



Kanto Auto Works

Manufacturer identifies ways to cut IT costs by 60 percent with EMC Infrastructure Optimization Assessment



Business overview

Kanto Auto Works Ltd. develops and manufactures auto bodies for Toyota Motor Corporation, including its popular Corolla compact and Lexus luxury models. Kanto Auto Works also contributes its advanced manufacturing knowledge and techniques to Toyota Home, which builds new kinds of environmentally friendly, 21st century houses in Japan.

In addition to meeting product quality, safety, and energy objectives, Kanto Auto Works continually strives to improve its operational efficiency.

Challenges

When Kanto Auto Works decided to transfer its headquarters and technology development and production engineering divisions from the city of Yokosuka in Kanagawa Prefecture to the city of Susono in Shizuoka Prefecture, it recognized the opportunity to also optimize its IT infrastructure and operation.

“We wanted to reduce costs through streamlining and standardization, with the added aim of enhancing the backup environment that makes up our disaster recovery and risk management framework,” says Mr. Masamichi Niikura, General Manager, IT Promotion Division, Corporate Information Center.

To help it assess its current IT infrastructure and opportunities for optimization in a timely manner, the company looked for outside expertise. “We could have implemented the project on our own,” says Mr. Niikura, “but in this case, we decided to work with an external vendor to get a faster turnaround.”

The company reviewed the capabilities of leading IT providers and system integrators. After comparing information infrastructure optimization proposals from four companies, Kanto Auto Works selected EMC® Consulting, a part of EMC Global Services.

EMC solution

Mr. Kiyotaka Moriwake, Manager, System Department No. 1, IT Promotion Division, Corporate Information Center, who took the lead on the project, explains why Kanto Auto Works chose EMC as its consulting partner. “We compared proposals from each of the companies and made our evaluation based on the level of detail, such as what the procedure and the output of the assessment would be. We also evaluated how well the proposal reflected the viewpoint of our enterprise and users,” he says.

“The company also looked for methodology that was not partial to any specific server or storage technology,” says Mr. Niikura. “We looked for an objective framework, a thorough analysis and investigation of the current environment, and at how quickly organizational criteria could be defined.”

Analysis of problem areas in less than two month's time

The Kanto Auto Works Infrastructure Optimization Assessment was a joint effort between EMC Japan's consulting team and, at various times, 10 to 15 project managers from the company's IT organization. The team followed a four-step process:

- 1) Assess and analyze the current environment
- 2) Classify data and define service levels
- 3) Recommend an optimized architecture
- 4) Calculate and verify return on investment with a summary of the overall concept

"It took us approximately one and a half months to get a grasp on our situation, perform the analysis, classify the data, and establish a tentative plan," says Mr. Moriwake.

After reviewing architectural standards, performing server integration simulations, and reviewing interim reports, the company had the data it needed to make an informed decision about how best to proceed.

Once a program was finalized and approved, EMC developed a transitional plan which outlined the critical steps and factors for success. The entire engagement took four months.

"EMC possesses a great many templates with which they apply their accumulated know-how. They were also able to respond flexibly to our company's situation. If we had done this by ourselves, it's likely that we wouldn't have been able to get the project this far along in as short a time."

Mr. Souichi Monmae
System Department No. 1, IT Promotion Division, Corporate Information Center

The value of seeing the "big picture"

In all, Kanto Auto Works learned that it could reduce the number of its existing Microsoft Windows and Linux servers by as much as 80 percent through virtualization with VMware® and blade systems. The assessment also showed the company how it could improve storage utilization rates and achieve a 70-80 percent reduction in the number of storage devices through storage integration.

"Preliminary calculations showed that it would be possible for us to deliver current levels of service at 60 percent of the cost, achieve a 40 percent reduction in the facility space needed for equipment, and reduce both our power consumption and our CO² emissions," says Mr. Moriwake.

As a result, the company is going ahead with a four-year plan to move to an optimized, virtualized, and standardized infrastructure that will simplify ongoing cost savings and improve its disaster recovery capabilities.

Mr. Souichi Monmae from the 1st System Department of the company's IT Promotion Division says, "EMC possesses a great many templates with which they apply their accumulated know-how. They were also able to respond flexibly to our company's situation. If we had done this by ourselves, it's likely that we wouldn't have been able to get the project this far along in as short a time."

Construction begins on new disaster recovery site

Improving disaster recovery had long been a high priority at Kanto Auto Works, which has equipment located in the Tokai earthquake area.

The company, which backed up its data to tape, had initially planned to construct a new disaster recovery site at the same time it made the move to its new headquarters, but the cost of operating and maintaining the old infrastructure was too high to afford a new disaster recovery facility.

Now, the information infrastructure optimization has enabled the company to reach its goal of reducing costs and make the investment necessary for disaster recovery; and the new disaster recovery site is being built. “We are going ahead with our planned new infrastructure optimization, but the first thing we’ll deal with in terms of disaster recovery will be completing the construction on our backup site.

“What’s more, our use of an EMC Global Financial Services program allows us to achieve everything—from our integration implementation to the construction of our disaster recovery environment—all in one year, without having to bear enormous costs during a single period,” says Mr. Niikura.

Summary

With optimization of its information infrastructure well underway, Kanto Auto Works is turning its attention to improving its operational procedures. “By the end of this year, with our server integration, including integration with our disaster recovery systems, the preparations will have been made for the standardization of our operations,” says Mr. Souichi Monmae.

“Along with a review of our service levels, we want to get started on the establishment of a proactive operations and maintenance strategy,” Mr. Moriwake adds. To help jump-start best practices and transfer knowledge, Kanto Auto Works is bringing EMC experts onsite to work side by side with their staff through EMC Residency Services.

“The company will strive for still greater efficiencies moving forward,” says Mr. Niikura. “Continuing with optimization of our information infrastructure, we plan to look at standardizing our software as well. In doing so, I think we can anticipate further cost reductions and improvements in quality.”

In conclusion, Mr. Moriwake says, “By getting EMC Consulting to lead our work and projects, we were able to complete our assessment phase on time and achieve exactly what we had envisioned.”



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