



Car manufacturer powers business vision with Microsoft Private Cloud solution on FlexPod architecture

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: Toyota Tsusho Africa

Industry: Automotive

Location: South Africa

Number of Employees: 400

Challenge

- Increase agility to support core operations and new ventures
- Improve IT productivity while protecting against business disruption

Solution

- Microsoft Private Cloud solution running in FlexPod virtualized data center environment

Results

- Power requirements decreased, along with 85 percent less hardware footprint
- Reduced IT complexity, generating significant time savings
- Dependable disaster recovery strategy in place

Challenge

As a wholly-owned subsidiary, Toyota Tsusho Africa (TTAF) is one of 18 Toyota Group companies. It provides core automotive products and services across 23 African nations, along with diversified business interests in projects ranging from mining and agriculture to renewable energy.

TTAF faced significant IT challenges, ranging from inadequate disaster recovery arrangements to the need to consolidate a complex technology estate. Several factors were driving up costs, including an approach that isolated computing, storage, and networking resources, coupled with a proliferation of management tools and processes. Data center facilities, which comprised aging, power-hungry physical servers, were especially unwieldy and expensive to maintain.

Solution

In response, the company opted for a Microsoft Private Cloud solution from its service provider EOH. The solution runs on a FlexPod architecture built on the Cisco Unified Computing System® (Cisco UCS™), the Cisco Nexus® family of data center switches, NetApp FAS storage components, and Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2/VMM.

A first for South Africa, the FlexPod implementation has improved agility and protected IT investment through better asset utilization. “We particularly liked the way FlexPod enabled consolidation and virtualization without having to undertake a rip-and-replace exercise,” says Clifford Theunissen, general manager for corporate IT in Toyota Tsusho Africa.



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General Manager, Corporate IT
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FlexPod with Microsoft Private Cloud is certified via the Microsoft Private Cloud Fast Track program, helping ensure a pre-tested, reduced-risk deployment architecture. This helped enable the project to proceed quickly and smoothly. “A big plus is that the project forged ahead in record time,” says Theunissen, “and the team met all business requirements ahead of schedule.”

The manufacturer benefits from a simplified virtualized data center fabric that is highly-scalable, increases efficiency, and lowers cost. The solution includes eight Cisco® UCS B200 M2 Blade Servers installed at the company’s main data center and two more deployed at dual disaster recovery sites.

Results

The FlexPod with Microsoft Private Cloud solution is providing clear business benefits to TTAF by way of increased efficiency and reduced data center running costs.

The company has significantly reduced racks (from five to three) and servers (from 66 rack-mounts to eight blades) at its primary data center. The secondary sites have gone down from 12 to two, contributing to an 85 percent server consolidation overall. The new platform also consumes less electricity, making a significant contribution towards the company’s sustainability goals.

Freed from the burden of daily maintenance checks, the company’s IT teams can use their time more productively. “The project thus far has been a resounding success,” says Theunissen. “Future initiatives will leverage the FlexPod implementation, bringing more savings to the business.”

TTAF is confident that the move to an on-premise private cloud solution will speed up access to business tools and information, creating a more responsive, customer-centric service organization. The inherent flexibility of FlexPod has helped improve crucial processes such as data backup and recovery, along with dynamic workload allocation. Other systems running on FlexPod include SharePoint, SQL and Exchange environments. The solution also features NetApp SnapManager products for Microsoft applications such as SnapManager for Exchange, SnapManager for SharePoint, and SnapManager for SQL.

“In our old environment, we had limited disaster recovery capabilities, which meant that if one of our SAP environments were to do down, it could take up to a week to recover,” says Theunissen. “With FlexPod, we’ve moved to an active-active configuration, so if one virtual machine fails that workload automatically transfers to another machine.”

Next Steps

The company is currently looking to implement a virtual desktop infrastructure, offering secure mobility across the broad geographic sweep of its African territory. Clifford Theunissen sums up: “I believe it will be a tough task for competitive vendors to challenge the FlexPod offering.”

For More Information

To learn more about FlexPod, please go to: www.cisco.com/go/flexpod



Product List

Data Center

- FlexPod
 - Cisco Unified Computing System B200 M2 Blade Servers
 - Cisco Nexus 5548UP Series Switches
 - NetApp FAS 3240 storage

Fabric Interconnects

- Cisco 6248 Fabric Interconnects

Software

- Microsoft Windows Server 2008/R2, Hyper-V, SharePoint Server 2013, Exchange Server 2010, Office 2010, SQL Server 2008, and System Center 2012 Suite
- SAP ERP 4.6C



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