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*Alvin Lim
Senior Vice President, Information Technology
Asia Capital Reinsurance Group*



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Asia Capital Reinsurance Group Selects Hitachi Unified Compute Platform Solution to Optimize Performance and Scalability for SAP HANA

In 2012, Asia Capital Reinsurance Group decided to refresh its IT roadmap. It centered on SAP HANA to consolidate its business systems and data warehouses and to position itself to take advantage of the benefits of big data analytics. In order to meet the storage and infrastructure requirements of this new integrated analytics environment, it decided to deploy Hitachi Unified Compute Platform (UCP) Select for the SAP HANA Platform.

Asia Capital Reinsurance Group (Asia Capital Re) is an independent reinsurance group with a client base that extends from China and Japan to the Middle East. Headquartered in Singapore, Asia Capital Re is a wholly owned subsidiary of one of the world's top 50 reinsurance groups. It specializes in providing reinsurance solutions for large and complex risks across business lines, such as aviation, casualty, credit and surety, energy, engineering, medical, marine, motor and property.

To support its mission-critical business processes and operations, Asia Capital Re runs SAP software, ranging from SAP Financials (FICO) to SAP Re-insurance Management (FSRI), SAP Customer Relationship Management (CRM), SAP Business Objects, SAP Business Planning and Consolidation (BPC) and SAP Business Warehouse

(BW). At the same time, Asia Capital Re's data has been growing exponentially, from about 500GB in 2007 to 30TB in 2012.

The Challenges of Exponential Data Growth

Asia Capital Re's Senior Vice President, Information Technology, Alvin Lim has been mindful of the possible consequences of this data growth. "With our business growth and expansion," he explained, "we constantly review and update our systems to ensure that our data management capabilities are well-equipped to provide seamless and uninterrupted support as the company evolves." He estimated that the volume of data at Asia Capital Re could grow to 200TB within 5 years. Such huge volumes of data will present challenges not only in terms of data storage costs but



Asia Capital Reinsurance Group

INDUSTRY

Services: Reinsurance

SOLUTION

Hitachi Unified Compute Platform Select for the SAP HANA Platform

HARDWARE

Hitachi Compute Blade 2000, Hitachi Unified Storage 130

SERVICES

Provided by Bluefin Solutions

Benefits at a Glance

- Data warehouse consolidation.
- Reduced data duplication.
- Foundation for big data analytics.

SUCCESS STORY

also in data management, timely access to data for reporting and analysis, and the need to meet customer and government regulatory requirements for business continuity planning and disaster recovery.

To address these issues, Asia Capital Re required a high-performance platform that would be able to support current and future growth in analytical data. The platform would be required reduce data latency through accelerated load performance when handling huge transaction volumes, and deliver more productive planning and simulation capabilities.

With these considerations in mind, the company developed an IT roadmap centered on the SAP HANA platform. It would provide a single integrated environment for accessing current information from virtually any data source for near-immediate analysis.

SAP HANA allows Asia Capital Re to achieve a compression factor of 10 times on its production data, reducing storage requirements significantly. At the same time, its innovative in-memory technology moves data sets directly into the server's memory, boosting performance by removing the bandwidth barriers between analytics and transactional systems.

Asia Capital Re also required a new storage and infrastructure platform that would enable it to optimize the performance of the consolidated analytics platform.

SAP HANA's in-memory technology, for example, requires processing, storage and transport at unprecedented speeds and volumes. The infrastructure also has to be



highly scalable to cater to the exponential increase in the volumes and types of data that are being captured and analyzed by Asia Capital Re's business systems.

The Solution: Storage Infrastructure Optimized for SAP HANA

To meet these rigorous demands, Asia Capital Re conducted a stringent evaluation of several infrastructure options before deciding to deploy Hitachi UCP Select for SAP HANA.

One of the key reasons for the decision to go with the UCP solution was its scalability. To increase capacity, all Asia Capital Re would have to do is to add new blades to

the system instead of replacing its existing storage box and having to migrate its data to the new storage solution.

