SoftBank Upgrades Its Delivery Service with Cisco UCS

Multimedia content can now be delivered at a low price through the cloud with visuamall from SoftBank.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: SoftBank

Industry: Providing mobile communications services, mobile handset sales, fixed-line telecommunication services, and Internet connection services

Location: 1-9-1, Higashi Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo, Japan

Number of Employees:
Approximately 17,700 employees

Business Challenge

- Replacing each device when an upgrade is needed
- Supporting virtualization of the whole platform, including the network
- Increasing deployment and provisioning efficiency to provide rapid services

Solution

- Power-conservation and high-performance through Cisco UCS Mini, and building a cloud service platform that facilitates scalability
- Prompt response to client needs through workflow definition and automation with Cisco UCS Director
- Increased network bandwidth of the Cisco Nexus 9000 Series enabling future service growth

Business Results

- Establish a small-footprint service platform that saves on power, and delivers high performance
- Service platform optimization by migrating the existing system

Business Challenge

The integrated delivery management services from SoftBank called visuamall makes it possible to deliver multimedia content, such as catalogs, e-books, and signage through the cloud at low cost. The created content can be optimized and delivered to various devices and is used by many companies and users. At the 5-year mark since SoftBank started offering the visuamall service, it needed to renew the devices and software that make up the infrastructure, such as servers and the network. Information about the new infrastructure was collected from each vendor, and a comparative study was done.

Kazuhiko Fuchi, platform development manager for SoftBank's visuamall Marketing Control Division, spoke about the challenges that were identified through the study: "The server that was the service platform was being virtualized, but the network needed to continue to function. Some firewalls and load balancers support virtual environments and virtual appliances, and it was necessary to choose firewalls and load balancers that were stable. In the past, servers were built with products from different vendors, which resulted in a burden to operations management. The Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS®) offered us many options. We prefer to save on space as much as possible while installing the data center, and we are considering reducing the number of devices to save energy."

Kouta Iwama of the visuamall Promotion Management Department at SoftBank says, "For this project, we needed to define system configuration in a short period, and the timing of upgrading the devices overlapped with the budget resolution. Therefore, we had to choose the devices to install and define their configuration within a month, that is, between February and March 2015. Cisco prompt responses to our support requests were a great help, and we were able to expedite the expansion. Currently, we are upgrading all of our devices, with almost all them being Cisco products, including the firewall virtual appliances. We also wanted to centralize operations and maintenance to eliminate complexities we had encountered so far."

CISCO

"Cisco UCS Mini is a platform which offers a stable service to our customers, while delivering excellent performance and saving on space."

Kazuhiko Fuchi

Platform Development Section Manager,
IT Services Development Division,
Visuamall Marketing Control Division,
SoftBank

Solution

The 100-volt Cisco UCS Mini delivers high performance and has a small-footprint. "The Cisco UCS Mini introduced as the new platform for visuamall gives the scalability and performance of blade servers, and fits in a small space. Being 100V also gave it an advantage during selection", says Mr. Iwama. "The power supply of the data center being used supports 100V, however we needed to increase the power supply with an added cost wherever the servers consume 200V power. With Cisco UCS Mini, we are able to use the existing facility and boost server performance. The racks also consume less area because Cisco UCS Mini has all the required components in one chassis."

Cisco UCS Director enables speedy service delivery.

With Cisco UCS Director, the operations management tool for Cisco UCS, work-flow can be defined and automated starting with provisioning and deployment. By centrally controlling each component (server, network, and storage) and quickly deploying the necessary settings, a service platform can be built that promptly responds to client needs.

Fuchi says, "We can now manage different devices through a single tool with a consistent platform build and operation. Although the skills of engineers who focus on servers and those who focus on the entire network may vary, increasing efficiency by eliminating differences with the help of this kind of tool works well. It was difficult to create a basic template for workflow; as the services expand, so to do customer needs. Nevertheless, we need to respond promptly without compromising service quality. We were quite impressed with Cisco UCS Director as it helped us improve work standardization and build the platform faster."

The Cisco Nexus 9000 Series facilitates traffic concentration.

A recent addition by SoftBank in 'visuamall' infrastructure was that of the Cisco Nexus 9000 series Data Center switch. According to Mr. Fuchi, the aim was to create an environment that could sustain traffic concentration as services continue to expand.

"Uplink already has 40G circuit lines and though there is enough room, we wanted to be prepared considering the current growth in services. We have been using the Cisco Nexus 5000 Series as a Cisco data center switch, and there have been no concerns regarding reliability or performance."

Various Cisco demos and seminars supports implementation.

Cisco seminars and demonstrations have proved helpful for SoftBank in selecting its devices. SoftBank concerns prior to implementation disappeared after actually operating the tools on-site. Again, the response from Cisco was quick and accurate.

Business Results

The Cisco solution facilitates migration and optimization of existing systems . With this device upgrade, SoftBank was able to build a platform that consumes less energy and space, leaves margin for performance and expansion, and is able to cope with service growth. Softbank is now considering a step-by-step migration of the existing system environment to the new service platform by using Cisco UCS Mini and then tuning and optimizing the entire infrastructure.

PRODUCT LIST
Security
· Cisco UCS Mini
· Cisco UCS Director
· Cisco Nexus 9000 Series Switches
· Cisco Nexus 1100 Series Cloud Services Platforms
· Cisco Adaptive Security Virtual Appliance (ASAv)

For More Information

For details about Cisco UCS, visit www.cisco.com/jp/go/ucs.

ılıılı CISCO™

Americas Headquarters
Cisco Systems, Inc.
San Jose, CA

Asia Pacific Headquarters
Cisco Systems (USA) Pte. Ltd.
Singapore

Europe Headquarters
Cisco Systems International BV Amsterdam,
The Netherlands

Cisco has more than 200 offices worldwide. Addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers are listed on the Cisco Website at **www.cisco.com/go/offices.**