

Case study

LIFE CORPORATION

Integrated virtualization infrastructure improves LIFE CORPORATION's operational efficiency in 232 stores* nationwide and sets a platform for expansion and future business growth. While disaster prevention planning is reinforced as the de-duplication appliance can reach its maximum data compression ratio of 90%.

*as of May 2013

The customer

Industry: Supermarket
Head Office: 1-19-4 Higashinakajima,
Higashi-yodogawa-ku, Osaka JAPAN
533-8558



Representative: Takaharu Iwasaki
Founded: October 24th 1956
Sales Revenue: ¥505 billion (February 2013)
Number of employees: 19,894 (February 2013)
Number of stores: 232 (May 2013)
Website: <http://www.lifecorp.jp/>

The challenge

- Integrate servers and storage systems to generate cost reductions.
- Improve backup efficiency in the virtualized environment.
- Implement a high performance and highly reliable solution that supports business operations.

The benefit

- Integration of the virtualization infrastructure, servers and storage systems, reduced capital investment expenditure by 36% and maintenance costs by 64%.
- The implementation of ETERNUS CS800 S3 increased backup efficiency by allowing the data compression ratio, of the de-duplication appliance, to achieve a maximum of 90%. The high compression ratio and remote encrypted replication function strengthens the capacity for disaster prevention planning.
- The Integrated storage ETERNUS DX410 S2 provided high speed performance using an FC connection. The highly reliable system now has the power to effectively support the operations of 30,000 employees across 232 supermarkets nationwide.

Overview

LIFE CORPORATION built a virtualization infrastructure in order to integrate disparate servers and storage within the business. Fujitsu's ETERNUS DX410 S2 storage solution was selected for its high reliability, high performance and ability to effectively protect the business data of all 232 stores* across Japan. While the ETERNUS CS800 S3 was selected to accommodate the backup storage requirements. ETERNUS CS800 S3 data compression and de-duplication ensure LIFE CORPORATION can reinforce their disaster prevention planning. (*as of May 2013)

Customer background

Integration of servers and storage was essential to opening 400 stores.

Founded in 1956, LIFE CORPORATION runs 232 supermarkets across Japan, predominantly in Kansai and Tokyo metropolitan regions (May 2013). Focused on building a trusted relationship with its customers, LIFE CORPORATION will target the opening of 400 stores and 800 billion yen in revenue.

In 2012, LIFE CORPORATION began implementing a next generation business plan which included the opening of two new flagship stores over the next three years, one in Osaka (Nov 2013) and the other in Tokyo (2015). The plan will look to roll out a new innovative work style for employees, as well as establish a comprehensive strategy across five areas – new store openings, merchandise, customer satisfaction, cost optimization and future planning.

To ensure these five strategies are fully realized, optimizing ICT use will be an important aspect. In recent years, building an ICT infrastructure that reduces costs and can respond to change in the business environment has become paramount.

"In 2009, we started to look at integrating the increasing number of servers and storage systems within our business system. ICT infrastructure which could expand efficiently and flexibly with our business growth would be essential in achieving our goal of 400 stores." said Mr. Kenshi Yamamoto, Corporate Officer, Director of Corporate Planning and Information System, LIFE CORPORATION.



Mr. Kenshi Yamamoto,
Corporate Officer,
Director of Corporate
Planning and
Information System,
LIFE CORPORATION

Storage System

- Fujitsu Storage ETERNUS CS800 S3
- Fujitsu Storage ETERNUS DX410 S2
- Fujitsu Storage ETERNUS NR1000 F2240¹
- Fujitsu Storage ETERNUS SN200²

1: ETERNUS NR1000 F series is a NAS product available only in Japan.

2: ETERNUS SN200 series is a Fiber Channel Switch available only in Japan.

Servers

- Fujitsu Server PRIMERGY RX200 S6
- Fujitsu Server PRIMERGY RX300 S6

The solution

Experience and a comprehensive solution were key factors when selecting a partner to build the integrated virtual infrastructure.

LIFE CORPORATION had around 40 systems each optimized for a specific business function including; attendance management, payroll management, finance and groupware. Over time as the number of servers incrementally increased so did costs and the complexity of managing the system. Furthermore as the amount of infrastructure continued to grow its ability to adapt to changing business environments declined.



