



Japanese motor giant drives safer roads worldwide

Honda Motor Co. increases sale of safe-driving simulator and penetrates the healthcare services market by adopting a stable and reliable PC-based platform



Customer profile

HONDA
The Power of Dreams

Company Honda Motor Co.
Industry Automotive
Country Japan
Employees 204,730 worldwide and 22,954 in Japan
Website www.honda.co.jp

Business need

Honda Motor Co. wanted to realize the full business opportunity for its safe-driving simulator by developing the solution on a stable and reliable PC-based platform.

Solution

The company chose to work with Dell to help drive sales and to build the simulators on Dell OptiPlex desktop technology backed by Dell ProSupport.

Benefits

- Supports innovation and enters new markets
- Drives sales with dedicated support from global team
- Meets customer needs with energy-efficient high-performance PCs
- Ensures stable and reliable performance that businesses require
- Being future-ready with regular PC roadmap updates

Solutions at a glance

- Client Solutions
- Client Support

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Mitsuaki Miyazaki, Manager/Block Leader, Promotions Block, Head Office for the Promotion of Safe Driving, Honda Motor Co.

Technology not only makes a more efficient world; it also makes a safer one. Simulators, for example, where trainees learn to operate real-world machines in virtual environments, are a case in point. Honda Motor Co. (Honda) in Japan, with its safe-driving simulator, is helping to boost people's driving skills away from the roads, and to support the rehabilitation programs of people with serious injuries.

"The driving simulator is an important part of our strategy in terms of overseas markets. The simulator is a great piece of software, and that is why our partnership with Dell is so important to us."

Mitsuaki Miyazaki, Manager/Block Leader, Promotions Block, Head Office for the Promotion of Safe Driving, Honda Motor Co.

Honda developed its first driving simulator in 1996. In essence, it was a car seat surrounded by screens. Both the hardware and software were developed in-house, and each simulator cost Honda tens of millions of yen. To help increase sales, Honda looked to reduce costs and lower the price point. Mitsuaki Miyazaki, Manager/Block Leader, Promotions Block, Head Office for the Promotion of Safe Driving at Honda Motor Co., says, "The biggest issue was balancing cost against reliability. At Honda, we make a point of guaranteeing quality using our proprietary technology to ensure that costs are also under control. The central focus of our business management is striving to excel in that area – excellent quality at an affordable cost."

The need for a PC-based platform

The company also saw the market changing. Customers no longer wanted large-scale pieces of equipment. They wanted to operate more compact, energy-efficient simulators. At this point, Honda began looking for an IT partner to work with. It sought a partner which could help reduce the size of the simulator footprint using a PC-based hardware platform. And just as importantly, Honda looked for a brand which could ensure the simulators maintained the high level of performance that customers had come to associate with the Honda name.

A partner offering stability and reliability

After assessing the market, Honda chose to develop its simulators around Dell OptiPlex 9020 desktop technology. The Dell brand and OptiPlex desktop

solution stood out for two reasons: stability and reliability. Hiroshi Ono, who works in the Promotions Block, part of the Head Office for the Promotion of Safe Driving at Honda Motor Co., remembers, "At the time, only Dell was offering five-year on-site support. When we were considering vendors and products, we really liked the fact that the PC units could be customized and configured to meet our specific needs. We could shape pretty much everything to meet our specific requirements."

The support from Dell was crucial because it enabled Honda to offer greater value to customers. Up to this point, customers were responsible for the maintenance of all aspects of the simulators, but through the Dell relationship, they could offload the burden of maintaining the PCs to Dell ProSupport.

Technology to deliver performance, energy efficiency and manageability

The first simulators to include Dell technology featured the Dell OptiPlex 755, including NVIDIA® graphics cards. Today, the simulators feature Dell OptiPlex 9020

Products & Services

Services

Dell Support Services
– Dell ProSupport for PCs and Tablets

Hardware

Dell OptiPlex 9020 Mini Tower Desktop



Mini Towers with Intel® Core™ i5 and Intel Core i7 processors. The business-class PCs deliver performance, power efficiency and easy manageability. Built to the high standards of the Dell OptiPlex range, the 9020 model offers large amounts of storage on solid-state drives or solid-state hybrid drives. Because they can include up to 32 gigabytes of memory, the machines can run multiple applications simultaneously, including graphics-intensive programs. Finally, the machines all meet the ENERGY STAR 5.2 compliance rating and come with efficient power supplies as standard.

Miyazaki has no doubts that the Dell OptiPlex range can continue meeting the needs of Honda. He says, "We have been able to maintain the stable performance of our safe-driving simulator to date with Dell. I am sure the company will be helping us improve this product in the future."

Entering new markets — healthcare services

It was after the relationship with Dell started that Honda started selling its simulators to the healthcare market. The simulators were already popular with driving schools to help boost driving education and promote safety. But healthcare providers began to see the advantages of the cost-effective and reliable machines for helping patients recover from debilitating injuries.

Honda developed specialized software for its healthcare customers. Called Honda Safety Navi, this driving ability evaluation software has been installed in around 100 healthcare centers. At the centers, patients undergoing rehabilitation are encouraged to reacquire driving skills as part of their return to a functional life. As soon as a therapist or doctor decides the patient has recovered enough coordination and movement to attempt to drive using the simulator, a course of simulations begins.

Isami Sato, another employee of the Promotions Block, part of the Head

Office for the Promotion of Safe Driving at Honda Motor Co., says, "The programs that help rehabilitate patients are so satisfying to see. I really feel that we are making a contribution to society."

Driving global sales with specialist assistance

Working together, Honda and Dell are looking to open up new markets for the simulator solutions in Japan and abroad. The Honda strategy is to drive growth by promoting the simulator's support for social welfare programs around road safety. Miyazaki says, "The driving simulator is an important part of our strategy in terms of overseas markets. The simulator is a great piece of software, and that is why our partnership with Dell is so important to us."

Beyond the simulator, Honda plans to drive growth with Dell for its Honda KYT interactive safety video system which runs on Dell laptop technology. The company has the support of Dell sales channels through a special support team, called the Global 500, who have been trained to work with global corporations such as Honda. The Global 500 team is made up of sales and marketing professionals, as well as technical experts and support staff who are all trained to help Dell enterprise customers achieve their broader missions.

Staying future-ready with close support

Honda can drive growth of its simulation solutions safe in the knowledge that Dell will deliver the PCs ready for customer deployments. The Dell team keeps Honda stakeholders up-to-date with supplies of PCs to ensure orders are fulfilled as per schedule.

Stakeholders can also look to the future with confidence when it plans to develop the simulator technology for a large system of traffic safety training. They know the Dell roadmap and that Dell is continuing to develop the OptiPlex range to meet the PC needs of organizations for years to come.



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