

Flexing the muscle of a data center



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Provincia Net's Horacio Astesiano, Fernando Haring, and Martin Jauregui (right), with Cisco's Carlos Isla.

With one of Argentina's most advanced data centers, Provincia Net is delivering new services to an expanding customer base.

When you have one of the most sophisticated and powerful data centers in Latin America—with ample space for additional capacity—the opportunities for service delivery and business growth are virtually unlimited. You can, for instance, stream a live soccer game being played on the other side of the globe, serve it up to crazed fans for free, and collect a hoard of ad revenue. And perhaps that will just be an experiment, one idea for how the mighty data center will be utilized.

This is the rise of Provincia Net, which is emerging from the shadows of its parent company and aiming to be the premiere technology services provider in Argentina.

"Provincia Net is the fastest growing technology company in Argentina, with more than 500 percent growth and 200 new jobs created last year," says Santiago Montoya,

CEO of Provincia Net. "We offer services to both public and private sectors, and our goal is to improve the lives of citizens in the Province of Buenos Aires and beyond."

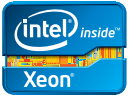
Provincia Net was established some 13 years ago as the technology services division of Grupo Provincia, a collection of companies that includes South America's first bank. With demand for technology services increasing, company leaders made the decision in 2012 to build the finest data center in Buenos Aires and expand its services beyond Grupo Provincia.

"It all started with the data center," says Horacio Astesiano, general director of business and services at Provincia Net. "There is no other facility like it in Argentina."

"The data center was designed to be 100 percent virtualized and software driven," explains Fernando Haring, COO of Provincia Net. "That means it is extremely flexible and we can meet a variety of customer needs and pursue new market opportunities very quickly."

It's also the only Tier II data center in Argentina to be certified by the Uptime Institute¹, and Provincia Net is currently working toward a Tier III designation. Built on the Intel® Xeon® processor-based Cisco Unified Computing System™ (Cisco UCS®) and utilizing Microsoft Hyper-V virtualization, the capabilities of the data center have been in high demand. What started with seven Cisco UCS chassis has expanded to 25 chassis in a single year, supporting 8,000 virtual machines (VMs).

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“Cisco, Microsoft, and Intel give us a lot of comfort,” says Haring. “They have been instrumental in helping us build a data center that is powerful, reliable, and flexible. We have a lot of room to grow.”

EXPLORING AND EXPANDING CUSTOMER SERVICES

Many companies construct their technology infrastructure to satisfy existing requirements, but Provincia Net built its data center with growth in mind. Only 30 percent of the physical space is currently being utilized, with the potential to add another 50 Cisco UCS chassis and 14,000 VMs.

“Our data center is our commodity,” says Montoya. “There is a big need for technology services in Argentina, and we are uniquely capable of meeting that need.”

The data center has been a huge selling point, Astesiano adds. “When customers see the facility, they are astonished,” he says. “They can’t believe the quality, the capacity, and the fact that it is 100 percent virtualized.”

Provincia Net currently offers infrastructure and cloud services, a bill payment and collection system, a hosted contact center, and a software factory specializing in mobile application development. With a desire to grow and improve the business and ample capacity in the data center, company leaders are exploring a number of new service options.

“We are planning to take advantage of the Cisco Intercloud, which gives us and our customers more choice,” says Martin Jauregui, manager of technology for Provincia Net. “Sometimes it makes sense to push client VMs to an external cloud for cost or compliance purposes, and the Intercloud will make that very easy.”

Provincia Net is also looking into social media services and big data analytics. And consumer services like sports and entertainment streaming have already been tested, with wild success.

The decision to stream a soccer game being played in Europe was made quickly. In just two days, the servers and network resources

were provisioned for the match, with no need to deploy additional hardware. Sponsors gobbled up the advertising space, and tens of thousands of Argentina soccer fans watched the game live from their computers and mobile devices.

But it was just one experiment, one idea for flexing the muscle of a powerful data center.

¹ <http://uptimeinstitute.com/TierCertification/certMaps.php>

MEASURING THE VALUE OF CISCO UCS

According to a Forrester Total Economic Impact Study, organizations utilizing Cisco UCS can achieve 307% ROI and more than \$1.6 million in cost savings and benefits over a three year period.

[Download the full study](#) from the Unified Data Center and Cisco Unified Computing System resource page on UnleashingIT.com.



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