

SUCCESS STORY

AUTOMOTIVE DEALERSHIP CHAIN: DESKTOP-AS-A-SERVICE (DAAS)

U.S. AUTO SALES SHATTERS SALES RECORDS AFTER DEPLOYING CLOUD-HOSTED VIRTUAL DESKTOPS

U.S. Auto Sales deployed virtual desktops with Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS) solution, powered by VMware Horizon® DaaS®, to secure its business from the threat of disasters while lowering desktop computer costs and improving access for its growing workforce. U.S. Auto Sales leveraged these new technologies into a 20 percent increase in sales revenue within the first year by accelerating their sales process.

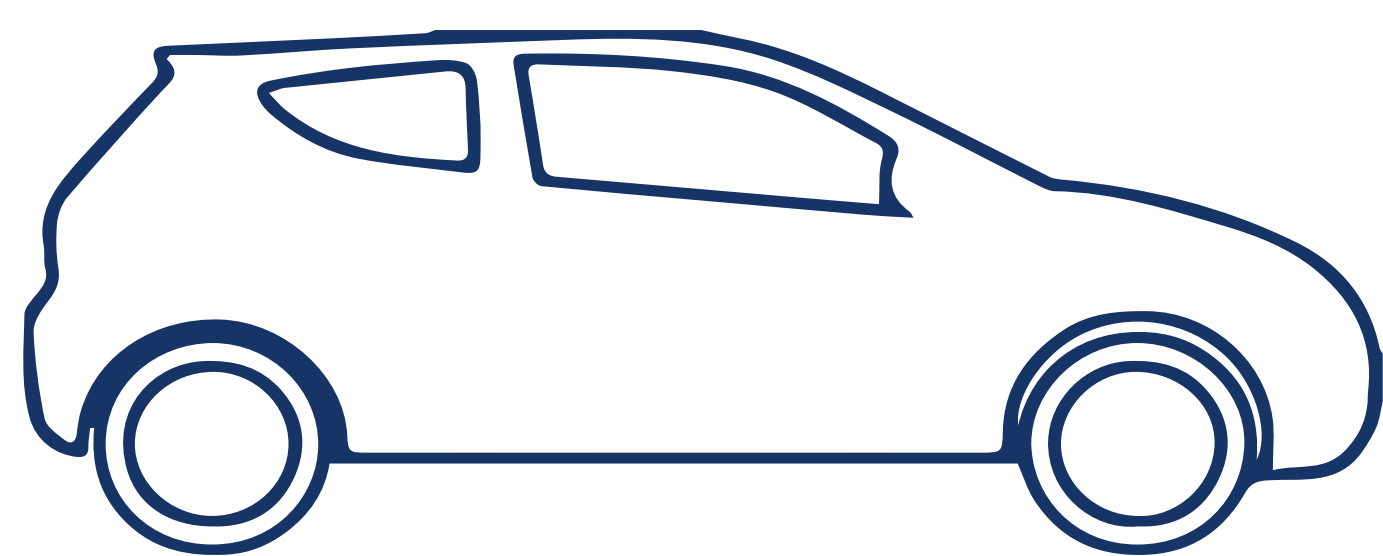
THEIR CHALLENGE

After an unprecedented ice storm paralyzed the Southeast for several days, U.S. Auto Sales could not open its location that collects payments from customers, which meant the company could not collect payment from many of its 20,000 accounts.

"IT was given the ultimatum that we cannot ever let this happen again. At the time of that storm, customers had to either call or visit a store location to make a payment. We can never be in a situation where we have customers who are willing to pay us money and we cannot accept it," said Travis McKeone, Director of IT and Facilities at U.S. Auto Sales.

