

# Netherlands looks to Cisco to support 70% of healthcare insurance data processing



<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>
<b>CUSTOMER NAME</b> · Vecozo
<b>LOCATION</b> · Tilburg, the Netherlands
<b>INDUSTRY</b> · Healthcare
<b>COMPANY SIZE</b> · 45 employees
<b>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</b> · Huge increase in customer demand on business applications · Business viability relies upon performance and availability of web applications · Make business systems and support operations more efficient and cost effective
<b>NETWORK SOLUTION</b> · Cisco Data Center 3.0 · Cisco Application Networking Services
<b>BUSINESS VALUE</b> · Reduces time-to-market for new products and services · Helps to increase and improve customer service · Ensures business critical systems are available 24/7 · Makes data center facilities and resources more cost effective · Reduces data center carbon footprint

A Cisco Data Center Network solution is helping Vecozo, a small 45-person business, to improve the performance and reliability of processing health insurance information for most of the population in the Netherlands.

### Business Challenge

Vecozo in the Netherlands provides a variety of healthcare insurance processing and management services to insurance and healthcare providers. Using web-based applications to exchange information between healthcare providers and insurance organizations, Vecozo handles around 70 percent of all healthcare insurance transactions in the Netherlands. Applications that Vecozo provides include insurance validation, processing invoices and medical service approval.

Since it was set up in 2002, Vecozo has seen a dramatic increase in demand for its services from customers wanting to process more information and for new applications. This has a huge impact on the amount of data that has to be managed and processed. In 2005 Vecozo was handling around 100,000 insurance validations, but by 2007 this had leapt to 50 million incoming validations a month. Every Dutch citizen has an insurance validation which is checked four times a month. All health insurance organizations and around 90 percent of healthcare providers – about 28,000 hospitals, clinics, doctors and dentists – in the Netherlands now use Vecozo's

services. Vecozo is a small business – just 45 people – and its existing computer infrastructure could not manage the increase in demand fast enough. Vecozo needed a more efficient and cost effective way to set up new functions and services and run its data center to cope with increasing customer demand.




## Network Solution

Vecozo turned to Cisco. Ronny Kennes, manager ICT, at Vecozo says, "We were familiar with Cisco and so knowledge transfer from foundation networking to Cisco's data center networking technology was easy. But it was the virtualization capabilities of the Cisco technology that persuaded us to adopt Cisco's Data Center 3.0 vision. We did look at other solutions but we found nothing similar to the capability and performance of Cisco's application networking services technology."

Vecozo has deployed a Cisco Data Center network solution based upon Cisco Data Center 3.0 architecture for bringing greater operational continuity, transport flexibility and scalability into the data center. The Cisco solution comprises Cisco Wide Area Network (WAN) connecting up three locations in the Netherlands where there are Cisco Local Area Networks (LANs). The three locations are the main office in Tilburg, southern Netherlands; the main data center in Amsterdam and a second data center in Den Bosch, also in southern Netherlands. The data centers have around 30 servers and handle about 3TB of data.

A central part of the Cisco Data Center 3.0 strategy is the use of Cisco Application Networking Services which Vecozo uses to improve the deployment and availability of its web services by virtualizing applications across multiple data center devices. Using virtualization technologies to ensure that these server resources are used as efficiently as possible, the Cisco Application Control Engine (ACE) allows applications to be spread across several servers instead of having to dedicate hardware to specific applications or websites. Not only does this mean better utilization of server resources, leading to increases in speed and productivity as well as cost savings through reduced need for additional servers, but it also brings benefits in terms of regular and emergency maintenance.



## Business Results

Since deploying the Cisco data center solution Vecozo has been able to increase customer service by improving the performance of its web applications at a time when customer numbers and customer demand has increased dramatically. Kennes says, "I'm not sure that we could deliver the level of service we do at present without the changes in our data center environment that the Cisco technology has enabled."

Because the Vecozo applications handle such a high volume of transactions 24/7, business continuity is essential to Vecozo and to maintaining a high level of customer service. Another example of the huge volumes is the number of invoices that Vecozo processes - 800,000 a month which accounts for around €25 billion a year. The Cisco ACE has helped Vecozo to ensure its applications are available virtually 100 percent of the time while also introducing new services and functionality without disrupting existing applications.

**"Cisco technology is absolutely vital to Vecozo because our business is technology and computer driven and without an Internet portal there is no business. Cisco is one of the key components in our data center and computing environment"**

**Ronny Kennes, manager ICT, Vecozo**

According to Kennes, "Cisco is helping Vecozo to provide a faster, more robust service to its customers. Since we've started using Cisco ACE we've cut time-to-market for new products and new

PRODUCT LIST
<p><b>Routing and Switching</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Cisco Catalyst 6500 Series Switches</li> </ul> <p><b>Security</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Adaptive Security Appliances (ASA)</li> </ul> <p><b>Application Networking Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Cisco Application Control Engine (ACE) Module</li> </ul>

functions and we don't have to worry about changes impacting our network environment – it's a non-issue." The Cisco ACE enables virtual partitioning of Vecozo's web applications across several servers which means that individual parts or applications can be effectively 'ring-fenced'. When changes or fixes need to be carried out, only the specific area needs to be taken down, virtually eliminating the impact on other applications.

One of the benefits of the Cisco technology is simplified data center management. For example, the Cisco ACE allows Vecozo to carry out functions such as setting up a new virtual server in the Amsterdam data center remotely from its office, hundreds of kilometers away in Tilburg.

The Cisco ACE also provides other useful functions such as application health checks. Kennes adds that using Cisco to simplify management has meant that the company is handling a dramatic increase in system and application demand with the same number of technical staff it had before. "This is a significant benefit to Vecozo because we have four people who can deliver a 24/7 services to the business and to customers, but significantly we can also manage customer and business growth with the same staff."

Another benefit of using Cisco ACE is to reduce space and energy consumption in the data center. Because of virtualization, the Cisco ACE means better use of existing hardware reducing the need for more equipment, more physical space and more power.

"Cisco technology is absolutely vital to Vecozo because our business is technology and computer driven and without an Internet portal there is no business. Cisco is one of the key components in our data center and computing environment," says Kennes.



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