



Workspace Design Firm Draws on Cloud Technology

Mayhew expands private cloud capabilities and implements cloud backup with help from Sentia

Today's workplace has evolved dramatically over the past several years. Since 1982, Mayhew and Associates (Mayhew) has been designing innovative workspaces that help businesses increase productivity, collaboration and efficiency.

In fact, Mayhew has worked on over 22 million square feet of space, successfully moved 300,000 people, and supplied and installed over 100,000 workstations. Their goal: to make organizations' workspaces the perfect fit for their business, their people, and their future.

Mayhew's technology infrastructure was in need of a refresh to keep pace with their growth and ever-expanding offerings. Running separate applications on separate servers was costly, hard to manage and did not provide the levels of redundancy and high availability that Mayhew required. Their backup environment involved a great deal of manual intervention and tape management.

Robert Burin, Mayhew's Director of IT explains, "As a leader in our industry, it's critical to have the right technology in place to support our business in a secure and efficient way. We needed to update our backup environment and implement a disaster recovery and high availability solution to prevent application outages and downtime."

Having previously engaged Sentia, a leading IT solution provider for their initial virtualization efforts, Mayhew again reached out to Sentia for help with system growth architecture, support, hardware and software.

"Expanding their private cloud capabilities is a significant focus at Mayhew, and is an area in which Sentia has extensive knowledge," says Roger Osmond, President of Sentia. "We were able to help Mayhew develop their private cloud environment as well as enable remote data backup to the Sentia data centre."

Sentia's services, wrapped around IBM and VMware technologies, have enabled Mayhew to continue to transform workspaces for its clients.

Sentia's consultative approach, combined with IBM technologies, has provided COM DEV with a storage system that will scale along with its business needs.

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Robert Burin,
Director of IT,
Mayhew and Associates

Virtualization and cloud solutions key to technology evolution

Mayhew and Associates (Mayhew) comprises a group of professional workplace strategists, interior designers, project managers, construction managers, architectural technologists, facilities managers, procurement technicians, ergonomists, move managers, product experts, installers and support staff – all focused on delivering workplace solutions that provide value, flexibility, usefulness and appeal. Mayhew is a past winner of the "Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies" award.

Their IT infrastructure consisted of aging Intel servers with internal disk storage, which were experiencing frequent failure. Performing backups on a server-by-server basis was a cumbersome and time-consuming process. Even though Mayhew had started implementing server virtualization by deploying VMware on a single server, they still had several other standalone servers – all with non-shareable internal disk. This environment was causing three key issues:

Continued on reverse

- The large number of physical servers and lack of consolidated storage required a significant amount of non-automated management time to keep the infrastructure running, which drew valuable IT resources away from strategic projects
- Without a Disaster Recovery or High Availability solution in place, application outages were causing downtime
- Data backups and restores were time-consuming and inefficient

Led by Mr. Burin, Mayhew had already undergone a significant technology transformation over the past few years. "We have moved to a virtualized environment and deployed new servers, SAN storage, switch equipment, firewalls and more. This cloud and virtualization initiative is the next step in Mayhew's technology evolution," states Mr. Burin.

Consultative approach

Mayhew did its due diligence when selecting an IT vendor for its virtualization, private cloud and remote backup initiatives. When it came to the final decision, Sentia's approach made all the difference.

Mr. Burin explains, "Most vendors are happy to sell hardware, but when it comes to providing advice and answering questions, that's another story. It was easy to recognize Sentia's interest in earning our business and being a true partner, instead of just selling products. Sentia has been involved in our technology refresh from the start for those reasons."

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VMware delivers availability & allocation

vMotion enables 7/24 application availability, allowing server upgrades and migrations to be performed midday, or as required – so Mayhew no longer has to run weekend upgrades.

With VMware Dynamic Resource Manager, applications are always allocated the necessary resources to provide optimum response times to users.

Minimized IT & admin footprint

Overall, the virtualized environment has reduced Mayhew's IT footprint – power, cooling and rack space – by over 60 percent. Administrative time and effort has decreased by over 50 percent, while providing 99.9 percent application uptime.

Future prospects

Sentia continues to support Mayhew with the rollout of Sentia's Remote Data Backup offering. Future considerations include a virtual desktop private cloud, mobile access to data, and a remote Disaster Recovery solution to provide uninterrupted compute capabilities.

For Mayhew, it's business and technology by design.

Private cloud & virtualized environment

Once Sentia architected the solution, the seamless implementation was completed in just a few days.

The private cloud incorporated:

- Clustered IBM System x3650 servers, an IBM DS SAN
- attached storage subsystem, an LTO tape library and
- VMware virtualization software
- Migration of additional physical servers to virtual partitions
- in the new private cloud, and deployment of Dynamic
- Resource Scheduling (DRS) to allow VMs to autonomously
- move between physical servers as workload dictates
- VMware's vMotion with High Availability to provide a highly
- available environment

Resilience & flexibility

The resilient Disaster Recovery and High Availability solution meets Mayhew's Business Resiliency objective, and the advanced level of automation frees up IT staff to spend time on strategic initiatives. The virtualized server environment allows for quick provisioning of new workloads and ongoing physical-to-virtual migration.



Private Cloud, Virtualization and cloud backup Solution by Sentia

- Clustered IBM System x3650 servers
- IBM DS SAN attached storage subsystem
- LTO tape library
- VMware virtualization software
- Sentia Architecture and Implementation Services
- Sentia Managed Services – Remote Data Backup