FUJITSU

Case Study
Vendormate

» The high-performance architecture provided by Fujitsu, along with its industry-leading professional services, gives us the performance, availability, and reliability we need to meet our operational needs «

Tim Paulus, Vice President of IT Operations and Infrastructure, Vendormate

THE CUSTOMER

Country: United States
Industry: Healthcare
Founded: 2005
Employees: 106
Website: www.vendormate.com

THE CHALLENGE

Build a highly available IT infrastructure to ensure 24x7 access to web-based applications.

THE SOLUTION

Vendormate runs its flagship vendor credentialing application, Vendormate VISION™, along with Vendormate Contract Manager, in the Fujitsu environment. The company deployed six PRIMERGY RX600 S6 Quad socket servers, which are configured for virtualization using Xen hypervisor virtualization software and run on the CentOS Operating System. Vendormate selected the PRIMERGY RX600 servers because they come with multiple processors with hyper-threading technology, delivering superior performance and high-level availability. To meet storage requirements in a virtualized environment, Vendormate installed the ETERNUS DX80 S2 disk storage system for its reliability and flexibility and currently uses 50 TB of storage capacity.

THE BENEFITS

- Eliminates the need for physical disk space on each server, reducing space required meaning optimal performance in a small space
- Enhanced reliability and operational continuity to meet increasing business volume, peak traffic, and an expanding application portfolio
- Fujitsu delivers proactive and knowledgeable support right away

The Customer

A third-party vendor credentialing firm headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, Vendormate offers software-based services that enable healthcare providers and suppliers to know more about who they are doing business with today and who they should do business with tomorrow. Leveraging its extensive vendor credentialing network, Vendormate delivers Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) applications including Vendormate VISION™, which monitors the credentials, financial, and legal status of vendors. Also included is Vendormate Contract Manager, which monitors contract terms to provide customers with increased transparency and information control over their vendor relationships. With its business based on a SaaS model, Vendormate must ensure that customers and vendors alike can easily access services at any time of the day or night. With so much at stake, the company has invested in a highly available and redundant IT infrastructure based on Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers and ETERNUS storage systems to deliver enough capacity to handle all user requests at any given time.

The Challenge

Like all SaaS providers, the key challenge to Vendormate is to ensure 24x7 access to web-based services. To this end, Vendormate has built a highly available infrastructure consisting of multiple virtual hosts performing the same function grouped into pools of hosts. These pools of hosts also perform the same function, delivering complete system availability and redundancy in the event of a failure.

"With 18 million hits per month, 60,000 vendors on file, and 300,000 registered users, we absolutely must ensure that our applications are available all the time," says Tim Paulus, Vice President of IT Operations and Infrastructure at Vendormate, who was first introduced to Fujitsu by CDW, a leading provider of technology solutions for business, government, education, and healthcare in North America. Working with the experts at CDW, Vendormate began to look for a storage solution that could better meet the needs of its virtualized environment. *"We knew we needed a distributed disk environment to centralize disk space and facilitate storage management in our virtual environment,"* says Paulus. The company's previous configuration had separate storage attached to each individual host. *"The Fujitsu ETERNUS DX80 SAN storage system easily supports virtualization and allows us to seamlessly migrate virtual hosts from one physical host to another to meet our growing needs."*

Impressed with the performance, scalability, and reliability of the Fujitsu ETERNUS DX80, Vendormate took a closer look at the Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers as an alternative to its existing server platform, which was lacking in performance and not well supported.

"We recommended the Fujitsu PRIMERGY RX600 S6, a powerful server that is optimized for virtualization, delivers excellent performance, and is well-supported by the Fujitsu team," says Corey Benson, CDW Account Manager.

The Solution

With system availability a top priority, Paulus runs the company's flagship application, Vendormate VISION, along with Vendormate Contract Manager, in the Fujitsu environment. He deployed six PRIMERGY RX600 S6 servers running Xen hypervisor virtualization software on the Linux Operating System. Vendormate selected the PRIMERGY RX600 servers because they come with multiple processors boasting hyper-threading technology, delivering superior performance and high-level availability. To meet storage requirements in a virtualized environment, Paulus installed the ETERNUS DX80 S2 storage system for its reliability and scalability and currently uses 50 TB of storage capacity.

The Benefit

Big performance in less space

The Fujitsu platform is located in the company's main data center in Atlanta. *"We were looking for a platform that would maximize processing power in as little real estate as possible,"* explains Paulus. Each PRIMERGY RX600 server comes with four Intel® Xeon® processors, 10 cores per processor, and two threads per core, giving Vendormate 80 processing threads per host for optimal performance in a relatively small space. *"Because we pay by the amount of energy we consume, the more processing power I can fit on one power circuit the better. I am very happy with the performance we can achieve."* And according to Paulus, the use of the Fujitsu ETERNUS SAN solution eliminates the need for physical disk space on each server, further reducing space required.

Reliability, performance, and scalability

The Vendormate data center infrastructure has been built to run mission-critical applications that handle large volumes of crucial data and must operate reliably and continually and be able to grow to meet increasing business volume, peak traffic, and an expanding application portfolio. *"Our reputation – and even our bottom line – could be impacted if a user was unable to access our system, so reliability is absolutely vital to our success,"* explains Paulus. The PRIMERGY RX600 server has been designed with integrated redundancy functions to deliver enhanced reliability and operational continuity. *"I do feel that Fujitsu servers are more reliable than our previous solution."*

The advanced management components of the Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers help to further enhance their performance. In fact, Paulus leverages the secure management console to remotely manage servers for optimal performance, a feature that he says is more functional and easier to use than other comparable interfaces. According to Paulus, the scalability of the Fujitsu ETERNUS SAN storage system was another key selling feature. *"We really like the modularity of the ETERNUS DX80 because we can easily and cost-effectively grow as our data storage needs grow,"* comments Paulus. *"Our previous solution did not offer this flexibility – pricing would increase dramatically if we needed to expand or upgrade our storage system."*

Proactive and knowledgeable support

System support was a top requirement for Vendormate when it decided to upgrade its production environment because the level of support previously received was lacking. *"When our previous hardware would go down, the vendor would send out a contractor who would scratch his head over the problem; we just hoped he'd somehow be able to get it running again,"* states Paulus. *"The Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers and ETERNUS storage system deliver such excellent availability and reliability and are well-built, so we really don't have a lot of issues."* But if Paulus does need assistance, Fujitsu delivers proactive and knowledgeable support right away. *"Fujitsu sends out its own people who know the products – they can identify and fix the problem right away,"* Paulus adds. In fact, Fujitsu is often aware of issues – such as disk failures – before Paulus is. *"Fujitsu is prepared to deal with an issue even more quickly than we are. Overall, we have had a very positive experience with both the sales and support teams."*

Conclusion

Paulus has decided to standardize on the Fujitsu PRIMERGY servers and ETERNUS storage system moving forward. *"We expect to continue to grow our production environment as our customer base grows and as we expand our service offerings,"* concludes Paulus. *"The high-performance architecture provided by Fujitsu, along with its industry-leading professional services, gives us the performance, availability, and reliability we need to meet our operational needs."*

About Fujitsu America, Inc.

Fujitsu America, Inc. is a leading ICT solutions provider for organizations in the U.S., Canada and the Caribbean. Fujitsu enables clients to meet their business objectives through integrated offerings and solutions, including consulting, systems integration, managed services, outsourcing and cloud services for infrastructure, platforms and applications; data center and field services; and server, storage, software and mobile/tablet technologies. For more information, please visit: http://solutions.us.fujitsu.com/ and http://twitter.com/fujitsuamerica.