MTB Bank Chooses StarWind Virtual SAN over Fibre Channel

" With StarWind we were able to have a powerful SAN with disaster recovery features and all this at a truly affordable price. It was the best choice for us. **"**

Yuri Prigornitsky, IT Director

MARINE
TRANSPORT
BANK

About the Company

MTB Bank is a major national bank in Ukraine with links to financial services institutions around the world. The MTB Bank considers it critical to have reliable shared storage on its network that allows its IT to protect the stored data, and MTB engaged StarWind Software to help them.

www.mtb.com.ua

Industry

Banking and Finance

Environment

HP ProLiant servers in an Ethernet environment

Key challenges

Need to move from direct attached storage to more scalable SAN storage without having to build a new data network or substantially impacting the IT budget.

Solution

StarWind Virtual SAN

Business Benefits

Allowed development of a server clustering environment for a fraction of the costs associated with Fibre Channel SANs, helped meet strict regulatory and disaster recovery goals, and allowed reuse of the existing network (Ethernet) and computing (Windows) infrastructure to contain costs without sacrificing performance.

PROBLEM

Direct attached storage would not meet the company's growth needs. IT director Yuri Prigornitsky had stored data primarily in direct attached storage (DAS), but as the bank has expanded, he realized that the bank's existing storage infrastructure could not accommodate the organization's long-term needs. For one thing, the bank was upgrading its Exchange and SQL databases, and it wanted to move to server clusters, which cannot be created with a DAS configuration. The databases had been running on older Compaq servers, and the bank planned to move to newer, more powerful HP ProLiant servers running in a clustered environment to make it more resistant to equipment failures. This was an ideal time to move from DAS to a shared storage environment, The new infrastructure would also afford much greater protection in case of a data center disaster, allowing quick recoveries.

Talking to resellers in Europe, Yuri Prigornitsky initially considered building a Fibre Channel SAN, but it was "incredibly expensive," not only in terms of component and installation costs, but also in its training requirements. But there was literally a "harder" problem that would come from committing to Fibre Channel: the bank's walls were made of brick and it would be far too costly and time consuming to drill heavy walls for the FC wires and network while the Ethernet cables had already been placed.

SOLUTION

This left MTB Bank to consider its iSCSI options, which they knew would cost a small fraction of the cost of Fibre Channel. For one thing, they had perfectly serviceable Ethernet cabling in place, which would only require a new router to be very usable for new server cluster configurations. But every solution they explored, save for one was Linux-based, while the bank was committed to keeping their operation an all-Windows shop. They then found that **StarWind's Virtual SAN** solution hit all the points on their list for an ideal product and it is the only Windows-based virtual SAN solution on the market. But would it pass their demanding performance, functionality, and price tests? In a word, yes. They downloaded the software onto one of the new ProLiant production servers with highspeed SAS drives, taking advantage of StarWind's try-before-buying policy, turned it into a SAN and began by taking snapshots of one of the production server's databases. Everything worked as advertised, the bank made the purchase, and they continued to load **StarWind Virtual SAN** onto other servers including less costly servers with less costly high-performance drives because it met their needs across their production environment's non-financial systems.

In just a few hours, the bank was able to transition from direct attached storage to a highly scalable storage environment at a very lost cost, and still meet all the functionality, disaster recovery, regulatory compliance and pricing requirements they had set for a SAN.

With the new shared storage system in place, the bank's evaluation reveals that the **StarWind Virtual SAN** simplifies networked storage, offers far more flexibility and safety for the bank's data, and offers a wealth of functions once found only on much more costly and more-difficult-to-use SAN solutions. Combine that with not having to drill into those thick, brick walls, or the need to get involved in supporting another operating system (Linux), and the bank points out, StarWind was clearly the right choice.

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