

Catholic Church Insurance relies on FlashStack™ from Cisco® and Pure Storage to improve business performance, delivering IT value, faster. Catholic Church Insurance was undergoing a modernisation project to provide new online services to schools, churches and hospitals within the Australian Catholic diocese. With the legacy system at capacity and costly ongoing maintenance, the company needed to deliver vital IT systems faster and provide more business value, quicker. Catholic Church Insurance required high performance, scalable infrastructure to help them speed through the project phase and deliver an ongoing seamless user experience.



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Catholic Church Insurance has significantly reduced maintenance costs with Pure Storage FlashStack as physical management of storage is better, with zero management overhead. The FlashStack solution serves all of Catholic Church Insurance's storage requirements, as the integration between server, fabric and storage has significantly improved. This delivers high performance, simplicity and enables the business to scale seamlessly.

GEO

Australia

INDUSTRY

Insurance

"I have nothing but praise for Cisco and Pure Storage FlashStack. It's a complete success and I've recommended it to my colleagues in the industry."

Tony Lawrence,
Information Security Officer

BUILDING A BEST-OF-BREED SYSTEM FOR THE FUTURE

Catholic Church Insurance (CCI) provides insurance, workers compensation and asset management support for schools, churches and hospitals within the Catholic dioceses. Established in 1911, CCI has a long history of serving the Catholic community and is one of Australia's oldest insurance companies. CCI is headquartered in Melbourne, Victoria with 250 staff spanning offices in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

On top of its supportive culture and strong focus on employee engagement, IT has been a crucial factor in driving the business forward. As CCI progresses through a 'modernisation' project, having the correct infrastructure is a core requirement for the future of the company, underpinning the speed of new service offerings to customers, including a cloud portal, insurance systems and client record transactions. Tony Lawrence, Information Security Officer, said the company's existing IT systems, specifically a legacy storage system, failed to meet the requirements of the evolving services environment. "We needed a solution that would ensure our systems were fast enough to provide an excellent user experience for client portals and insurance systems."

PERFORMANCE AND SIMPLICITY MAKE THE CISCO AND PURE STORAGE FLASHSTACK A PERFECT FIT

To continue as a best-of-breed insurance provider, CCI required the newest technology, and it recognised the Cisco and Pure FlashStack flash as the smartest option available. The company investigated EMC and HDS storage components but the Pure Storage Forever Flash model stood out. "Maintaining traditional storage infrastructure was a major pain point. With the Cisco and Pure FlashStack, long-term maintenance is built into the product. It offered lower ongoing cost, reduced storage and physical space requirements, lower latency and easy maintenance; it was a no brainer," said Lawrence.

All of CCI's workloads — with everything from CRM dynamics to Microsoft SQL Server — now sit on FlashStack, which includes two FlashArray™/M20s from Pure Storage, 14 Cisco UCS B-series blades across 2 chassis, four SAN switches, 16 Cisco MDS Fibre Channel network switches and VMware vSphere. Lawrence said CCI's FlashStack deployment couldn't have been simpler. The Pure Storage engineering team physically installed the FlashStack solution one day. "We had been using VMware and Cisco for a very long time, so when we moved away from our legacy vendor to Pure, our storage solution evolved into FlashStack."

COMPANY:

Catholic Church Insurance
<http://ccinsurance.org.au>

USE CASE:

- VDI – VMware® vSphere®
- Database – Microsoft® SQL Server

CHALLENGES:

- Data centre maintenance was time consuming and costly as the company relied on an external services team for storage management.
- Required higher performance to provide customers with new services such as a cloud portal, more detailed analytics and client records.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- Processes data 10 times faster.
- Less time spent maintaining backup infrastructure – from 16 hours to two hours.
- Virtual environment loading time has reduced from 20 seconds to five seconds.
- Systems running significantly faster to provide a positive user experience with client portals, insurance systems and quicker database transactions.
- Reduced cabling from 60 to 12 cables.
- Reduced storage physical footprint from multiple racks to two FlashArray//M20s.
- Able to provision more virtual machines on a smaller footprint. Achieved a data reduction rate of 3.7:1 and 3.0:1 with each FlashArray.

FlashStack is a flexible, all-flash converged infrastructure solution combining 'best-of-breed' in compute, network and storage hardware, designed for virtualization and private clouds. Highly efficient components reduce power, cooling and data centre costs. As a single, integrated architecture, FlashStack speeds time to deployment, lowers overall IT costs and reduces deployment risk.

IMPROVED PERFORMANCE AND SIMPLIFIED MANAGEMENT

The benefits of the FlashStack deployment were noticeable immediately. The Pure Storage footprint is significantly smaller than the former storage vendor deployment as multiple racks have been reduced to a single rack, saving space, power and cooling in the data centre.

Simple, non-disruptive maintenance is a key advantage. FlashStack has completely removed the storage maintenance burden from Lawrence's team. CCI has gone from requiring two internal staff plus an external professional services team for maintenance to zero management overhead. Lawrence said this equates to saving one whole month out of the year on storage administration. Since deploying FlashStack, CCI has gone from spending 16 hours on systems backups to just two hours. "With the Cisco and Pure Storage FlashStack, the physical management of storage is much simpler. No one needs to touch it, which translates into tangible savings for our organisation. You know it's an amazing product when you install it and forget it's even there."

The speed and efficiency with which processes are now completed is another important benefit. CCI has achieved a data reduction rate of 3.7:1 and 3.0:1 respectively on each of their two FlashStack configurations. Yet even with this level of data reduction, systems run significantly faster to provide CCI's clients with a seamless experience on customer portals, insurance systems and quicker database transactions. "Everything runs quicker and we're able to process data 10 times faster to help our customers make better decisions," said Lawrence.

Overall, Lawrence described FlashStack as a superior technical solution. "We suffered a data centre power outage and when we powered the equipment back on everything came back without data loss. With Pure, there's minimal wiring and a very simple interface. This is testament to Pure's reliability." Based on its outstanding experience with FlashStack, CCI is planning to implement advanced features such as snapshots and the replication option for disaster recovery. "We've got a solid foundation in place so the future is looking very promising."

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Tony Lawrence,
 Information Security Officer



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