OVERVIEW

INDUSTRY



Automotive

LOCATION



Lawrenceville, Georgia

CHALLENGES

1. Critical need for immediate disaster recovery
2. Escalating desktop computing costs
3. Slow and complex customer experience

SOLUTION

To reduce computing costs, avoid business disruption, scale workforce coverage and provide a superior customer experience, U.S. Auto Sales implemented VMware Horizon DaaS desktop virtualization running on thin clients.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Gained the ability to redistribute collection service during a disaster
- Lowered computing costs, even after onboarding 100 new hires
- Delivered an unparalleled customer experience that increased sales revenue by

THEIR SOLUTION

Business continuity was only one challenge the company faced. Each location had only a couple of desktop computer kiosks, where sales representatives gathered to process sales and manage customer financing. Sales staff were forced to wait for a computer to become available.

Whether the wait was minutes or hours, this experience frustrated sales representatives and convinced customers to walk away and purchase elsewhere. It was clear that more computers were needed, but the company did not have a budget large enough to accommodate every employee.

“Deploying desktop computers is traditionally a costly endeavor. You have to buy the PC. You must support it. And you need the right staff to support applications,” said McKeone.

OUR SOLUTION

The executive team initially considered a site-to-site virtual private network and a service that provide the infrastructure. However, the complexity of managing that solution would prove difficult for its three-person IT team.

Based on the advice of its technology consultant, U.S. Auto Sales learned that a DaaS infrastructure could virtualize the collection of payments and scale the workforce to address customer demand while controlling IT costs and supporting a simplified customer experience.

IMPLEMENTATION

U.S. Auto Sales implemented a DaaS platform to gain unified access to desktop and application capabilities through the cloud without sacrificing control and security. With this solution, the company could operate on a secure and highly available platform and expand the desktop footprint as needed. Even better, employees were no longer tied down to a single desktop or thin client.

Before fully moving to the cloud, the IT team piloted the solution and addressed potential issues and business requirements. This phase was so successful that the company decided to deploy 94 virtual desktops across its entire dealership network.

RESULTS

U.S. Auto Sales deployed virtual desktops with VMware Horizon® DaaS®, to secure its business from the threat of disasters while lowering desktop computer costs and extending access to its growing workforce. After achieving these expected results, U.S. Auto Sales received an unexpected outcome: the company realized a 20% increase in sales revenue within the first year by accelerating the sales process.

“Since rolling out the VMware solution, one of the key attributes we have right now is that our sales are up 20 percent across the board,” said McKeone.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

By deploying DaaS solution, McKeone checked a box on the executive team's agenda to quickly address disaster recovery. U.S. Auto Sales now benefits from a collection team that is fully virtualized 24/7, including an outsourced call center. The business can now collect payments even if its dealerships are closed.

By virtualizing its desktops, U.S. Auto Sales also reduced its total cost of PC ownership from \$1,500 per desktop to \$500, executed IT activities more efficiently and experienced record-breaking growth.

The DaaS solution currently supports more than 300 virtual desktop employees. The company can also scale up and down as workforce numbers fluctuate, especially during its busiest time of year: tax-refund season. During this time, the company typically bumps up its DaaS footprint by 30%.

Because all sales and finance employees are equipped with a thin client, they have access to data, sales contracts and financial processing whenever they need it.

"One of our sales representatives commented that he can now work on two sales at the same time. While he is inputting data for a previous sale, he's running searches for vehicles for another customer from his desk," said McKeone.

While improved sales and IT operations are significant benefits, so too is the security of U.S. Auto Sales' information assets. In compliance with payment card industry (PCI) requirements and Service Organization Control (SOC) 2 accounting standards, the company's private data remains in the cloud, ensuring the security of sensitive financial information.

As a small and growing business, U.S. Auto Sales couldn't afford to buy this kind of data security on its own. "Even if one of our thin clients is stolen today, the information is safe because our data management is centralized in the cloud, not the device," said McKeone. "It's more secure, scalable and cost-effective."

LOOKING AHEAD

As it prepares for aggressive growth and expansion throughout North Carolina and South Carolina, U.S. Auto Sales believes that its cloud-first mentality will play a vital role. The company plans to work to advance its analytics capabilities to accurately forecast IT spending for existing locations and to support plans for opening new stores.

"As we enter new markets, we will continue to grow our desktop footprint in the cloud. It's proven. It's a commodity now. We just need to keep moving forward," said McKeone.