Offering outstanding learning experiences in the classroom and beyond.

How **Majmaah University** used a Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI solution to support mission-critical digital solutions for its students, teachers, and staff—helping it to deliver outstanding learning experiences even in periods of remote working during the pandemic.

Lenovo Infrastructure Solutions for The Data-Centered

Microsoft

Lenovo

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Background

Established in 2009, Majmaah University is one of Saudi Arabia's newest higher education institutions. With a main campus located in the city of Al Majma'ah, the university offers a wide range of academic and research programs across 13 faculties and departments, including the sciences, engineering, and medicine.

Majmaah University aims to offer its students the best possible learning experiences. As part of its commitment to this mission, the university invests heavily in digital services for learners, faculty, and administrative staff alike. These include online tools to reserve library books, access course materials and download past exam papers, databases to store student and staff records, and finance and business systems to help drive the day-to-day operations of the university.

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Challenge

Nashmy Al-Rasheedy, Head of Operating Systems Department, elaborates on the importance of digital systems at Majmaah University: "Digital systems play an integral role in practically every aspect of university life: from enabling students to sign up for classes to helping administrators create annual budgets. Since the COVID-19 pandemic first struck in 2020, ensuring 24/7 uptime for our digital systems has become even more important, as we rely on them to enable remote working and teaching."

To empower its 13,000 students and 3,000 faculty and staff to access the applications and files on demand online and on mobile, Majmaah University has relied for many years on a rock-solid infrastructure from Lenovo.

"We've used Lenovo System x solutions to support our mission-critical systems for more than six years, with great success," continues Al-Rasheedy. "Our key software platforms include Microsoft SQL Server, Microsoft Windows Server 2019 Datacenter Edition and MySQL, and we've been very impressed with the reliability of the Lenovo solution for these vital workloads. As the existing environment approached end-of-life, we looked for a fresh infrastructure platform that could meet and exceed its reliability and performance."

"Our core systems include staff- and student-facing applications and databases, and availability is critical—especially during online examinations."
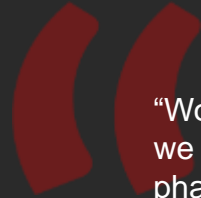
Nashmy Al-Rasheedy
Head of Operating Systems Department, Majmaah University

Why Lenovo? High performance, competitive pricing, and dependable reliability.

Majmaah University evaluated solutions from several leading IT vendors to replace its existing environment. After considering traditional three-tier solutions, the university determined that a hyperconverged infrastructure (HCI) based on Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI was the optimal choice for its long-term requirements.

The new solution is based on a five-node cluster, managed using Lenovo XClarity Administrator and Microsoft Windows Admin Center. By consolidating all server, storage, and networking components to a single cabinet in the data center, the university contains the cost and complexity of management and maintenance while ensuring high levels of performance, scalability, and reliability.

"Working with Lenovo to design our new solution was a very smooth process, and we were very pleased with the help we received from the team. During the pre-sales phase, Lenovo consultants visited us on site many times and provided valuable recommendations to size the HCI environment for our Microsoft workloads."

Nashmy Al-Rasheedy
Head of Operating Systems Department, Majmaah University

Successful deployment.

With guidance from Lenovo, Majmaah University deployed a five-node Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI solution and migrated its existing Microsoft Storage Spaces Direct cluster to the new platform.

"Although Lenovo had to perform the implementation work remotely because of local COVID-19 restrictions, the whole project went very smoothly," continues Al-Rasheedy. "The Lenovo ThinkAgile MX solution was very easy to set up, and Lenovo technical engineers talked us through the process via a video call. I really can't fault the experience—there was no impact on delivery at all, even against the backdrop of the COVID-19 challenges. Lenovo also provided training on Lenovo XClarity Administrator, which helps us to get maximum benefit from the new management capabilities."

"The combination of Lenovo HCI infrastructure and Microsoft Azure Stack HCI software is a great choice for Majmaah University. Because Lenovo ThinkAgile MX is certified and validated for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI, we knew there wouldn't be any compatibility issues, and the Lenovo solution is also very cost-effective."

Nashmy Al-Rasheedy
Head of Operating Systems Department,
Majmaah University

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Results

With a HCI solution from Lenovo and Microsoft powering its learning and business systems, Majmaah University is ready to support its students, faculty, and staff with responsive digital services for years to come.

"We're extremely pleased with the performance of Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI," says Nashmy Al-Rasheedy. "Our applications are running faster for end users, we've increased our storage and compute capacity to enable future service development, and everything is far easier to manage thanks to Lenovo XClarity Administrator and Microsoft Windows Admin Center."

جامعة المجمعة
Majmaah University

✓ **Delivers dependable reliability for mission-critical systems**

✓ **Boosts end-user application performance**

✓ **Reduces IT management requirements**

✓ **Creates headroom to expand digital services**

"With Lenovo ThinkAgile MX for Microsoft Azure Stack HCI, we've created a rock-solid infrastructure platform to help offer our students outstanding digital learning experiences."

Nashmy Al-Rasheedy
Head of Operating Systems Department, Majmaah University

What will you do with Lenovo software-defined infrastructure solutions?

The Data-Centered deliver exceptional learning experiences with Lenovo smarter infrastructure solutions, powered by Microsoft.

Explore Lenovo Software-Defined Infrastructure Solutions