

Softchoice and Samuel, Son & Co.

Metal processing and manufacturing company's new IT infrastructure boosts reliability and manageability

softchoice
CASE STUDY

Business Challenges

In 2010, the privately owned Samuel, Son & Co., a company specializing in the distribution, and transportation of metals and industrial products, amalgamated with its manufacturing and processing business, Samuel Manu-Tech, which had been a public company. As a result of the merger, it was decided to consolidate each company's IT network into one new infrastructure for higher efficiency and consistency. The two divisions of the now wholly private firm had separate IT infrastructures in place, with different equipment, different standards and different management systems. The two networks supported a range of proprietary applications as well as productivity software such as Microsoft Exchange.

"We had an aged environment that was becoming unmanageable," says Paul Mann, Director, Integrated Technical Services with Samuel, Son & Co. "We had hundreds of non-standard servers and equipment that were out of support. We wanted to build a single infrastructure that would offer us better reliability and efficiency."

Softchoice Solution

Samuel, Son & Co. issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a new IT infrastructure and ultimately selected a Softchoice solution that combined Cisco Nexus switches and UCS servers with Microsoft Hyper-V server virtualization. Mann and his IT team were impressed Softchoice's proposal, which included solutions and expertise from IT industry leaders Cisco and Microsoft. The company's plan was to build a private cloud that offered a secure, reliable environment for users, eliminating disruptions to the business and reducing the time it took to deploy new servers and applications.

Mann and his team worked closely with Tim Taylor, an enterprise account executive with Softchoice. Softchoice and Taylor have a long-standing relationship with Samuel, Son & Co. and kept in daily contact during the project.

Samuel, Son & Co. deployed its new equipment in two identical data centres to maximize reliability. There were some initial challenges in deploying the virtualization as the IT team was working with a just-released version of the Hyper-V Server 2012 software. "We received significant technical expertise quickly from Softchoice, Microsoft and Cisco," Mann says. "They were handling their own pieces independently, so it took longer to isolate some of the issues, but they were responsive and ultimately we got everything sorted out."

Business Outcomes

Samuel, Son & Co. now has a stable, standardized IT infrastructure that offers better reliability and takes less time and fewer people to manage and maintain. The company no longer has to deal with interruptions to the business caused by slow systems or unstable hardware and the IT team can deploy new servers and applications at a faster rate than in the past. The UCS clusters run well and are easy to manage and maintain, Mann notes. "It took longer than expected to get to where we want to be, but we've gained efficiencies and reliability," he says. "Softchoice was responsive to our requests during the project and helped us get in touch with the right people to overcome the challenges we encountered."



Case Study Snapshot:

Samuel, Son & Co. had two aging environments with a mix of various servers and wanted a leading-edge solution that would offer fast, reliable service for users and applications. Softchoice deployed Cisco UCS servers combined with Microsoft Hyper-V virtualization.

Client Profile:

Samuel, Son & Co., based in Mississauga, Ont., offers solutions in the distribution, transportation, processing and manufacturing of metals and industrial products. Founded in 1855, the company is the largest family-owned metals processor and distributor in North America.

Applicable Business Verticals:

+ Manufacturing

Geography:

+ Global

Technologies involved:

+ Cisco Unified Computing System

+ Cisco Nexus Switches

+ Microsoft Hyper-V Server 2012

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