Cisco® Cloud Partner Program and Cisco Collaborative Professional Services Cloud Builder. A Cisco partner since 1995 for data center and networking solutions, Forsythe saw Cloud Builder as an opportunity to enhance its cloud approach and achieve a credential that would help differentiate the company from other resellers. “Clients rely on our experience, methodology, and expertise in infrastructure optimization, which is why we have built a proactive and strategic relationship with Cisco,” says Michael Hurliman, Cisco partnership manager for Forsythe.

Solution

Forsythe chose to participate in the Cisco Cloud Builder track of the Collaborative Professional Services portfolio for partners who want to design and implement cloud-ready infrastructures or fully provisioned private or public clouds. The track offered a modular, comprehensive training program focused on all aspects of going to market with Cisco cloud technology.



“Our hybrid data center and cloud-related engagements have doubled since we have been certified as a Cisco Cloud Builder. And we already have approximately 40 clients with some form of hybrid and/or cloud solution initiatives under way.”

David Mossinghoff
2011 Managing Director, IT-as-a-Service
Forsythe Solutions

Press play below to hear a quote from
David Mossinghoff

“With Cloud Builder, our goals were to validate our approach, refine our practice and align it with emerging trends, position Cisco technology, and educate more people within Forsythe on cloud architecture,” says Mossinghoff. Forsythe achieved these goals and became certified as a Cisco Cloud Builder by demonstrating competency in cloud infrastructure, management applications, and cloud professional services. Twelve Forsythe employees, a mix of both management and technical personnel, directly participated in Cloud Builder.

Forsythe also found great value in the business planning tools provided within Cloud Builder, which helps in projecting revenues and profits, as well as building partnerships with service providers. “The business planning part of the program offered excellent tools that really complemented our strategies and direction for our cloud practice,” says Mossinghoff. “Each component of the offering enabled us to learn about new areas with respect to the cloud market and technology and then incorporate those learnings into our methodologies.”

Results

Due in part to Cisco Cloud Builder and related Cisco technologies, Forsythe has been able to accelerate on-premise cloud implementations by 40 percent, creating a competitive boost that has paid off in new business contracts. “Our hybrid data center and cloud-related engagements have doubled since we have been certified as a Cisco Cloud Builder. And we already have approximately 40 clients with some form of hybrid and/or cloud solution initiatives under way,” says Mossinghoff.

Forsythe is experiencing an increase in business outside of its cloud practice as well, thanks to its cloud expertise. “It has helped us strengthen our customer relationships and also do a substantial amount of business that is not directly related to cloud strategies,” says Ron Jackson, Forsythe data center practice lead. “We’re capitalizing on Cisco’s innovation in combination with our know-how and services to offer a skill set that goes well beyond that of typical value-added resellers. This raises our level of engagement and helps customers be more confident partnering with us because of our increased capabilities to help them solve their operational issues.”

After participating in Cisco Cloud Builder, Forsythe experienced its highest revenue ever as a Cisco partner, topping US\$225 million in total revenue generated to Cisco for fiscal year 2011. Forsythe was also the top channel partner for VCE Vblock based on revenue generated in the same year.

Next Steps

Forsythe plans to capitalize on the fast-growing hybrid data center and cloud market through its continued partnership with Cisco. “We want to help customers unlock the full capabilities promised by cloud computing,” says Mossinghoff. “And we expect Cisco to continue playing a large role as we work toward that goal.”

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco Collaborative Professional Services, visit:
www.cisco.com/go/cps

Program List

- Cisco Collaborative Professional Services Cloud Builder

Product List

- Cisco Nexus® Switches
- Cisco Unified Computing System™ (UCS™)
- Cisco Intelligent Automation for Cloud (CIAC)
- Converged Infrastructure utilizing Vblock and FlexPod



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