manufacturing customer migrates entire datacenter to the cloud in two days

industry
Building supplies

location
Germany

key challenges

- Lead time
- Recourses not available
- Minimum downtime

This German manufacturing customer has a long-standing history of delivering top notch plastic and metal products for the building industry. During their 50-year history, the still family-operated business – which has started with just a handful of employees – has grown to a workforce of more than 5,000 on four continents with over € 1 billion in sales.

"Our growth in the recent past and added compliance regulations had prompted us to invest in a secure and robust virtualization platform," said the CTO, "a large part of our IT infrastructure has already been virtualized using VMware vSphere."

As one of their datacenters in Europe needed urgent renovations and upgrades, they turned to the experts at comdivision to evaluate their options.

the challenge
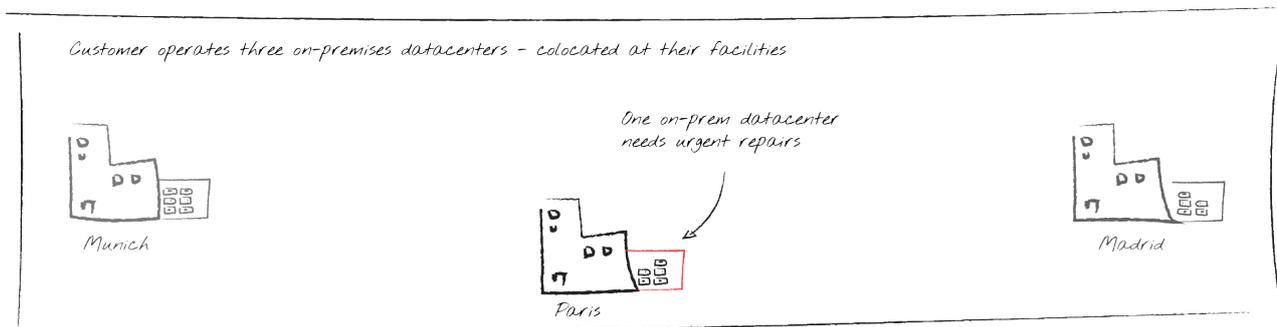
For multiple reasons, the renovation needed to start inside two weeks. Also, downtime had to be kept at a minimum, since the datacenter is located next to a production plant, and therefore, only two days were allotted for the transfer of all data to a temporary home, and only two days for the return. They would take advantage of the weekend, was the thought process by the customer.

comdivision architects discussed the different options with the customer's IT team:

- Rent equipment and build a temporary datacenter.
- Expand one of the existing datacenters.
- Use Cloud options.

The first two options where initially brought forward by the customer's team members. Several issues were identified by comdivision architects:

- The timeframe to rent and the resources needed to install the equipment didn't work out.
- The existing datacenters were almost at capacity.
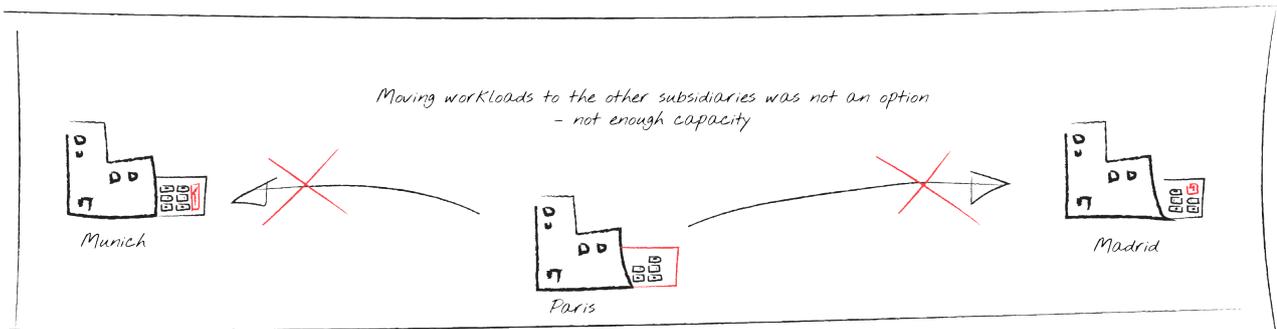
Then, other issues arose: the environment in the various subsidiaries had grown historically and had been optimized for local requirements and efficiency, but not for compatibility (this is another issue that comdivision is working to resolve for the customer). Lastly the transfer window of the data was an issue as well. Additional migration tools would have to be set up and tested.

