

For immediate release

MassMutual Asia Deploys Microsoft Azure StorSimple Solution

Lowering costs by 20 times compared to building own datacenter and enjoying improved storage and disaster-recovery speed and efficiency

Hong Kong, 23 February 2015 — In recent years, Microsoft's cloud business has grown significantly due to a substantial uptrend in cloud services adoption. For the sixth consecutive quarter, Microsoft's commercial cloud revenue more than doubled, driven by Office 365, Azure and Dynamics CRM Online. It is now on an annualized revenue run rate of US\$5.5 billion. Microsoft Azure has a similar growth rate both internationally and locally. Globally, Microsoft has 19 Azure datacenter regions open for business to date, with close to 60% of Fortune 500 companies now using Azure.

"Microsoft Azure continues to perform exceptionally well with triple-digit growth both internationally and locally. Azure has differentiated itself from its competition with three key strengths: hyper-scale with the most number of datacenter regions, hybrid cloud ease of use with familiar tools, and open enterprise infrastructure which supports Linux and other 3rd party languages, applications and devices. In Hong Kong, customers from many different industries use Azure, including TVB, Mass Mutual Asia and Emperor Group, to name just a few," said Flora Yu, Data Insights Product Marketing Manager of Microsoft Hong Kong.

Microsoft Azure StorSimple offers affordable disaster-recovery storage solution

MassMutual Asia is a member of the US-based MassMutual Financial Group (the Group), one of the largest global financial services organizations. MassMutual Asia delivers one-stop risk- and wealth-management consulting services, including a series of flexible and innovative life insurance products, retirement plans and investment services. Currently, it has an agency force of over 2,600 consultants, administrative and management staff.

In 2013, the Group imposed a new set of requirements to meet the regulatory compliance in the post-9-11 period. In response to this, the company needed to keep one set of data backup image at a system 60 miles away from its headquarters in Hong Kong. Currently, its offsite backup image was kept at Iron Mountain, Tuen Mun with the traditional tape vault.

In order to meet the new regulatory compliance requirements, the company needed to consider another data backup system geographically out of Hong Kong to store another set of data image. However, it would pose limitations to the team in terms of accessing and maintaining the data stored on the system, and the data transfer cost could be 10-times higher than those within the territory of Hong Kong.

Since the introduction of the requirement from the US headquarters, the company was made aware of the innovative Microsoft Azure StorSimple, which could help the company meet the compliance requirement at a much lower operating cost.

Microsoft Azure StorSimple has a solution called Cloud-integrated storage (CiS), which addresses the challenges of data backup & recovery and disaster recovery, with a tapeless approach. CiS integrates primary SAN storage on-premise with automated data protection in the cloud that greatly simplifies and reduces the total cost of storage and data protection.

To meet the requirements from the compliance in a cost-conscious way, Microsoft team came up with a deployment, which enables the company to enjoy the flexibility to keep its data in a local backup location, Microsoft's datacenter in Hong Kong, with geo-replication to Microsoft datacenter in Singapore. To address future needs, the company went with the option of StorSimple 7520 Appliance with 20 terabytes (TB) of local storage and 100TB of cloud-based Azure storage.

"Microsoft StorSimple offers not just a product, but a solution that meets our needs for cost-efficiency, technical support, high efficiency, and above all, corporate compliance." said Daryl Cheng, Senior Vice President, Management Information Systems, MassMutual Asia.

"The costs of transferring data between our office and an overseas location via broadband as opposed to a local one alone would have been some 20 times more expensive. Microsoft Azure StorSimple can help us reduce the running cost for Internet, unlike other vendor solutions which need to back up to their cloud datacenter overseas."

"Microsoft Azure StorSimple is the best option we have seen in the market, which attains a perfect balance between high performance and cost-effectiveness for us, helping us meet the regulatory compliancy law in an extremely short period of time. What they offer is not just a product, but a one-stop solution that gave us peace of mind," added Cheng.

Benefits gained from deploying Microsoft Azure StorSimple

MassMutual Asia started deploying Microsoft Azure StorSimple solution in March 2014, with the help of Microsoft team and its dedicated partner, accessing varying benefits immediately.

- **Adherence to regulatory compliance at a lower cost**
As the data saved on the cloud backup system hosted on Microsoft's Hong Kong datacenter, users can now access the data with local broadband instead of overseas cable. The savings will scale up with data growth as MassMutual Asia no longer has to expand its own premises to accommodate for storage.
- **Better disaster recovery**
With StorSimple's disaster recovery capabilities, MassMutual Asia will gain complete and geographically-distinct data protection, alleviating its concerns over physical backups even in the event of a regional disaster.
- **Seamless deployment**
The ability to set up the new storage solution without disrupting business operations was a key concern for MassMutual Asia. Much to the organization's relief, Microsoft Azure StorSimple was

deployed in just two short weeks with minimal needs for technical assistance or complicated configurations, and the support offered by Microsoft on shipment of StorSimple hardware and its installation. Moreover, StorSimple integrated remarkably well with the company's existing IT infrastructure, and was particularly easy to link with Windows and Linux systems the company is currently running.

- **Improved speed and efficiency**

With the use of local broadband, the company was able to enjoy significantly higher transfer speeds than could have otherwise been achieved for that cost with an overseas facility. At present, the company can transfer 2TB of data in just 24 hours, thanks to its affordable but fast 100MB connection. In addition, the new solution also allowed the company to achieve a significantly higher compression ratio over the previous solution. Furthermore, MassMutual Asia was able to benefit from the new solution's data deduplication function, which eliminates duplicate data system-wide for greater efficiency.

- **Enhanced data security with local technical support**

The StorSimple solution offered significantly improved security to MassMutual Asia by ensuring that all of its data would be protected using AES-256 encryption technology. As a perk of the Microsoft Azure StorSimple solution, MassMutual Asia also gained the benefit of continued technical support from Microsoft in Hong Kong and its partners, Lantro Systems, which helped enhance the company's disaster recovery plan.

By using Microsoft Azure StorSimple solutions for its off-site storage disaster recovery solution, MassMutual Asia was able to achieve significant cost savings, while also gaining notable speed and efficiency advantages. The company is now considering deploying further Azure cloud based solutions in other areas of the business.

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About Microsoft

Founded in 1975, Microsoft (Nasdaq "MSFT") is the worldwide leader in software, services and solutions that help people and businesses realize their full potential. Microsoft Hong Kong was established in 1991.

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