Citrix Helps Future Group Realize Faster Time to Market, Better Security

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> "Citrix XenDesktop and Citrix NetScaler have provided our employees the freedom to work from anywhere, have reduced IT costs and secured our enterprise data. We can now control the delivery of all enterprise and cloud services, and maximize the end user experience for all, including mobile clients."
>
> **Rajesh Saboo, Head - IT Services at Future Group**

Headquartered in Mumbai, Future Group is a major player in India's retail sector. Present in about 170 cities across the country, the Group has a footprint in all the major retail categories such as food, fashion, merchandise, and sportswear. Around 300 million customers walk into their stores each year and choose products and services supplied by over 30,000 small, medium and large entrepreneurs and manufacturers from across India. Future Group employs about 30,000 plus people. The company is also present in online retailing and is investing heavily into it.

Key Benefits

- Faster time to market with anytime, anywhere and any device
- Greater security of data
- Ease of administration and maintenance
- Enhanced flexibility
- Employee satisfaction with simplicity, convenience and compliance

The challenge: Faster time to market

The last few years have seen the Indian retail sector moving along a strong growth trajectory. Retail players have been aggressively expanding their presence across the country. It was a similar case for Future Group too. Not to be left behind, the company was opening new stores at a rapid pace.

"The business was growing and so was the requirement of technology. We were opening 10-15 new stores each month, and adopting traditional desktops simply couldn't allow technology to match the speed of business," says Rajesh Saboo, Head - IT Services at Future Group.

The complexity of managing a huge number of desktops, in addition to managing multiple tools, applications and supporting the same was posing a big challenge for the Group.

Being the first retailer in the country to be PCI-DSS compliant, it was looking for a solution that was completely secure.

"We generate a lot of data and ensuring that it is secure was of paramount importance. The need of the hour, therefore, was to secure web applications, prevent inadvertent or intentional disclosure of confidential information and maintain compliance with information security regulations such as PCI-DSS," Saboo informs.

The power of two

To overcome all these bottlenecks in its journey of growth, Future Group wanted a solution that was not only state-of-the-art but also simple, low maintenance, convenient, scalable, highly-available and one that met the compliance requirements.

"The move to a new solution was a journey that was started by the group CFO. He wanted a solution that met all our needs," says Saboo. Future Group explored several solutions to fit into its criteria before narrowing down to Citrix XenDesktop and Citrix NetScaler.

"In our evaluations, we found Citrix's products to be technically superior in comparison with other solutions in the market, and decided to go ahead with them," says Rajesh Shinde, Program Manager, Future Group.

Future Group implemented both Citrix XenDesktop and Citrix NetScaler in tandem. In the first phase, 600 users were migrated to Citrix XenDesktop, while all the business applications were moved from the existing Cisco load balancer to Citrix NetScaler.

"We approached Citrix directly for implementation and received very good support from their consulting services team. The first phase of the project was completed in six months. As this initiative came from the Finance department, we implemented it there first, and followed it up with implementation in new stores," says Shinde.

Future Group has now migrated 850 users to the new solution and is now focusing on the office locations. The new solution has been branded as 'pratibimb' (reflection) and has been a huge success for the company.

Hardware & storage
- IBM x83 240 servers
- IBM v7000 generation SAN storage

Application Delivered
- SAP
- Libre Office
- MS Office
- Browser based business applications

Gaining agility and security

With the implementation of Citrix XenDesktop, Future Group's business has become borderless. The solution has given employees the freedom to work from anywhere, while cutting IT costs. Citrix XenDesktop enables IT to send secure, IT-approved apps and desktops straight to the employees' devices.

"Earlier, employees used to carry laptops home and rely on data card to work. Now they can work from their home network and use smart devices while doing their personal work at the same time. There has been an increase in the level of employee satisfaction" says Saboo.

Future Group has also benefited from Receiver for Chrome, which enables users to access virtual desktops and hosted applications delivered by XenDesktop and XenApp from devices running the Google Chrome operating system. This has allowed Future Group to consider cost effective smart end points for their retail stores.

In addition, virtual desktops and apps are centrally maintained in the datacenter, which reduces the risk of data loss or intrusion when delivered to any device. Access remains secure while intellectual property and sensitive private information stays safe.

The IT team can now control the delivery of all enterprise and cloud services, and maximize the end user experience for all users including mobile clients.

Citrix NetScaler also secures web applications, prevents inadvertent or intentional disclosure of confidential information and maintains compliance with information security regulations such as PCI-DSS. A hybrid security model combine's attack signature detection with an advanced learning engine, enabling rapid deployment and preventing DDoS attacks.

Future Group procured 5000 licenses of Citrix XenDesktop and has already migrated 1000 users to the virtual environment.

"As the phase of creating awareness amongst users is now over, the implementation of the balance licenses in the future would be faster and easier. We are also in discussion with Citrix on various other initiatives," adds Saboo.

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About Citrix

Citrix Systems, Inc. (NASDAQ:CTXS) is a leading provider of virtual computing solutions that help companies deliver IT as an on-demand service. Founded in 1989, Citrix combines virtualization, networking and cloud computing technologies into a full portfolio of products that enable virtual workstyles for users and virtual datacenters for IT. More than 230,000 organizations worldwide rely on Citrix to help them build simpler and more cost-effective IT environments. Citrix partners with over 10,000 companies in more than 100 countries. Annual revenue in 2010 was $1.87 billion.