



Financial services company saved over 80% in Capex and improved the RTO/RPO by moving to the cloud

Highlights

- *Deep knowledge of various cloud platforms and VMWare and the ability to utilize that knowledge to give a solution that benefits the customer.*
- *Methodologies to migrate applications from in-house to public cloud and then set-up for DR.*
- *Experienced professionals for different technologies from OS to VMware to networks deployed to execute a successful implementation.*
- *Partnership with IBM to ensure that the resources were available when needed.*

The Client:

Our customer is an international financial services company. Their India center is a back office which provides support services in various areas like HR, IT etc.

While the company is Europe based, it has offices across the globe. Their main Data Center is in Europe while the DR was in Asia. They are heavy VMWare users in a predominantly Microsoft environment of operating systems databases and applications. They had a site to site storage replication using NetApps storage on both primary and DR site.

As the servers and storage devices were more than 6 years old and support costs were rising they wanted to do a tech-refresh. As per the original plan they wanted to continue with the same methodology of site-to-site storage based replication since it had been proven in their environment, worked well and did not require additional servers to be procured.

Challenges:

Their hardware was six years old and the cost of maintaining the old hardware along with paying annual maintenance charges was becoming exorbitant with each passing year.

- Site- to - site replication has its own set of challenges. In case of a disaster, time involved in loading applications and mounting the database is considerably high.
- The speed of replication is very high when doing a storage-to-storage replication. However, a data corruption at the primary site is immediately replicated at the DR site also.
- To opt for storage based site-to-site replication, the customer would need to forecast and provision storage in advance resulting in increased capital expenditure.
- While they were extensive users of VMWare they were not utilizing the advanced features of Cloud DR available in VMWare.
- Being a finance company they also had to ensure that they were maintaining the requisite compliances so going onto a public cloud was not on their mind. This meant that they had to be co-hosting and spending capex.

Suggested Solution:

While getting engaged with the customer and assessing their existing environment and requirement our SMEs gave them various scenarios of how a public cloud could be utilized to build a DR set-up with more flexibility and lower CAPEX.

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However, the customer had their own apprehensions to move on public cloud as their compliance required that they be able to identify the exact machine IPs being used, the rack in which the machine was located etc. Generally in the public cloud environment this is not feasible because the whole concept of cloud is about virtual machines.

Post understanding the criticality of the compliances, DCM suggested the IBM cloud, which gave them the capability of having a Bare Metal server (dedicated machine) with all the necessary security compliances and the flexibility of taking a public cloud with capability to scale indefinitely on demand.

Once the customer was convinced on the idea of moving to a public cloud we showcased how they could benefit from the advanced features of VMWare which are native on IBM cloud. To prove the technical feasibility of the solution we showcased the usage of the VMWare SRM module between the machines on-PREM and on CLOUD. The customer was able to use the existing VMWare console to manage the machines on the CLOUD so there was no learning curve to be accounted for.

The second concern the customer had was on costs for doing replication of data between sites. Based on the customer's operational requirements the DC servers had to be located in a location in Europe and the DR servers in a location in Asia. Most public cloud providers have variable costs when data is sent out from one DC to another. Since IBM has its own redundant network between its cloud data centers, they do not charge for data travelling between the DCs. This helped close one of the financial issues that the customer had in mind.

VMWare native tools are usable on the IBM Cloud, so migrating the applications was not a major challenge. However, we had to tune the applications for operating in public networks and taking care of latency issues for each application. We sequentially migrated the infrastructure, then the applications so that production was not hampered.

The Benefits:

- The customer moved from CAPEX to OPEX model as they bought Bare Metal servers for both the DC and DR site on a monthly rental and ensured compliance.
- Saved on AMC and other Maintenance costs resulted in better utilization of their budgets.
- Ability to upgrade their infrastructure within few hours with the latest storage and processors, so they do not have to plan and buy for capacity in advance. Based on how business moves they can now keep adding capacity on the fly.
- No additional costs incurred in buying licenses or DR software as their existing VMWare licenses could be utilized on IBM-Cloud "AS-IS".
- Improved their RPO/RTO as the SRM application instantly transfers users of an application on one VM to another irrespective of the site.