Hitachi Unified Compute Platform is also optimally configured for SAP HANA, the result of a long-term strategic relationship between Hitachi and SAP that began in 1994. As an SAP Global Technology Partner, Hitachi provides a single, virtualized and scalable storage and data management infrastructure for the complete spectrum of SAP production, test and development, and archival data.

Hitachi UCP Select for SAP HANA delivers a best-in-class, tight integration of Hitachi Compute Blade 2000 (CB 2000) with Hitachi Unified Storage 130 (HUS 130). It supports SAP in-memory computing technology for a broad range of high-speed analytic capabilities.

Asia Capital Re itself has a well-established relationship with Hitachi, having implemented Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage and Hitachi Universal Storage Platform to meet its storage requirements in the past. Based on this experience, it was confident of the reliability of the new HDS solution as well as the customer support provided by HDS.

“ Since implementing Hitachi UCP within our IT system, our data storage process has been smooth and simple. HDS has a strong reputation in the industry for its reliability and Asia Capital Reinsurance Group is happy to be among the long list of companies attesting to it. ”

*Alvin Lim
Senior Vice President, Information Technology
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In mid-2012, Hitachi Data Systems worked with SAP to conduct a successful Proof-of-Concept (POC) at Asia Capital Re's data center, and went on to deploy UCP Select for SAP HANA. The implementation was carried out by Bluefin Solutions.

Benefits: The Foundations for Big Data Analytics

The deployment of Hitachi Unified Compute Platform Select for the SAP HANA Platform has enabled Asia Capital Re to consolidate its data warehouses, reducing data duplication and laying the foundation for the company to leverage the benefits of big data.

Scalability

As a reinsurance organization, Asia Capital Re collects and analyzes structured data on business developments, trends and events. Increasingly, it does the same for unstructured data from the insurance documents, Web and social media platforms, such as the Twitter and Facebook.

The scalability of UCP Select for SAP HANA plays a key role in helping Asia Capital Re to manage this exponential growth in data. With highly scalable clustered compute nodes based on CB 2000, Hitachi offers the first blade server solution for SAP HANA that allows Asia Capital Re to scale for additional capacity without adding complexity to the environment.

As Alvin explained, "We need to invest in storage and infrastructure with the view that we are going to grow and will need to scale in the future. Hitachi Data Systems is the first solution provider that supports SAP HANA on blades, which means that whenever we need to scale, we can simply upgrade by adding blades instead of having to replace the entire compute and storage appliance fabric." In comparison, other solutions would require Asia Capital Re to replace existing storage boxes and migrate the data to higher-capacity storage when the need arose.

Performance

"The combination of SAP HANA and Hitachi UCP Select for SAP HANA delivers the compute and storage performance and high throughput that we need to make smarter business decisions, faster. By dramatically reducing the traditional delay between operations and analytics, it enables us to gain near-real-time insights and information," said Alvin. "Where previously, it could take us a few days to generate a report, this can now be done within 45 minutes."

Ease of Management

The integrated storage and infrastructure environment provided by UCP Select for SAP HANA enables more robust monitoring and ease of configuration. From the control panel, for example, storage administrators can create multiple disk environments without having to do a command line setup. This greatly reduces the learning curve for the IT team. "For every change in IT that we introduce, one of the challenges that we face is in retraining people to use the new system," said Alvin. "With the simplified platform, not much training is required. Our people can get up to speed within a day, where typically for other IT systems, it could take a few weeks."

Asia Capital Re has 3 people looking after its storage, out of a total IT strength of 30. "Requiring less manpower to manage the infrastructure frees up our resources to focus on providing Asia Capital Re with a full suite of IT support, which includes creating proprietary systems that have direct impact on adding value to the business," he said.

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Availability and Reliability

With a highly efficient unified architecture based on HUS 130, UCP Select for SAP HANA is meeting Asia Capital Re's requirements for high availability, disaster recovery, replication, big data use cases and data life cycle management. This, combined with the highly reliable and scalable compute clusters for in-memory computing, ensures 24/7 operations for the most demanding and data-intensive environments.

"Since implementing Hitachi UCP within our IT system, our data storage process has been smooth and simple. HDS has a strong reputation in the industry for its reliability and Asia Capital Re is happy to be among the long list of companies attesting to it," Alvin concluded.

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