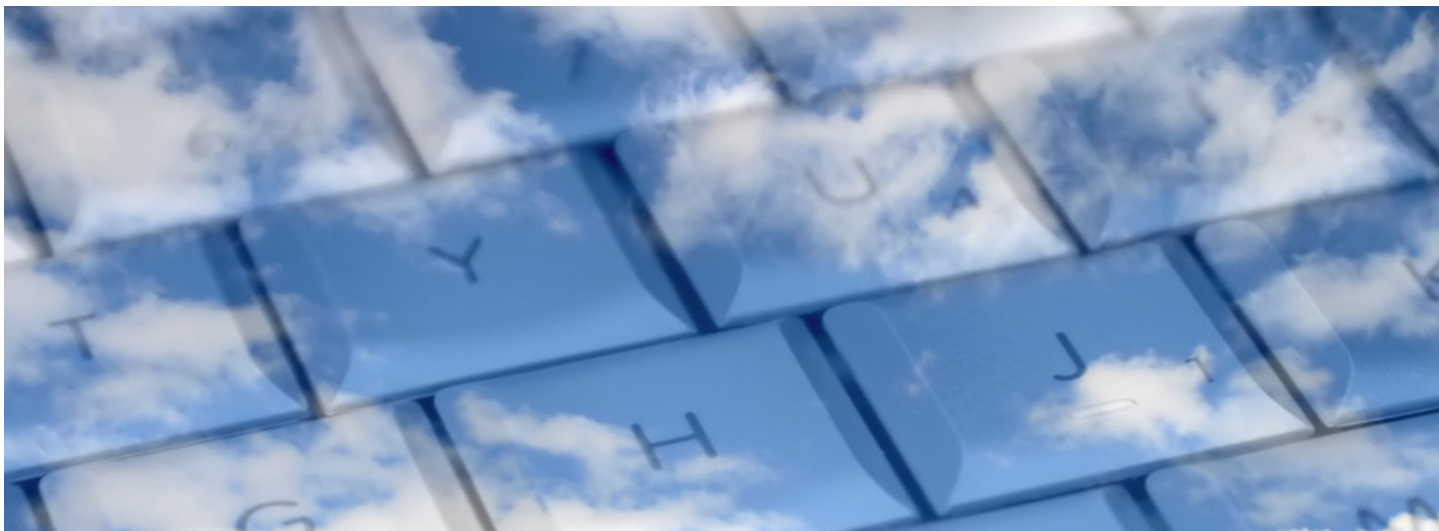# Helping to Execute a Transformational Growth Strategy at VMware

"Great work by all involved. Very impactful for our R&D community. I have heard nothing but exceptional feedback."

– Carl Eschenbach, Co-President, Customer Operations

Defining a New Direction for Growth

VMware, the global leader in virtualization and cloud infrastructure, has made a bold strategic shift by rapidly expanding its product line, moving beyond enabling basic hardware consolidation and evolving into a recognized leader in cloud computing.

The company embarked on a new phase to generate significant growth while continuing to build upon its success in virtualization software. Through strategic acquisitions and notable innovation, VMware enlarged and diversified its product portfolio to help customers achieve tangible business results.

This shift in strategy and broadened portfolio of business-centric, interoperable products has added complexity to VMware's business. With the end goal of helping customers move toward an enterprise hybrid cloud model and IT as a service came a need to better understand the motivations of the CIO.

Engaging Engineers in the New Strategy

VMware's senior management wanted to align and engage its engineers with the company's new strategy. As the company expanded its product offering, engineers had to shift their concentration from a smaller scope of core virtualization to a more dynamic focus requiring the development, integration and management of multiple products. This change added complexity for engineers, who needed to identify how their products fit into the big picture and how the different applications worked together to add value to the customer. To achieve this, management had to reinforce the perspective of the end customer as a principal consideration for engineers. Ultimately, the executive team wanted to bolster engineer confidence and build employee engagement by strengthening their understanding of CIO metrics, customer agility needs and motivations for cloud computing.

BTS worked closely with the CIO and CTO on a customized, high-impact scenario simulation to build strategic alignment and execution capability of engineers who were skeptical about the new environment.

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The Transformation: Strategic Alignment and Deep Engagement

In the simulation experience, 1,100 VMware engineers collaborated in new ways to fully understand the dynamics driving the CIO's need for agility. The simulation experience realistically integrated VMware's strategic initiatives, engineer decisions and the implications for the CIO's key business performance measures.

Competing in teams of six at nearly 200 tables, the engineers participated in a competitive simulation while senior managers circulated, shedding "real world" light on the events. "It was thrilling to see our engineers so engaged in the SIM--it was a huge success!" said Ellen Snee, Vice President of Organizational Consulting & Leadership Programs.

Complementing the experience, Steve Herrod, VMware CTO, introduced the event while Mark Egan, CIO, motivated the audience by asking, "Are you ready to feel my pain?"

In the end, by living the roles and responsibilities of the CIO, the engineers became more deeply engaged with the strategy and came to understand the impact of VMware products on IT and the CIO.

Persuasive Results

Before the experience, "We were certainly not all on the same page," noted one VMware employee. However, the four hour simulation inspired engineers from across the organization with disparate viewpoints to work together and understand the implications of VMware technology on CIO metrics.

It provided the necessary big picture, created deep alignment with the strategy and inspired greater employee engagement. Following the event, 92.8% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that because of the simulation, they now better understand the customer's motivations for product agility.

Going forward, the engineers' wholehearted understanding of the VMware strategy and CIO perspective will aid the company's continued growth.

What's Next?

Powerful results are inspiring further application of the simulation program. VMware plans to deploy the program to its sales organization, which also needs to understand the company's impact on the CIO.

About BTS

BTS focuses on the people side of strategy, working with leaders at all levels to help them make better decisions, convert those decisions to actions and deliver results. At our core, we believe people learn best by doing. For 30 years, we've been designing fun, powerful experiences™ that have profound and lasting impact on people and their careers. We inspire new ways of thinking, build critical capabilities and unleash business success. It's strategy made personal.

For more information, please visit www.bts.com.

"The engineers had a fantastic time with the SIM. Another VMware experience logged into a powerful memory and our history books."

– Betsy Sutter, Senior Vice President, HR

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