Bankrate Insurance
Insuring smooth and trouble-free data center upgrades

The Company

Founded in 1976, Bankrate, Inc. made its first foray into the insurance industry with the 2008 acquisition of InsureMe. In 2010, the company created the Bankrate Insurance brand upon acquiring NetQuote, the largest insurance lead generator on the web. Bankrate acquired the assets of Insweb in 2011 and in April 2012 continued its growth by acquiring InsuranceAgents. com. With these companies, and their history of innovation and excellence, Bankrate Insurance allows consumers to comparison shop for the best insurance rates available, delivering on their mission to equip consumers to make informed financial choices. Of course, the deployment of technology is critical to that mission.

"If I'd had a person dedicated to this project for a week, we could have done it. However, this took 12 hours, and that's with us learning as we went. Tangible results."

James Harvey
Bankrate Insurance
Vice President of Systems

The Challenge

With its exponential growth – both organic and through acquisition – Bankrate Insurance needed to consolidate servers and update its data center to effectively serve its customers.

Data center consolidation and upgrades are typically the most demanding projects an IT organization will undertake. There are many critical challenges associated with moving and consolidating servers and other hardware, including: downtime, data loss, extended deadlines and budget overruns.

Most issues, however, can be minimized or avoided through careful planning and diligent communication. It was with a data center upgrade initiative that OneNeck® IT Solutions helped position Bankrate Insurance for future growth through superior data management and connectivity.

The OneNeck IT Solutions Answer

Bankrate Insurance has two data centers in Denver, Colorado. Both needed compute and storage upgrades. When it was time for the upgrades, OneNeck met with Bankrate Insurance's data center team to discuss their needs and perform a comprehensive review of their infrastructure. OneNeck recommended using Cisco's Nexus 7010 switches as the core. With up to 384 ports of line-rate 10-gigabit capacity, this data center switch has the unique ability to scale with Bankrate Insurance and meet future bandwidth infrastructure demands.

OneNeck also recommended EMC's unified network storage solution, the VNX7500 Series. As one of the largest members of the VNX family, the VNX7500 supports a combination of flash, SAS and/ or NL-SAS for up to 1000 drives with a total capacity of 2970TB. With this solution, Bankrate could achieve unparalleled performance while maintaining the ease-of-use and flexibility of the other VNX models.

OneNeck provided both product procurement and installation services for the data center upgrade, including project management, staging of equipment, cut-over and post-installment support. Most importantly, the upgrade was completed in just 12 hours, on schedule and on budget, with minimal downtime or business interruption.

Bankrate Insurance Summary

Organization	Bankrate Insurance
Industry	Online insurance aggregate for consumers and industry professionals
Business Challenges	Integration and optimization of data centers to provide for future growth
User Environment	Two independent data centers in Denver, Colorado
Technical Environment	SQL Cisco MDS Switches
	Cisco Nexus 7010 Switches
	Cisco UCS, B200/B230/B440 Blades
	EMC VNX7500 with:
	100+TB
	2800GB Flash
	EMC FastSuite

The Benefits

Thanks to their upgraded data center environment, Bankrate Insurance is now using around 60% of their UCS space, allowing room to grow and scale. They are also experiencing better utilization. Consolidating and optimizing their servers so what once required 36 CPUs now requires just eight.

"50% less in CPU utilization. 100% better. UCS is a solution, not just servers" said James Harvey, Vice President of Systems for Bankrate Insurance. "I like a holistic solution. It's taking Cisco's switching technology for which there's no competition, and integrating it into the server side. A very elegant solution. UCS, VMware and EMC with VNX works as advertised."

In addition to better utilization, their new storage solution is also easier to manage. Harvey said, "EMC is a very balanced solution – between performance and manageability. It's also straightforward, which means I can train more people to use it and give better visibility to our developers. When I make changes, I have a usable interface. Plus, UCS integration is so nice. From provisioning storage to templates for Windows and Linux, it's just usable."

Bankrate Insurance also uses OneNeck's managed services in their support services. The OneNeck team helped resolve any post- installation issues as they arose, giving Bankrate Insurance's team a little breathing room with their business-critical systems. Harvey stated, "When you're trying to do more with less, you either reach out to the service community or hire more people. Being able to reach out to OneNeck and augment my staff, well, it's made my life easier."

Better positioned for growth, Bankrate's partnership with OneNeck provides a myriad of benefits including:

Simplified Management
Management through a straightforward interface that allows for more scalability among the Bankrate IT team.

Faster Throughput
Higher overall throughput to data center applications, resulting in less lag time when accessing shared servers and faster connections.

Continued Support
With OneNeck's continued support, Bankrate Insurance is confident in their investment and ongoing health of their data centers.

About OneNeck IT Solutions

OneNeck IT Solutions provides world-class, hybrid IT solutions for thousands of businesses around the globe. From cloud and hosting solutions to managed services, ERP application management, professional services, IT hardware and top-tier data centers in Arizona, Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Oregon and Wisconsin, OneNeck has the expertise to help customers navigate the cloud to get the right application on the right cloud at the right time.

OneNeck is a subsidiary of Telephone and Data Systems, Inc. [NYSE: TDS]. A Fortune 500® company, TDS provides wireless; wireline and cable broadband, TV and voice; and hosted and managed services to approximately six million customers nationwide.

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