



Ready Pac Foods uses Cisco HyperFlex hyperconverged technology to keep food fresh from field to plate

Ready Pac Foods, Inc.:

Size: 3,500 employees

Industry: Fresh food production

Location:

United States

Irwindale, California

Solutions

- Provides a hyperconverged platform with Cisco HyperFlex to simplify operations and drive innovation
- Integrates with VMware vCenter for centralized management

For More Information

For more information about Cisco HyperFlex Systems, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/hyperflex>

Ready Pac Foods has been giving people the freedom to eat healthier for more than 45 years as a premier producer of convenience fresh foods and fresh-cut produce. With processing facilities throughout the United States, Ready Pac Foods manufactures a complete range of value-added products featuring fresh produce and protein under the company's Bistro®, Ready Snax®, Cool Cuts® and elevAte™ brands. Offerings include fresh-cut salads, fruits, vegetables, snacking, and complete meals that are distributed in supermarkets and restaurant chains across North America.

Challenge: Maintaining Profitability, Growth, and Fresh Produce

Ready Pac Foods is focused on profitable and consistent growth, and needed an IT infrastructure that could support that vision. It also needed high performance for real-time analytics, which is critical to gaining new visibility into field operations and customer demand.

“Accurate forecasting is extremely important due to tight timeframes for processing raw commodities such as lettuce,” says Mark Myers, director of information technology at Ready Pac Foods. “We have only a few days to get produce from field harvest to

the grocery store, and it can be very costly if we are wrong about yield or demand.”

Ready Pac Foods wanted to obtain more timely information from its farms by enabling crop managers to use mobile devices to feed data into its Tableau business intelligence system. However, the company's mixed-vendor IT infrastructure was aging and could not support the new level of technology innovation needed for Ready Pac Foods to compete and grow.

“We were buying extended warranties for outdated equipment, and our two dedicated IT infrastructure engineers struggled just to keep the environment running,” says Myers. “We had to make a change.”

Increasing Agility with Hyperconverged Infrastructure

Ready Pac Foods wanted a new infrastructure that would allow IT to be agile, efficient, and adaptable to changing business needs. Myers and his team began looking at hyperconverged infrastructure solutions, hoping to simplify operations by unifying computing, storage, networking, and vendor support.

“We recognized hyperconvergence as the future and wanted to get on board quickly,”

With Cisco HyperFlex, built on Cisco UCS, Ready Pac Foods:



Improves supply chain management



Reacts faster to market demands



Scales to meet evolving business needs

says Myers. "It was a great opportunity to reduce risk, improve efficiency, and get ahead of the competition."

After evaluating solutions from three vendors including Cisco, Ready Pac Foods deployed a Cisco HyperFlex™ System. "We chose Cisco HyperFlex because Cisco UCS® and networking technologies are best of breed," says Myers. "We knew we weren't making a risky choice. All components have been proven and tested and are designed to work seamlessly together. That means we don't have to spend our valuable resources on troubleshooting. Cisco also offers superior integration with VMware. We can manage the entire environment from vCenter."

The installation and configuration were completed quickly, meeting a tight implementation deadline. "Within a couple of days our HyperFlex system was completely installed and operational," says Myers. "In less than 2 weeks, we completed 70 percent of the migration."

Improving Quality with Real-Time Crop Data

The first food manufacturing company to deploy a Cisco HyperFlex System, Ready Pac Foods is getting a jump on the competition with new mobile apps. Its Agriculture Operations (AgOps) app has replaced paper-based crop reports, enabling demand planners to access real-

time harvest information instead of relying on data that is days old.

"With Cisco HyperFlex supporting our business intelligence, we can make better, faster decisions and improve quality," says Myers. "Any authorized person can immediately identify the field that any product was grown in, as well as the date it was planted and harvested. Previously, this was a manual, investigative process that took a lot of time."

Increasing Sales with Technology

By being one of the first companies to modernize agricultural crop reporting, Ready Pac Foods is impressing existing customers and winning new ones.

"We won tens of millions of dollars of new business by showing a major client how we're innovating to ensure quality," says Myers. "It's incredibly powerful to be able to show our customers how we're collecting and using crop data to everyone's advantage."

Empowering a More Strategic Workforce

Ready Pac Foods IT associates no longer struggle to respond to business needs. Instead, they are now focused on finding new ways to add value and move the business forward.

"Cisco HyperFlex has enabled all of us to be more strategic in our thinking, all

Products and Services

Unified Computing

- Cisco HyperFlex HX240c M4 Node
- Cisco UCS C220 M3 Rack Server
- Cisco UCS 6200 Fabric Interconnects
- Cisco UCS Manager

Routing and Switching

- Cisco 2900 Series Integrated Services Routers
- Cisco Nexus® 9000 Series Switches

Cloud Networking

- Cisco Meraki® MS320 Access Switch
- Cisco Meraki MR32 Indoor Access Point

Virtualization

- VMware vSphere

Services

- Cisco Smart Net Total Care™ service
- Cisco Meraki Support

“We chose Cisco HyperFlex because Cisco UCS and networking technologies are best-of breed.”

Mark Myers
Director, Information
Technology, Ready Pac Foods

the way up to the executive level,” says Myers. “Cisco Meraki helps, too, giving us a cloud-based networking platform that’s easy to administer.”

Providing Multiple Levels of ROI

Moving to a hyperconverged infrastructure is helping Ready Pac Foods reduce operating expenses (OpEx), enabling the company to cancel more than \$30,000 worth of annual extended support contracts on legacy equipment.

“We’re saving more than \$50,000 a year in power and cooling costs on top of that,” says Myers. “We’re also reducing software license costs because Cisco HyperFlex nodes can handle much greater virtual-machine density than our previous hosts.”

What’s Next

With a Cisco HyperFlex System providing modular scalability, Ready Pac Foods can easily support fast growth and attract interest from large packaged-food companies looking to offer customers healthy fresh foods.

“The innovations we’re driving with Cisco HyperFlex will help Ready Pac Foods continue its growth and leadership in the fresh foods industry.” says Myers. “HyperFlex is delivering on all the promises that were made. We are a very happy customer.”



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