



Business challenge

To maintain its competitive edge, Welch's must squeeze the most out of every IT dollar to keep manufacturing running smoothly and to support executive decision-making with timely business reports.

Transformation

With more than 400 product SKUs in 40 countries, Welch's decided to embark on a journey to a hybrid cloud to maximize value from IT. It has built a robust storage foundation for its private cloud by combining enterprise-class IBM XIV with the cost-efficiencies of IBM Storwize V7000.

Business benefits

Simplicity

that allows worry-free operations, to focus on business innovation

Built-in

software-defined storage tools simplify and accelerate administration

Capacity-optimized

storage minimizes data-center footprint, cutting costs

Welch Foods, Inc.

Choosing the right storage to drive business value from hybrid cloud

Headquartered in Concord, MA, [Welch Foods, Inc.](#) (Welch's) is the processing and marketing arm of the National Grape Cooperative Association. At the heart of Welch's you will find the company's owners, about 1,000 family farmers, and the one-of-a-kind Concord and Niagara grapes they have planted, cared for and harvested with passion and skill for generations. The window for picking Concord grapes is fairly short—just a few weeks in the fall. Once picked and assessed, the grapes are pressed into juice within eight hours of harvesting, locking in the grapes' ripe flavor and benefits.

"We want to keep things simple. XIV fits perfectly with that hybrid-cloud philosophy, giving us extreme performance with zero tuning requirements."

—Mukesh Sharma, Senior Manager of IT, Welch Foods Inc.

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Powering the heart of the business

To maximize the quality and value of its products, and to maintain its edge in a competitive environment, Welch's focuses on operational efficiency and speed. This is particularly true at harvest time, when Welch's family farmers and receiving plants work around the clock to bring in the crop and ensure they are preserving the grapes' natural nutritional power. This is just the beginning of the cycle for a business that works with a multitude of partners to deliver grape goodness worldwide in a wide array of products. Keeping these products in consumers' minds and on store shelves requires the fast and reliable functioning of Welch's strategic business systems.

Mukesh Sharma, Senior Manager of IT at Welch Foods Inc., comments: "As a co-op, we are owned by farmers, and we are the stewards of their trusted brand. That's what drives us every day: our farmers work hard on the farms, and we're working



here to make sure the organization gives the best benefit back to them for each dollar spent. Welch's IT works at the heart of the business, and one of the key things we do in support of the brand's growth is delivering the 'Good Morning' Business Intelligence report on time, so that the business can make the best decisions."

Welch's recognized that running its own data center—with all of its cooling systems, redundant power supplies, generators and other continuity measures—was inefficient in an age when service providers can offer higher service levels and lower costs thanks to their greater economies of scale. After successfully moving to a co-located facility,

the IT department was able to increase its focus on delivering greater value to the business through improved integration and performance.

Any new solution needed to fit seamlessly into the company's vision of a hybrid cloud infrastructure. As Sharma explains: "For all new application requests, we always ask: 'Can it be run in the public cloud?' That's always our preferred option, because we don't want to spend time managing things that can be run equally well by somebody else—giving us back vital resource time to spend innovating in our own business."

Welch's strategy is to move less critical systems out to the public cloud and integrate them back into its private cloud, where the mission-critical systems run. This hybrid approach offers the best of both worlds: low costs and high flexibility for less critical systems; strong control and high performance for critical systems.

Enterprise storage for the private cloud

Welch's chose to deploy IBM® XIV® as the backbone for its mission-critical private cloud workloads. Today, XIV supports all of the important ancillary services, such as email and personal productivity software and all of the critical production systems at Welch's: manufacturing, ERP and Oracle databases running on IBM Power Systems™ servers.

“We rely on XIV as our enterprise storage platform for all of our mission-critical systems,” says Sharma. “XIV enables us to run our most important applications efficiently and securely. It is hotspot-free, it doesn't force us to architect our applications by disk groups, and it offers powerful snapshot technology for trouble-free backup and recovery.”

The Storwize® V7000 environment has been architected to meet price performance requirements. It runs non-mission critical Development and



Test systems and also acts as disaster-recovery option for the main production systems.

The XIV and Storwize V7000 solutions are deployed at two data centers; Welch's handles the logical management while the physical management of the solutions is

performed by its third-party service provider. Many non-critical systems—including service desk applications, performance monitoring systems and the corporate call center system—have been moved to a public cloud but are integrated with the core systems running on IBM Power®, XIV and V7000.

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Focusing on the core mission

“Our hybrid cloud keeps the critical systems ‘on-premises’—although in fact they are physically hosted elsewhere, because that is more economical—and integrated with non-core systems running in the public cloud,” says Sharma. “This approach enables us to focus more on our core values and mission: we want to keep things simple. XIV fits

perfectly with that hybrid-cloud philosophy, giving us extreme performance with zero tuning requirements, and providing exceptionally easy migration, provisioning and management. XIV has enabled us to set up a production storage landscape that runs all by itself.”

Sharma explains that Storwize V7000 also provides “lights-out” operation, enabling his team to focus on tasks that add value to the Welch’s business rather than on routine maintenance. By taking advantage of its automated tiering and deploying solid-state drives—optimizing the price:performance ratio—Sharma ensures that Storwize V7000 can support the production landscape during a disaster scenario, as well as running non-critical systems.

“The combination of XIV and V7000 delivers a low-maintenance disaster-recovery environment that produces ongoing value by also running our non-critical systems,” says Sharma. “Our goal is that the technology should be able to handle most of the work so that we can dedicate our time to adding business value. XIV is the perfect fit for our hybrid-cloud philosophy. It keeps our on-premises footprint small, it keeps our costs low and it manages and optimizes itself, freeing us up to focus on innovation.”

When looking to the future, Welch’s sees value in software defined storage (SDS). Focused on simplifying operations, autonomic data movements, and reducing costs and

complexity, Welch’s looks to SDS as a means to help business innovation by extracting value from data, not focusing on how and where data is stored.

“We have had a very positive experience with SDS—having relied on IBM Spectrum Accelerate™ software-defined storage in XIV,” says Sharma. “With other Spectrum Storage offerings, we hope to reduce our footprint, not only physically but also in terms of the dollar footprint. As one of our key vendor partners, IBM is providing us with the next generation of storage which can do today’s work and much more at a very attractive price point.”

Solution components

- IBM® Power Systems™
- IBM Spectrum Accelerate™
- IBM Storwize® V7000
- IBM XIV®

Connect with us



Take the next step

To learn more about IBM XIV and IBM Storwize V7000, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following websites: ibm.com/xiv or ibm.com/storage/disk

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