the solution

Under the lead of chief architect VMware Certified Design Expert (VCDX) Yves Sandfort, comdivision suggested to use VMware Cloud on AWS services for this project.
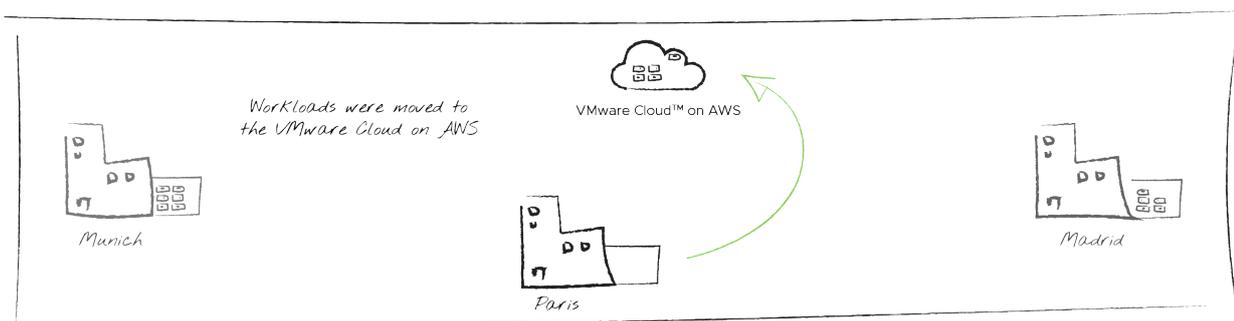
"We have recently invested in training our specialists to provide consultation and architectural services in regards to VMware Cloud on AWS environments for our customers," said Sandfort, "besides the other four Master Competencies, we are proud of being first to having achieved the VMware Master Competency for this solution offering in the DACH region," Sandfort continued. "Because of this, my colleagues and I knew that VMware Cloud on AWS is almost tailormade for an undertaking like this".

solution

The customer was able to leverage VMware Cloud on AWS to quickly migrate all workloads to the Cloud using VMware HCX.

business benefits

The workload was moved to the Cloud using a mixture of hot and cold migration allowing for minimum to no downtime.

VMware footprint

- VMware Cloud on AWS
- VMware HCX
- VMware vSphere

"Thanks to VMware Cloud on AWS we could safely migrate our data to allow the urgent updates needed in our existing datacenter.
This project has shown that we can trust to integrate VMware Cloud on AWS in our disaster recovery strategy as well!"

customer's CTO

Because VMware Cloud on AWS is using the same vSphere-based SDDC stack that the customer is using within their on-premises datacenter, there was no need for time consuming re-architecting anything. Furthermore, the infrastructure admins could use the familiar vSphere user interface and didn't need to be re-trained. Using VMware HCX, data could be live migrated over to the enterprise-grade infrastructure that is hosted in an AWS datacenter near the production facility. Leveraging the AWS network allowed to have low latency and high bandwidth network access without having to put additional load on the cross company MPLS network.

This way, there was no downtime for the majority of users, not even the self-declared two-day maintenance window was necessary.

Because some VM's ran on a host with specific hardware acceleration features of the processors, those VM's had to be cold-migrated to enable a change of the CPU settings. What sounded like a difficult task during the planning stages, turned out to be almost a non-event.

the results

The migration to the Cloud went flawless. The migration was completed in less than two days. "VMware Cloud on AWS has saved the day" said the CTO enthusiastically, "we also really liked the commitment comdivision put forward in their projects" he continued.

Next step for the company is to analyse how VMware Cloud on AWS can be integrated into their current disaster recovery concept and if they can leverage VMware Cloud on AWS when expanding their Asian footprint.