CLIENT
University of San Diego, a Roman Catholic institution with a student population of 8100 students

CHALLENGE
Standardize on a virtualized infrastructure to reduce IT complexity and meet growing demand for fast delivery of IT services

SOLUTION
Vblock Systems

RESULTS
Decreased deployment time for new systems, reduced operational costs and freed IT resources for innovation
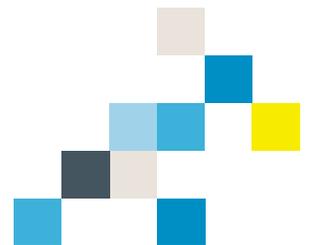
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UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO ADVANCES ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE WITH VBLOCK

CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY SPEEDS DEPLOYMENT OF IT SYSTEMS BY 75 PERCENT WHILE REDUCING IT COSTS

The University of San Diego had undertaken a series of strategic initiatives to improve the experience of its 8100 students, consolidate administrative offices, and expand faculty and student recruiting. Recognizing the role of technology in these initiatives, the Roman Catholic university brought on board a new IT head to help support its strategic initiatives.

As the university looked closely at its growing IT infrastructure, there were serious concerns that IT complexity was adding unnecessary cost and slowing delivery of critical services to support academic excellence. Students and faculty were increasingly dependent on websites and portals for information and collaboration. To support the needs of its varied constituents, IT needed a more flexible infrastructure.

Now, Vblock™ Systems provide the solution for USD. The factory-integrated, converged infrastructure simplifies management, accelerates deployment of new services for constituents, and substantially reduces costs.

> "**Vblock Systems have provided a strategic way to deploy state-of-the-art technology** that has reduced our costs, accelerated deployment of IT projects and delivered a great level of service to the academic community. For us, that's a real competitive advantage."
> — *Christopher W. Wessells, Vice Provost and Chief Information Officer, University of San Diego*

The Challenge

In recent years, the University of San Diego (USD) has adopted multiple advanced information technologies to drive excellence in research and instruction, as well as higher administrative efficiency. Supporting these separate technologies became difficult and costly, and the IT team could not deploy new services quickly enough to meet the campus community's high expectations.

"Piecing together technologies on our own was extremely complex and time consuming. We needed a solution that brought together rich virtualization and cloud capabilities while freeing our administrators to focus more on innovation." says Christopher W. Wessells, vice provost and chief information officer, USD.

The Solution

Impressed with the VCE converged infrastructure, USD decided to standardize on the Vblock Systems. Applied Computer Solutions (ACS), the reseller and systems integrator, and VCE Professional Services worked with USD to deploy the Vblock System 300. VCE Professional Services and ACS also provided on-site support and knowledge transfer to USD's IT staff.

All of USD's hundreds of educational and business applications run on the Vblock Systems. These include: Microsoft Exchange, which supports 3,500 mailboxes, Microsoft SharePoint collaboration, Oracle Hyperion enterprise business planning, Cognos enterprise reporting and a Blackboard learning management system.

To further optimize efficiency, USD relies on Vblock System technologies, including EMC Fully Automated Storage Tiering for Virtual Pools (FAST VP) and FAST Cache, as well as Flash, SAS, and near-line SAS drives comprising EMC VNX unified storage. For streamlined management, USD uses VMware vCenter Operations Management Suite and EMC Unified Infrastructure Manager (UIM).

The Results

With the Vblock Systems, USD can quickly deploy infrastructure resources wherever they're needed—whether it's storage for a research application or additional computing capacity for the learning management system. At the same time, the IT organization has reduced costs and time involved in managing and supporting the more agile and flexible infrastructure.

USD's IT organization has documented several improvements in agility and efficiency.

- Purchasing a pre-integrated system reduced implementation costs by 50%

- Standardizing on Vblock Systems reduced the time to roll out new systems by 75 percent, creating more time for engineers to work on innovative projects

- Virtualization and FAST VP improved resource utilization

- Redundant components and the flexibility to move virtual machines reduced downtime

- Converged infrastructure transformed USD's IT staff from a group primarily focused on maintenance and support to one adding value to the institution's mission.

USD also has valued VCE's accountability for the entire platform and single-call support. Because cross-vendor finger-pointing has been eliminated, USD has seen overall IT productivity and infrastructure reliability improve. With the efficiency gains enabled by an integrated, virtualized infrastructure and consolidated support model, USD IT has gained significantly more time to focus on innovative projects to promote the university's long-term focus on academic excellence.