

Customer Success Story

Platform ISF

Fetch builds their framework to cost-effectively scale with demand



Customer

Fetch Technologies

Industry

Software

Challenges

- Fetch is expanding to deliver its Software as a Service (SaaS), and requires a highly reliable infrastructure
- The company is scaling quickly to match their growing demand, requiring IT to respond faster without increasing cost

Solution

Private cloud managed by Platform ISF

Business results

- As the business expands, IT can provision new servers dramatically faster
- IT can monitor and manage all its computing resources under a single unified management environment, independent of what physical or hypervisor platform is in use
- IT can increase server utilization by ensuring that the best resource is applied to the software load
- The end-user self-service model provides instant gratification and increased productivity to its customers

More responsive to customer demands, without added cost

Fetch Technologies enables organizations to extract, aggregate and use real-time information from websites. Fetch's artificial intelligence-based technology allows precise data extraction from any website, including the Deep Web, and transforms that data into a uniform format that can be integrated into any analytics or business intelligence software. Major corporations, business intelligence companies and news organizations use Fetch to connect with millions of websites for a myriad of applications including competitive intelligence, news aggregation, data analysis and background screening.

Fetch has pursued an aggressive virtualization strategy in their data center to build a private cloud, enabling it to deliver software applications to its customers. Rick Parker, IT Manager at Fetch Technologies, investigated Platform ISF and realized that he was looking at a cloud management tool that could fit the company's requirements.

"I spent a lot of time researching cloud computing and other technologies that might offer productivity improvements. What I've found is that certain software models fit better with our stack," say Parker. "I liked Platform Computing's history and experience with system management software. Platform Computing's software actually works."

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– Rick Parker, IT Manager, Fetch Technologies

Platform ISF ensures the deployment and running of Fetch's software application meets their provisioning and workload requirements. In terms of provisioning benefits, Platform ISF gives the company a very flexible approach to data center capacity. "We are a small IT department that serves a very dynamic company, so at anytime I can get a call to set up new computing resources on a moment's notice," said Parker.

Before using Platform ISF, Fetch provisioned resources manually to increase SaaS capacity, which could take up to an hour of personnel time per server. With Platform ISF they can provision groups of servers at a time automatically, thereby dramatically reducing labor costs. "If we had continued to do manual provisioning we would not be able to scale fast enough to keep up with customer demand with our current staff," said Parker. "Platform ISF lets us scale up without adding staff saving us cost, and helping us to better meet customer expectations."

Furthermore, administrators do not need to be aware of which specific hypervisor virtual machine is running the Fetch software. Platform ISF supports heterogeneous virtual resources and thereby buffers the administrators from the actual resource type. This multi-hypervisor support in Platform ISF reduces training since administrators only need to learn one interface. Additionally, this gives the IT department the flexibility to select the best hypervisor for each particular application based on provisioning policies. "VMware may be the leading hypervisor out there," explains Parker, "but Microsoft might be better for some specific applications. So I want to be agnostic."

Self-service to dramatically increase service responsiveness

A key benefit mentioned by Parker is their ability to push administration closer to the users. "They know what they need," he says, "and I don't want IT to be the bottle neck on basic, routine user tasks. Shutting down or starting servers, adding disk space, CPU, memory and things like that can now be handled by the user without waiting for us to do it for them."

Platform ISF's self-service user portal allows Parker to simplify server management tasks so that users can make the changes they need at any time. It is safe and controlled, without negatively affecting things that users should not be able to change on their own. "We're looking to Platform ISF not only to provide the framework for fast scalability, but also to eventually push the administrator console out to the customer since that would improve scalability even more," he adds.

Cloud bursting – ultimate scalability

Finally, Platform ISF allows the company to start seriously thinking about leveraging public cloud resources to supplement the resources available in their private cloud. "We would like to be able to handle burst capacity using Platform ISF to create a hybrid cloud that pulls in resources from EC2 or from any other source."

Parker's advice to others is to look into the benefits of private cloud. "People are starting to realize that private cloud is not as hard or expensive to set up," he says. "Our primary move into cloud is reliability, because it's critical in SaaS. If you have a service outage, you are going to lose the customer. The secondary reason is cost reduction."



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