

Banking

Safeguarding critical banking systems

Anxi Rural Commercial Bank

Anxi Rural Commercial Bank extends its hyperconverged infrastructure from Lenovo and VMware to cover a new disaster recovery site, elevating data availability and business continuity.



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Who is Anxi Rural Commercial Bank?

Fujian Anxi Rural Commercial Bank Co., Ltd. (Anxi Rural Commercial Bank) officially opened for business in July 2020. Headquartered in Quanzhou City, Fujian Province, the bank employs more than 400 people across 51 business units. It focuses on serving local small and micro enterprises, many of them in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. The bank is a member of the Fujian Rural Credit Cooperatives Association, which works to promote financial inclusion and economic development among small-scale farmers and producers.



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The Challenge

Anxi Rural Commercial Bank plays a vital role in connecting local enterprises to the credit they need to develop their businesses, create jobs in their communities, and lift their living standards. To deliver the best possible service to these clients, it's crucial that the bank's core systems run smoothly and securely at all times.

It's for this very reason that Anxi Rural Commercial Bank runs on Lenovo ThinkAgile VX Series. The hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) platform integrates Lenovo's ultra-reliable servers with world-class VMware vSAN™ virtualization software to provide a solid foundation for the bank's most critical systems and data. Combined with VMware vSphere®, the ThinkAgile VX platform offers a software-defined approach to hyperconvergence, leveraging the hypervisor to deliver compute, storage, and management in a tightly integrated software stack.

While the HCI had more than delivered on Anxi Rural Commercial Bank's requirements for performance and flexibility, the bank was missing one crucial component: an airtight disaster recovery (DR) strategy. With the business growing steadily, reliability and uptime requirements kept rising higher and higher. But the bank lacked a secondary backup and recovery site—putting it at elevated risk of losing critical systems and information if extended downtime or disaster occurred.



“While we have, fortunately, never experienced a disaster resulting in the loss of systems or data, the lack of a dedicated, geographically separate backup site presented an unacceptable risk, which we were eager to eliminate once and for all.”

Huang Dongqiang

Deputy Manager of Science and Technology Department, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank

Protecting business continuity with an active-active configuration

Together with Lenovo, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank extended its existing HCI, built on four Lenovo ThinkAgile VX5520 appliances, with a new business continuity and DR platform built on VMware vSAN. This also comprises four ThinkAgile VX5520 appliances, powered by VMware vSAN, and is housed at a central server room at another bank location in Quanzhou, separate from the organization's local data center.

The HCI solutions are set up in an active-active configuration between the two sites. With a software-defined data center (SDDC) powered by VMware virtualization technology, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank can instantly switch over to the second DR site to keep operations running uninterrupted in the event of an incident at one location.

Hardware

Lenovo ThinkAgile VX5520
Appliance
Lenovo ThinkSystem NE1032
RackSwitch

Software

Lenovo Software Defined
Infrastructure Management Platform
VMware vSphere®
VMware vSAN™

The bank makes use of Lenovo's Software Defined Infrastructure (SDI) Management Platform for integrated management of both physical and virtual components across both clusters. Jointly developed by Lenovo China and the VMware China R&D team, the Lenovo SDI Management Platform is an administration software for HCI, which provides a single interface for IT administrators to centralize the management of Lenovo ThinkAgile VX systems, VMware vSphere, VMware vSAN, and related value-added services including integrated software and hardware upgrades. The IT team has at-a-glance views of the real-time status and performance of all components, from a large, user-friendly display. The platform also makes it quick and easy to orchestrate resources and perform maintenance activities.

“We established a very good working relationship with Lenovo during our initial HCI deployment, which gave us a strong footing for extending the existing landscape with a disaster recovery site. We had productive, in-depth discussions with the Lenovo team to map out our requirements and design a solution that delivered on all of them.”

Huang Dongqiang

Deputy Manager of Science and Technology Department, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank

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Results

With its new active-active DR architecture, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank has optimized data availability and business continuity. The bank can now rest assured that key systems and information will remain readily available, so that business can continue as usual even if disaster strikes.

Importantly, the integrated HCI also reduces management effort. Even though the bank is now operating two clusters, the IT team can monitor and manage them both from one central interface, using intuitive SDI Management Portal tools to simplify routine administrative tasks. As a result, the IT team can tackle day-to-day management more efficiently, leaving them with more time and energy to devote to strategic work.

And as business grows, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank has an infrastructure that it can rely on to meet changing requirements in a flexible, secure way. The Lenovo-VMware HCI platform makes it easy to scale compute and storage capacity, ensuring that the bank is ready for whatever the future may hold.



Minimizes risk of data loss and business disruption



Simplifies infrastructure management



Provides headroom for future growth



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“The Lenovo and VMware HCI solution provides a robust foundation for supporting our banking operations. The new active-active architecture is a welcome addition, protecting business continuity and reducing risk.”

Huang Dongqiang

Deputy Manager of Science and Technology
Department, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank

Why **Lenovo**?

When it came to initially selecting an HCI platform, Anxi Rural Commercial Bank found the combination of Lenovo hardware and VMware virtualization to be an ideal match for its requirements.

Huang Dongqiang recalls: “We considered several HCI providers, and felt most reassured by the joint offering from Lenovo and VMware built on Lenovo ThinkAgile VX appliances and VMware vSAN. VMware is the market leader for HCI software, we had good experience of using VMware vSphere already, and we got a positive impression from Lenovo’s sales and technology teams right away.

After getting to know the capabilities of the Lenovo-VMware solution, it was an easy decision to extend this environment to support the bank’s goals for better business continuity and DR.

Huang Dongqiang adds: “We had been using Lenovo and VMware HCI for almost two years without any problems, and the quality of service from Lenovo also met our expectations. It was an obvious choice to continue with Lenovo and VMware solutions to enable our business continuity and DR plan.”



How do you keep credit flowing to clients, no matter what?

Keeping key systems up and running at all times with Lenovo and VMware.

Explore Software-Defined Infrastructure Solutions

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