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Fernando Zangrande, Manager of Data Center Services, Locaweb

Business Profile

Company Name:
Locaweb

Headquarters:
Sao Paulo, Brazil

Industry:
Information Technology

Founded:
1998

- Business Environment:
- Leader in the professional service of hosting Web sites in Latin America.
 - Supports more than 162,000 customers.
 - Maintains a partner network of more than 14,000 developers.
 - Has grown 40% year over year and recently posted \$76 million in sales.

Vision Solutions Product:
Double-Take Move

Implementation Partner:
Vision Solutions

Critical issue

Locaweb needed to migrate from a physical to a virtual (P2V) environment to reduce IT costs, consolidate servers and improve efficiency without disrupting service to its customers.

Results

- Within 18 hours after the installation, all of the data was replicated to the virtual servers.
- End users accessed applications right up until the moment when the servers were switched.
- Locaweb completed their entire migration in less than six weeks.

Technologies

- Double-Take Move
- Microsoft Windows
- VMware

Business Challenge

Locaweb is a pioneer and leader in the professional service of hosting Web sites in Brazil. The company provides solutions for internet, data and communication centers and employs more than 470 people, hosts 312,000 domains, and partners with over 14,000 developers of sites. Locaweb requires their own flexible, reliable and innovative IT environment to support their 162,000 customers.

With a heavy investment in technology, infrastructure, research and development, Locaweb has been able to stay ahead of the market. And with an increasingly complex IT environment, Locaweb has made it a priority to stay ahead of its own IT infrastructure. The most recent challenge facing the Locaweb IT team was to migrate from a physical to a virtual (P2V) environment to reduce IT costs, consolidate servers and improve efficiency.

"We were challenged to consolidate our servers and improve our system flexibility," said Fernando Zangrande, manager of Data Center Services. "Understanding the benefits of virtualization, we decided to move to a virtual environment with VMware Infrastructure because it promised a reliable solution with centralized management capabilities."

VMware helps organizations such as Locaweb to create a self-optimizing IT infrastructure with their virtual infrastructure products. Not only does a virtual environment reduce costs due to server consolidation, but it reduces hardware requirements and by running fewer servers, and it increases energy efficiency.

Though virtualization enhanced the Locaweb IT infrastructure incredibly, the complete project required Locaweb to convert 120 Windows physical servers to virtual servers. This presented three additional hurdles:

1. Locaweb needed to effectively migrate from a physical environment to a virtual one which included disparate server and storage infrastructures.
2. Locaweb needed to complete this migration within two months.
3. And Locaweb needed to complete the migration without halting production applications or requiring extensive manual intervention.



“One of the major barriers we needed to address with our migration project was to eliminate the downtime associated with the migration,” said Zangrande. “The existing tools we evaluated required the physical servers to be taken offline for several hours while the data is moved to the new virtual machine. Given the nature of our 24x7 business, this presented problems for us so we started looking for alternate solutions.”

Solution

As fate would have it, Locaweb met Vision Solutions at VMworld and quickly became impressed with how seamlessly Double-Take Move worked with VMware. The Locaweb migration project was discussed and the Vision Solutions team presented Locaweb with an effective solution to address their P2V migration challenge.

By using a combination of real-time data replication and full-server failover technologies, Locaweb could easily perform this P2V migration. Essentially, Double-Take Move eliminated the costly downtime associated with migration projects.

Locaweb installed Double-Take Move on the physical source servers and began the real-time replication process to a target virtual machine created in the new VMware pool. About 18 hours after the installation, all of the data was replicated and the Locaweb team was ready to switch from the physical server to the virtual server having almost no down-time. Because Double-Take Move can replicate changes to data in real-time, Locaweb end users continued to access production applications right up until the moment at which the workload was migrated. All things considered, Locaweb completed their migration and virtualized in less than six weeks.

Double-Take Move uses patented replication and failover technology that continuously captures byte-level changes as they happen and replicates those changes to one or more target servers at any location. The software is so flexible and its features are so vast, it can be used to address many different business problems – migrations being one of them.

One of the key features that was used to make the Locaweb migration easy is the Full-Server Failover feature. This feature applies the source server’s OS configuration, applications, and data to the target server. Because applications do not have to be pre-installed and maintained on the target server, full-server failover is easy to configure.

Double-Take Move reduces the complex and manual steps required to ready the new virtualized environment for migration. This flexible solution does the work of provisioning the target virtual machine for the user- eliminating the need to setup the new virtual machine, install an operating system, patches or applications.

At the beginning of this project, Locaweb was merely looking for a P2V migration solution for Windows. However, given the breadth of experience and expertise at Vision Solutions, Locaweb is considering the suite of Vision’s Double-Take software products for other projects such as workload backup, workload optimization and disaster recovery.

Zangrande noted, “We are very satisfied with Vision Solutions for the simple fact that although we evaluated other software, no other software was as simple as Double-Take Move. Their workload portability solution for migrations was easy, cost-effective and the best solution out there.”



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