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Craig McLellan, CEO, ThinkOn



CASE STUDY

ThinkOn: Where Data Thrives Using Intelligent, Scalable Object Storage From Hitachi Vantara

Challenge: Harness soaring volumes of unstructured data through a pay-as-you-go solution.

Solution: Implement simple, secure and available disaster recovery as a service (DRaaS), infrastructure as a service (IaaS), cloud application hosting and data storage as a service (DSaaS).

Outcome: Achieved 100% utilization of infrastructure, simplified provisioning and maximized revenue opportunities.

The Challenge

In a world where data is becoming increasingly complex, it shouldn't be surprising that simplicity is more valuable than ever. For ThinkOn, making data storage and management simple yet powerful is the cornerstone of its business. Based in Toronto, this wholesale provider of IaaS delivers innovative data solutions to a variety of value-added resellers and telecom providers. These partners resell ThinkOn services to enterprise and mid-sized customers across a variety of industries.

Data storage and archiving is a rapidly growing part of ThinkOn's wholesale operations. As organizations grapple with soaring volumes of unstructured data, the ability to manage and archive this data is key. ThinkOn's customers needed solutions to help them retain older data to meet regulatory compliance needs, access that data for future business initiatives and, above all else, ensure the data is secure.

“At the end of the day, there's one thing you have to fully commit to: minimizing risk of destruction of customer data,” says Craig McLellan, CEO of ThinkOn. “That's really what this is about – providing our customer with a rock-solid guarantee that their data is safe.”

Seeing an opportunity to meet the needs of customers and resellers, ThinkOn sought a scalable, intelligent content platform to help businesses accelerate productivity, gain insight from their data and maintain governance.

The Solution: Security and Freedom in One Solution

As one of Hitachi Vantara's first cloud service providers, ThinkOn deployed Hitachi Content Platform (HCP), a cloud object platform that enables companies to store, share, sync, protect and retrieve file data from a single system. HCP tackles exponential data growth and bridges traditional and emerging technologies to protect data while keeping it available anywhere, anytime.



INDUSTRY

Wholesale Cloud Service Provider

SOLUTIONS

Data Storage and Management

SOFTWARE

Hitachi Content Platform

Hitachi Data Ingestor

Hitachi Content Platform Anywhere

SERVICES

Hitachi Vantara provided Hitachi Content Platform deployment services and collaborated with ThinkOn to develop, market and deliver Cloud Application Hosting, Data Storage as a Service, Disaster Recovery as a Service and Infrastructure as a Service.

Outcomes

- Cost-effectively protects critical data and meets compliance requirements.
- Adds value through automation, advanced metadata features and intelligent archiving.
- Realizes 100% infrastructure utilization and simplified provisioning process.
- Ensures production-grade quality; easy to deploy and operate.

HCP's intelligence streamlines data management with automation that moves content to the appropriate on-premises or cloud storage environment. With centralized data management and custom metadata, managing and searching unstructured data is fast. HCP's intelligent archiving capabilities ensure proper governance.

"Over time, we discovered that as an object store it has so many qualities that allow us to stand out over the alternatives," says McLellan. "We continue to see advantages in HCP that other solutions don't have. It's an ideal long-term platform for us."

ThinkOn also utilizes Hitachi Data Ingestor (HDI) to simplify file services and reduce storage costs with elastic, scalable, backup-free cloud storage gateways. HDI connects remote locations to advanced data center storage for greater control, security and protection of data.

To meet growing customer needs, ThinkOn launched several pay-as-you-go services that help companies protect critical data assets and optimize their application infrastructure costs. "With HCP, what we found is that we're getting much better performance out of the infrastructure than what we expected or planned for," said McLellan. "This has given us a lot more flexibility than we originally anticipated with respect to supporting customer-owned assets as well as our own infrastructure."

The Outcome: Future-Ready Approach With a Scalable and Secure Solution

With its powerful intelligence and automation, the Hitachi Vantara solution delivers digital transformation dividends to ThinkOn's IT staff. "As a service provider, we look for ways to simplify our daily lives as much as possible," said McLellan. "By incorporating HCP into our infrastructure, we've been able to simplify the provisioning process, as well as drive cost efficiencies out of our infrastructure. Now we're able to enjoy 100% utilization of infrastructure, instead of having islands of storage that are left unused."

ThinkOn's close relationship with Hitachi Vantara has also unlocked substantial benefits by giving the firm access to the best hardware and support in the industry. "When there are issues, we see a high degree of ownership and collaboration from Hitachi," said McLellan. "It all goes back to Hitachi's heritage of being such a strong, technically competent organization. There is a level of collaboration that we just love."

McLellan and his team are exploring new possibilities through their partnership with Hitachi Vantara, and are looking to further realize its potential. "Technologies like IoT [internet of things], visualization and big data all connect back to the data we are amassing together on Hitachi Content Platform," said Dean Hachey, senior vice president of sales at ThinkOn. "What started

as a great relationship has expanded, and the different technologies we are investing together and employing to stimulate the market are extremely exciting."

Using the Hitachi Content Platform portfolio as the foundation for data-storage-as-a-service offerings, enables ThinkOn to offer a variety of value-added solutions. These include a choice of industry-leading backup, disaster recovery, analytics and storage service offerings.

The Hitachi solution ensures that ThinkOn can rapidly scale up its services offerings to partners and customers while making only incremental investments in the required infrastructure to support those services. The result: simple, scalable, value-added solutions.

About ThinkOn

ThinkOn is Canada's only wholesale provider of infrastructure-as-a-service resources. Working with resellers throughout North America, ThinkOn is expanding into the U.S. with secure, fast and scalable solutions for enterprise application hosting, big data analytics and flexible disaster recovery as a service.

About Hitachi Vantara

Your data is the key to new revenue, better customer experiences and lower costs. With technology and expertise, Hitachi Vantara drives data to meaningful outcomes.

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