



Beam Suntory keeps distillery operations flowing 24/7 with ultra-reliable Lenovo infrastructure



Overview

From grain to glass, Beam Suntory must ensure that manufacturing systems run 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to distill the premium spirits the company is known for. To minimize the risk of unplanned downtime, Beam Suntory replaced the aging IT infrastructure supporting its core Wonderware manufacturing execution system with Lenovo Converged HX3310 hyperconverged appliances, integrated with Nutanix software. Now, the company has complete confidence that its IT systems will run uninterrupted, keeping the drinks coming.

Leading premium spirits company Beam Suntory crafts a wide range of alcoholic beverages, from bourbon and whiskey to vodka, rum, tequila and cognac. The company is behind some of the world's best-known spirits brands, including Jim Beam, Maker's Mark and Courvoisier. A subsidiary of Suntory Holding Limited, Beam Suntory is headquartered in Deerfield, IL, generates annual revenues of USD 4 billion and employs around 4,400 people.

Trouble brewing

For people across the globe to enjoy Beam Suntory spirits, the company must ensure that its manufacturing systems run without a hitch at all times.

Sanjay Kirtikar, Director of Digital Technologies at Beam Suntory, begins: "We use Wonderware software to manage production at our distilleries, covering everything from mashing and fermentation to distillation and bottling.

"Distillation is a 24/7 process, so it's absolutely crucial that Wonderware is able to run uninterrupted around the clock. Every hour of downtime results in lost production, which can amount to millions of dollars in losses."

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outdated servers supporting its Wonderware systems with a more resilient, reliable infrastructure.

Sanjay Kirtikar adds: “We wanted to find a solution that would offer the performance to meet our current requirements and the scalability to match our ambitions – something we can’t achieve without having an efficient, cost effective, highly reliable and easily-scalable infrastructure in place.”

Perfect mix

With years of experience with Lenovo PCs and laptops, Beam Suntory was keen to partner with Lenovo to upgrade the technology in its distilleries.

“We’ve always had positive experiences with Lenovo computers and a good relationship with the Lenovo team,” says Sanjay Kirtikar. “So when the time came to refresh the infrastructure supporting our Wonderware systems, we turned to Lenovo for help.

“When we visited the Lenovo briefing center in Raleigh, North Carolina to get a closer look at the technology, we were very impressed. It soon became clear that the Lenovo team didn’t just want to sell us some hardware, they genuinely wanted to help us accomplish our goals. They listened closely to the challenges we were facing and took a strategic approach when designing a new infrastructure solution for us.

“The icing on the cake was the fact that Lenovo got the solution that we needed and were willing to work with us on getting the solution tested and certified by Wonderware at no additional costs. The Lenovo team really went above and beyond to ensure we had complete confidence in migrating our critical systems to the new solution.”

Working closely with Lenovo, Beam Suntory initially implemented two Lenovo HX3310 hyperconverged clusters integrated with Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform software at one of its highest-volume distilleries. The company plans to implement the Lenovo-Nutanix solution in other distilleries in the coming years.

Sanjay Kirtikar recalls: “The implementation went very smoothly and, because the Nutanix software came preloaded on the Lenovo hardware, we were able to get the solution up and running very quickly. Support from the Lenovo team has been fantastic – they are very proactive and always happy to jump on a call with us if we have any questions.”

High spirits

Today, Beam Suntory can be sure of its key Wonderware systems running uninterrupted all day, every day – keeping the distillation process flowing smoothly.

Sanjay Kirtikar comments: “We have enjoyed consistent, uninterrupted performance since the Lenovo-Nutanix solution has been in production. The Lenovo hardware is very durable and extremely reliable. Previously, I’d always have the concerns at the back of my mind about our aging infrastructure going down and impacting

Solution components

Hardware

Lenovo Converged HX3310 Appliance
with Intel® Xeon® E5 processor
family

Software

Nutanix Enterprise Cloud Platform
Wonderware (distilleries)
VMware (back office)



production. Now with the Lenovo solution in place, I can sleep soundly at night! My team and I are glad to have such a rock-solid solution in place to run our most mission-critical systems.”

By pooling compute and storage into a single shared virtual structure, the Lenovo-Nutanix solution simplifies infrastructure management while offering unprecedented flexibility and scalability. “It’s very easy to deploy, administer and monitor resources remotely, from anywhere in the world,” says Sanjay Kirtikar. “Easy scalability means that the Lenovo-Nutanix solution gives us a lot of room for future growth.

“What’s more, we were able to reduce our physical footprint with the hyperconverged architecture, which makes management less time consuming and less costly. For example, we reduced rack usage from 15U to 3U, reduced cabling and eliminated the storage array. We expect to see significant savings over a five-year period compared to maintaining our existing infrastructure. While it is too early to realize exact savings, we are seeing more than 50 percent reduction in power usage than our earlier setup. Over the next five years, I am expecting a 25 to 35 percent overall operating cost benefit when lower support and maintenance efforts are also factored in.”

Powered by the Intel® Xeon® E5 family of processors, the Lenovo hardware has also given Beam Suntory’s IT operations a real performance boost.

Sanjay Kirtikar concludes: “We’ve been so impressed with the reliability, scalability and performance of the Lenovo-Nutanix solution that we’re now in the process of rolling out the Lenovo HX Series across other locations worldwide. Right now, we’re also rolling out additional Lenovo HX3310 converged appliances with VMware for a simplified and virtualized back-office solution. We’re looking forward to working more closely with Lenovo, as we know that they’re a technology partner we can rely on to help us keep production lines rolling.”

For more information

To learn more about Lenovo Data Center Systems solutions, contact your Lenovo Sales Representative or Lenovo Business Partner, or visit: lenovo.com/systems

For more information about Beam Suntory, visit: www.beamsuntory.com



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