Industry

Pharmaceuticals

Location

Austria

Key Challenges

- Business continuation (end of life)
- Higher security
- Short downtime

Solution

Time-critical upgrade to the latest version of Workspace ONE UEM with minimal impact to operations.

Business Benefits

- Business continuation by enabling upgrade of Windows 2008.

- Higher security and better performance by using a new UAG platform and a loadbalancer.

VMware Footprint

- VMware Workspace ONE UEM

Time-Critical Systems Upgrade for Pharmaceutical Company

For generations, this pharmaceutical wholesale company aims to combine tradition, competence and quality at the highest level. The service portfolio is quite diverse – while one branch of the parent company does traditional distribution of pharmaceuticals to pharmacies and another actually produces the drugs, this part of the company provides other services, including IT and sales support, as well as packaging and marketing.

Needless to say, they needed to keep their systems constantly updated to the latest patches and security measures. "For sure, a security breach would be disastrous for our business" said the CIO, "with the end-of life announcement for Windows 2008, we started to plan the transition" he continued.

our project lead on the case

Reinhard Partmann

The Challenge

"Our client's customers expect them to be available 24/7" said Reinhard Partmann, comdivision's project lead on the case, "but since Pharmacies rotate their overnight and holiday services, we could keep the impact of a systems downtime to a minimum, by scheduling the upgrade for the Christmas holiday season". That required a lot of preparation.
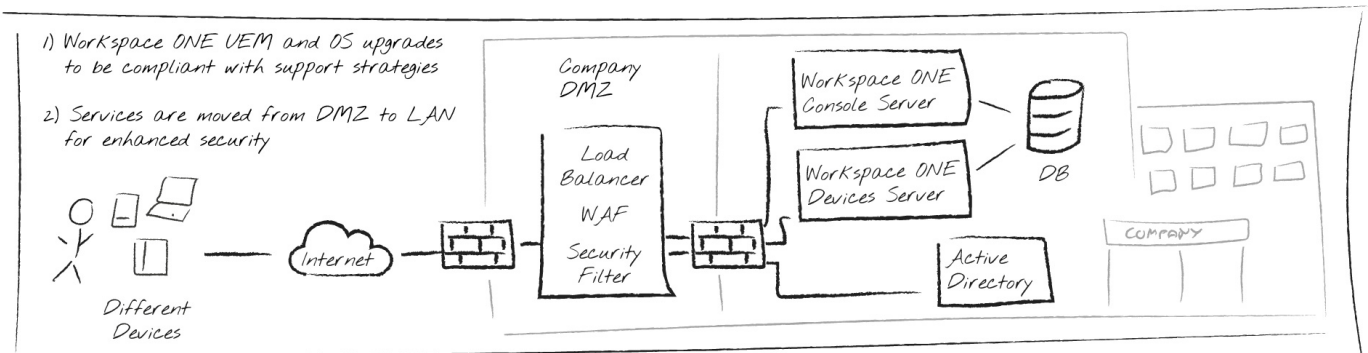
Partmann listed the items that needed to be carried out to fulfil the challenge: "we needed to:

- upgrade the Windows 2008 systems to Windows 2016
- upgrade Workspace ONE UEM to the latest version
- switch the SEG (secure email gateway) to the new UAG (unified access gateway) platform
- implement a load balancer

vmware®

...and all of this in 2 days!"

The Solution

Reinhard Partmann and the customer's CIO had agreed upon a few prerequisites: they agreed, that the customer's administrators would prepare

the required VMs with their respective operating systems preinstalled, as per comdivision's suggestions. Additionally, a stakeholder of each team involved needed to be on standby. "...and they DID deliver", exclaimed Partmann "literally everything was prepared to a 'T' – frankly, that's not very common" Partmann confessed, "so when we sat down for the kick-off meeting, all we had to do is to finish the scheduling and agree on a few minor details".

Part of Partmann's roll-back strategy was to create snapshots and backups of all the systems. He also suggested, as an added security measure, to pull all systems that were still running in the company's DMZ into the LAN. "In order for mobile devices to reach these systems, we installed a security proxy and load balancer in the DMZ to act as a go-between" explained Partmann "and we also set up service monitoring to shorten the reaction times in case of an outage."

"Reinhard did a great job, instead of two days, we were done in just one day!"

customer's CIO

The Results

"Reinhard did a great job" said the CIO, "instead of two days, we were done in just one day!" he raved "with the idea to utilize the central load balancer's enhanced features, we were able to increase the security of our systems – this gives us an edge over the competition."