Mr. Yasuhiro Yamane, Section Chief in charge of Information System division, LIFE CORPORATION

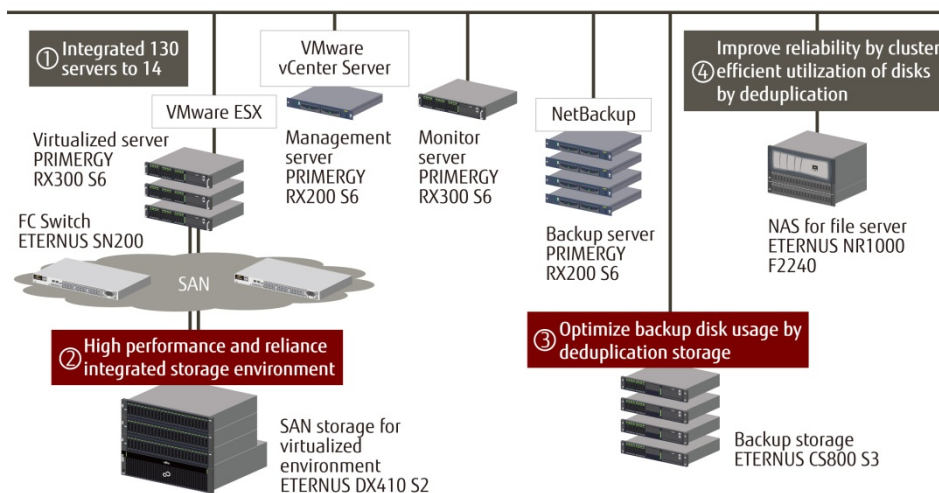
“In the past when more storage was required for the dedicated servers in each business, we have had to stop the whole the system. However with our approach of using next generation ICT infrastructure, system expansion can be completed flexibly without system interruption. In addition by optimizing resources and separating hardware and software operations, we have been able to drive down costs as well.” stated Mr. Yasuhiro Yamane, Section Chief in charge of Information System division.

With an eye for the future, the company chose to adopt a server and storage solution that utilized virtualization technology. In 2011, LIFE CORPORATION issued an RFP (request for proposal) that detailed their requirements for an integrated virtualization infrastructure. From the vendors that responded to the RFP, Fujitsu was selected to partner with LIFE CORPORATION and construct the integrated virtualization infrastructure that would facilitate future planning. Mr. Yamane explained the reason for selection. “In addition to fulfilling all requirements, Fujitsu proposed a solution that was the most effective in generating cost reductions, and delivered high quality disaster prevention. Fujitsu was chosen based on their extensive proven performance and knowledge of VMware solutions. What’s more, Fujitsu offered one-stop-support for the multi-vendor environment, providing us with a strong sense of security.” Mr. Yoshihiro Sogabe, Section Chief of Information System division of LIFE CORPORATION said.



Mr. Yoshihiro Sogabe, Section Chief of Information System division of LIFE CORPORATION

High performance and reliability products which support integrated virtualization infrastructure



System overview

De-duplication and scalability takes priority when selecting the backup storage solution.

"We were concerned that the processing speed of servers in a virtualization environment would be less than with physical servers. We believed this would be due to I/O operational bottlenecks, and therefore one of our key requirements was high performance. In addition as the system was used by over 30,000 employees high reliability was also essential. In regard to functionality when selecting



Mr. Shinji Takemura
Deputy Section Chief
of Information
System division,
LIFE CORPORATION

the backup storage solution, priority was given to de-duplication and scalability. Following the selection of the right infrastructure for our needs, migration to the new integrated virtualization infrastructure took place. This was undertaken through a staged approach in accordance with the replacement of the physical servers, while consideration was also given to scalability required in the future." said Mr. Shinji Takemura, Deputy Section Chief of Information System division.

Business benefits and future possibilities

Benefits exceeded expectations. ETERNUS CS800 S3 improved back-up efficiency by maximizing data compression to 90%.

Implementation of the integrated virtualization infrastructure solution for LIFE CORPORATION began in February 2012. A year and a half later and the system continue to provide strong performance and are delivering results that exceed expectations. "With the virtual solution in full swing we have managed to reduce capital investment costs by 37%, maintenance costs by 64%, and decrease utility and other operational costs by 44%, we also were able to reduced our environmental footprint by half" explained Mr. Yamane.

"By processing the system backup in the virtualized environment the data compression ratio can reach its maximum of 90%. The ETERNUS CS800 S3 back up of physical servers also ensures unified management of both system backup and data backup. Currently we are planning to use the remote encrypted replication function of ETERNUS CS800 S3 to develop a disaster prevention planning. We are confident that the high compression ratio achieved by ETERNUS CS800 S3 will allow us to control network costs." said Mr. Takemura. In the past, LIFE CORPORATION has primarily used tape backup, however now with ETERNUS CS800 S3 they can reduce operation costs associated with of changing and storing the tapes. Within the new virtual infrastructure platform, the department's disparate servers have been integrated into the ETERNUS NR1000F³ NAS storage device to improve operational efficiency. This is also supported by the integrated virtualization infrastructure ensuring disk capacity optimization using de-duplication, and clustering that provides high reliability.

Mr. Yamamoto talked about the future possibilities as follows; "Cost reduction is still our main focus. While Fujitsu supports the stable operation of our integrated virtualization infrastructure, we also rely on them for thought leadership and innovation around Big Data and any other initiatives that will drive our business".

Leveraging advanced technology and its extensive experience, Fujitsu will continue to support LIFE CORPORATION in their passion for social development and building trust for their customers.

3: ETERNUS NR1000 F series is a NAS product available only in Japan.

Contact

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