GD Express gains scalability and high performance with Nutanix

Nutanix Enterprise Cloud helps a logistics company ride the ecommerce wave while maintaining profitability

INDUSTRY
Logistics

BENEFITS
- Supports 3x volume increase in business transaction
- Scales in minutes to overcome order spikes for events such as 11.11
- Helps maintain profitability, keeping IT costs in check
- Ensures company deliver service excellence regardless of order numbers

SOLUTIONS
- Nutanix Enterprise Cloud OS
- Nutanix AHV
- Nutanix Prism Pro management software

APPLICATIONS
- Microsoft SQL Server database
- Manhattan Warehouse Management System
- Logistics Management Applications

BUSINESS BENEFIT

Ecommerce is booming worldwide, offering logistics companies a great opportunity. GD Express Carrier Bhd (GDEX) in Malaysia is rapidly expanding their ecommerce logistics operations while retaining a tight control on cost and ensuring an excellent level of service to customers using Nutanix hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) as the foundation for a private cloud. Scaling their IT in minutes, GDEX can cope with even the biggest spikes in ecommerce sales, such as 11.11 and 12.12 promotions.

> "The logistics industry is fast changing, and the pandemic has made the business landscape even more challenging to navigate. As a customer-focused and technology-driven company, we partnered with Nutanix to ensure that we are always ready to adapt to changes in customer and market demands."

– Teong Teck Lean, MD and Group CEO, GD Express Carrier Bhd

CHALLENGE

The value of ecommerce globally could hit more than $6.5 trillion in 2022 as more people shop online and goods get delivered to their homes. For logistics company GD Express Carrier Bhd (GDEX), it is an exciting business opportunity. However, the organization is under no illusions of the challenges involved with strict service level agreements (SLAs) to meet whatever the volume of orders.

GDEX operates a business-to-business (B2B) and a business-to-consumer (B2C) operation, the latter driven by ecommerce has tripled in number of transactions. This represents 35 percent of the company's overall business. On any given day, GDEX can be managing 180,000 consignments where each consignment passes through multiple shipping tracking points on its way to its destination. Each tracking point generates a record that needs to be processed and stored, giving visibility to the shipment manager.

The GDEX operation needs to be flawless to enable seamless end-to-end operations. The IT behind that data also has to be fit-for-purpose and cost effective if the business is to grow successfully. It was concerns over scalability that prompted Charles Ong, special project advisor at GDEX, to re-evaluate the existing legacy infrastructure in the data center. He says, "We compared it with a hyperconverged private cloud, where software managed everything. It was obvious hyperconvergence would give us the rapid scalability we needed to support changing volumes at a lower cost."

SOLUTION

GDEX assessed the Nutanix Enterprise Cloud running on an appliance from Dell EMC, an incumbent hardware provider. Ong says feedback from the IT team running the proof of concept was great, particularly around simplified management. The Nutanix solution also met the need for cloud-level scalability without the company having to overcome concerns of migrating business data to a public cloud.

As of today GDEX has built three Nutanix clusters, which it has extended to cover both the production environment and a disaster recovery site. The team also migrated all the core applications supporting the logistics process. These include the main Microsoft SQL Server database, a Manhattan Warehouse Management System and internal microservices-based applications that personnel use to govern shipments. Using the Nutanix AOS and Nutanix Prism Pro, the IT team manages server, storage, and networking resources through a single pane of glass.

CUSTOMER OUTCOME

With Nutanix, data is keeping the GDEX machine in motion and operations in synch regardless of the volume of shipments. Personnel always have the information they need to make sure goods arrive on time. "The investment in the Nutanix cloud platform has paid significant dividends for us because we have successfully supported up to 300 percent jump in our overall business transaction," says Ong.

He continues, "A lot of logistics companies in B2C [business to consumer] get burned because they grow the business without maintaining profitability. We are different. Our model is to expand while ensuring we can meet both the needs of our customers and our shareholders. Nutanix is a key part of our model because we can scale a cluster in minutes and ensure fast and reliable access to data across our operation whether it's a 11.11 promotion or just a normal Monday."

Overall, Nutanix has supported the business growth at GDEX very well. Comments Ong, "Frankly speaking, we wouldn't be so successful if we still had our legacy infrastructure because the cost of scaling and management could have eaten away our margins." Just like their deliveries, GDEX is never static, and the business expects to continue growing at its present rate. Ong knows that Nutanix can support that continued growth and that other areas of operations will need to be scrutinized to ensure they can support expansion without impacting SLAs or profitability. "Many parts of the business may need to be upgraded so we don't get any bottlenecks, but I'm confident IT won't be one of them," he concludes.

NEXT STEPS

The beauty of the Nutanix solution is that GDEX can continue adding nodes, adding capacity as the organization grows. At the start of 2020, the company added three more nodes to the Nutanix clusters to give extra head room for the year ahead. "We're very satisfied with the performance and service support for our Nutanix platform and we want to continue with our current success."

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