

Ability to deal with unexpected demand

Physical servers are often inefficient, as each must have spare capacity to deal with unexpected spikes in demand. With VMware virtual infrastructure, all resources are shared amongst business applications, enabling ANZ Stadium to fine-tune each server as required.

"If our SQL or file and print server becomes sluggish, or our POS is dealing with a heavy load around a large event, VMware's Distributed Resource Scheduling dynamically reassigns resources appropriately," explained Fletcher.

IMC's Gifford said that virtualisation solutions have matured greatly in the past few years. The decision will ensure ANZ Stadium receives the maximum benefits possible from its IT resources.



"The real innovation is the change in management thinking around the use of physical infrastructure. Rather than servers being a necessary burden, riddled with inefficiencies from a resource and financial viewpoint, virtualisation unlocks the available power of the expensive hardware.

"No executive wants to finance 20 servers, running at five per cent utilisation for 95 per cent of the day. However, financing four physical servers running at 60 per cent capacity hosting 20 Virtual Machines is a far more positive picture: truly enhancing business agility and competitiveness," said Gifford.

ANZ Stadium Goes Virtual

VMware Virtual Infrastructure reduces costs, facilitates swift disaster recovery & increases IT flexibility

Case Study: ANZ Stadium

Player Credentials

ANZ Stadium is one of the world's largest and most modern sports and entertainment venues. Unique in the world in being able to host four different codes of football, ANZ Stadium's seating capacity varies from 83,500 for Rugby Union, Rugby League and Football to 81,500 for Cricket & AFL.

Hosting more than 50 sporting events, concerts and corporate events annually, it is crucial for ANZ to have the most reliable and efficient system in place to meet the needs of on average one million patrons each year.

The Challenge Cup

In June 2007 when ANZ Stadium brought its catering operations in-house, by acquiring the business from contract caterer Sodexo, the management team immediately embarked on a plan to improve the Point of Sale functionality, efficiency and reliability, while integrating the food & beverage business into the rest of the organisation.

After deciding to replace the existing POS terminals and the related network infrastructure, which were originally installed in 1999 for the Sydney Olympic Games, the challenge was to ensure they could migrate to an entirely new system mid season without effecting patrons overall event experience.

Contacts

Andrew Gifford

IMC Communications
0411 216 000
agifford@imc.net.au

Natalie Green

Just Go Write Public Relations
02 9519 4103
ng@justgowrite.com.au

IMC Communications

For More Information

Suite 29 Level 10
53 Walker Street

North Sydney NSW 2060

T 02 9006 8200

F 02 9006 8222

617 / 434 St.Kilda Road
Melbourne Vic 3004

T 03 9863 1300

F 03 9863 1313

Suite 14, 14 Argyle Street
Albion QLD 4010

T 07 3256 0074

F 07 3256 0153

IMC Communications





The Game Plan

State of the art POS and Virtualisation

In a million-dollar upgrade, IMC Communications introduced ANZ Stadium to VMware virtual infrastructure technology and to an 'infrastructure as a service' model. "IMC worked on the design, imaging and rollout to provide a fully consolidated centrally managed solution," said Charlie Thomlinson, IMC Account Manager.

In one of the largest POS deployments of its kind in Australia, the first stage of the project involved replacing ANZ Stadium catering division's 380 point of sale (POS) registers with latest version touch screen POS terminals and by virtualising the POS back-end server application.

The second stage entails the migration of the Microsoft exchange, file/print, SQL database and web servers from a physical to a virtual infrastructure – all hosted at IMC's Homebush Technology Centre.

"Aside from the physical hardware cost, ANZ Stadium also had to house and maintain its physical servers. VMware virtualisation reduces the associated space and administration costs, as well as facilitating more efficient disaster recovery," said David Fletcher, Manager, Information Technology and Administration, ANZ Stadium.

IMC created this virtualised environment using VMware's Vi3 solution, the industry's leading virtualisation technology. VMware's Vi3 is designed to help organisations simplify IT operations through the consolidation of physical server infrastructure to foster a dynamic and automated data centre.

"A VMware virtual infrastructure environment makes it possible for organisations to dramatically increase the reliability, performance and robustness of their IT environment and significantly reduce the number of physical servers needed, which contributes to a significant reduction in carbon emissions, by lowering energy consumption – both for processing power and cooling, as well as cutting overall system management costs," said Paul Harapin, Vice President, VMware Australia and New Zealand.

"Improving application availability has quickly become a leading reason for thousands of businesses to adopt VMware virtualisation throughout their IT infrastructure. VMware Vi3 virtualisation enables businesses to achieve true enterprise-class reliability, efficiency and performance. VMware's third generation virtualisation technology also has built in features to not only enable consolidation, but deliver dynamic provisioning, resource pooling and overall availability assurance of expensive IT infrastructure, whilst helping to reduce the organisation's carbon footprint."

ServActive Monitoring

ANZ Stadium is also taking advantage of IMC's ServActive product as part of the hosting package. ServActive provides proactive server monitoring to mitigate possible outages and downtime. ServActive provides 24 x 7 monitoring of system resources and can be programmed to trigger email, SMS and paging alerts when a server health threshold is breached.

"ServActive provides real time fault detection and resolution before a possible disaster. If a problem occurs, IMC will manage the fault from start to finish," says Andrew Gifford, Director of Technology Services, IMC Communications. "IMC has extensive contacts with the relevant hardware and software manufacturers and the expertise to fix problems with a high level of first pass resolution."

ServActive provides greater visibility of ANZ Stadium's server infrastructure environment through real time web-based statistics that IMC use to monitor server usage trends. This data is collated and presented to ANZ Stadium in a monthly management report to assist with Business Continuity and Capacity Planning.



Winners Are Grinners

Andrew Gifford, Director of Technology services, IMC, says the VMware virtual infrastructure technology will make backup and recovery easier and more cost-effective for ANZ Stadium. "These benefits are enhanced by the lower hardware overheads, which also translate into reduced management and maintenance costs," he added.

As well as easier disaster recovery and back-ups, other benefits ANZ Stadium expects to realise include:

Greater agility and a more flexible infrastructure

VMware virtualisation renders a server down to a single file. This file can be copied, or better still synchronised, to another location. Not only does this make disaster recovery much easier, it allows the IT department to quickly build isolated "lab" environments using copies of their real servers in order to pilot complex procedures or prove concepts. Resetting or updating the Lab is as simple as overwriting the server files with a current copy.

"In a disaster recovery situation, VMware virtualisation means we can decide which servers to recreate, and to change our minds later if we like, with minimum disruption and vastly more efficient utilisation of the available hardware capacity. There will be no need to complete application and associated service pack updates in a DR Event. With VMware virtualisation, it's available and ready to run using the existing resources," said Fletcher.

Jennifer Cox (Network & Systems Administrator), David Fletcher, Manager, Information Technology and Administration, ANZ Stadium, James Baird (Business Systems Administrator / Project Manager for POS project).

The IMC Advantage

In the case of ANZ Stadium's POS system upgrade and VMware virtualisation technology, the project coordination was streamlined through the ease and rapid deployment of virtual machines. IMC made sure the deployment of new servers took place in minutes – not days.

One of IMC's primary roles was to maintain and manage a cohesive relationship with multiple vendors to deliver the optimum and most cost effective result for ANZ stadium.

The key to the project is for IMC to provide end to end management without depriving ANZ Stadium of the control or flexibility they require to run their systems.

