ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

 CLIENT
Électricité de France (EDF)

 CHALLENGE
Provide business units with more capacity and agility, and greater cost efficiencies

 SOLUTION
Vblock System 340 with VMware vCloud Automation Center and EMC Avamar

 RESULTS
Lower total cost of ownership from simpler, automated operations
Quicker global infrastructure updates from months to days
Faster provisioning from weeks to minutes
More time for higher-value work and innovation

LINKING CLOUD INNOVATION WITH BUSINESS STRATEGY

**EDF AUTOMATES IT SERVICE DELIVERY, IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY AND SPEEDING TIME-TO-MARKET**

Applications and data are like oxygen to the energy industry. They drive everything from punctual customer appointments and accurate smart meter readings to safe, efficient management of power grids and gas distribution networks.

EDF has optimized this environment by standardizing on Vblock® Systems converged infrastructure. Evolving beyond data center virtualization, this forward-looking strategy provides automated, reliable IT delivery and faster rollout of new services.

Released from the constant burden of infrastructure management, IT specialists are more productive and can focus on higher-value work.
The Challenge
EDF is the world leader in electricity supply and one of the largest energy companies with over 39 million customers and 156,000 employees globally. The business depends on continuous access to applications and real-time information. Any break in service would quickly impact operations, degrading safety and security and ultimately putting customer service and brand reputation at risk. Workflows and productivity would suffer, too.

To mitigate this risk, EDF has linked cloud innovation with business strategy. The journey began several years ago with the opening of a new data center in Noé, France.

“Having virtualized all our servers, we found that we still needed to provide business units with more capacity and agility, along with faster provisioning and new cost efficiencies,” says Catherine Gomez, IT Manager for EDF. “So the logical evolution was to move to an infrastructure-as-a-service (IaaS) model.”

The Solution
Previously, the company used to purchase and piece together individual IT components. Very expensive and time consuming, it also slowed the launch of new services.

“We needed a converged infrastructure to make this task easier,” says Jérémy Ladet, Internal Cloud Service Manager at EDF, “and the VCE proposal was the most consistent and well-packaged solution.”

Built on the market-leading Vblock 340, the solution includes VMware vCloud Automation Center orchestration tools, along with EMC Avamar for easy-to-manage backup and data recovery. “Avamar pretty much runs itself without any need for customization, while vCloud offers a user-friendly portal and simple administration,” adds Ladet.

The Results
Running all its applications and compute services on Vblock Systems has simplified operations and lowered total cost of ownership for EDF. For example, updates to the company’s virtualized global infrastructure used to take several months. Now they are completed within days.

Service levels and turnaround times have also improved. With the IaaS model it wanted, EDF has replaced lots of lengthy manual steps with slick automation and rapid time-to-market. New services and virtual machines used to take weeks to provision. Now they take minutes.

And that leaves more time to innovate. “The hardware is no longer a daily concern,” says Ladet. “We spend less time updating and upgrading the system and integrating new elements. That means we can focus on higher-value and more interesting tasks, from both the users’ perspective and ours.”

EDF is already considering its next big innovation, a move toward a software-defined data center where control is fully automated by intelligent software. Catherine Gomez concludes, “Two words stand out: speed and reliability. For us they are synonymous with Vblock Systems.”