

ENGINEERED SOLUTIONS

A PUBLISHING
SUCCESS STORY



DOING MORE
WITH LESS

Consolidating servers, storage, and incorporating virtualization allowed this publisher to expand with confidence in a challenging industry climate.

Because of increasingly competitive business and economic conditions, many organizations are under pressure to reduce capital and operating costs while maintaining or improving the level of services they offer. Nowhere is this more true than the publishing industry. Here's how one publishing company successfully used technology to do more with less.

About the Client

The client is a leading provider of news, information, and advertising in midsize markets. Its growing empire includes about 50 daily newspapers, a robust online presence, and nearly 300 specialty publications across the U.S.

OVERVIEW

Industry

Publishing

Client Profile

The client is a leading provider of news, information, and advertising in midsize markets.

Business Situation

The client was experiencing what many rapidly growing organizations face – server sprawl. They needed to centralize their servers in order to contain costs, facilitate manageability, and preserve operations space.

Solution

ITsavvy sold and installed the products and then migrated data from their servers to the SAN – removing the existing backup tape and software and transitioning to a new backup platform. When they were finished, what used to run physically inside the individual servers was now on the SAN.

Benefit

- > Better storage utilization
- > Virtualization
- > Business continuity replication
- > Centralized backup
- > Quicker restores

Their Challenge

When ITsavvy first started working with the client, they were in the enviable position of growing so fast that IT was adding servers at a blinding speed.

“In 2002, we had somewhere between 40 and 50 servers, but that number quickly grew to around 200,” explained the client’s technical support director. “It got to the point where almost every day someone needed a server for something else. We knew the situation was unsustainable and we had to do something.”

The client was experiencing what many rapidly growing organizations face – server sprawl. They needed to centralize their servers in order to contain costs, facilitate manageability, and preserve operations space.

The client also needed to consolidate data storage. Since each individual server required its own tape backup system, every time the client bought a new server, the backup alone accounted for about a third of the cost. The client did not have any expertise on SAN, but they did know that they wanted to backup everything on a central system – cost was only one of many reasons. Other needs they’d face down the road were an offsite SAN for disaster recovery and virtualization.

Our Solution

The client didn’t call the first company they could find. They spent months researching solutions, brainstorming, and interviewing possible solution providers. They also talked with other people in their industry to see what technology they were employing. They studied disaster recovery solutions alone for nearly a year. In a nutshell, they were thorough every step of the way.

“ITsavvy clearly had the expertise that we were looking for,” the technical support director said. “We had a very complex set-up and we did a lot of research and planning internally, but there was also a great deal of research and planning on the part of ITsavvy - they took it a step further by bringing in outside experts. Before we initiated anything, we met at least a half dozen times with them.”

The first task for ITsavvy was to get the lay of the land by learning as much about the client’s infrastructure as possible. Not only the physical servers and software, but how they tied to each other. They looked at what technology was available in order to determine the best way to accomplish and surpass the client’s goals.

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In all, it took about a year to fully implement server and storage consolidation, but the majority of the work was accomplished within three months.

Since the client was convinced that no one they knew had more expertise on storage area networks and server virtualization than ITsavvy, they naturally turned to ITsavvy when they considered an offsite SAN for disaster recovery and also considered implementing virtualization.

The client had already seen the benefits of centralized storage and wanted to take it a step further with virtualization. While centralized storage allowed the client to stop buying servers when they ran out of storage - with virtualization, they could consolidate several physical servers into one server and isolate it. It was an ideal way for the client to limit their infrastructure growth without compromising capabilities.

ITsavvy's engineers also trained the client's team directly onsite. No one had to sit in a classroom and miss work. During the process, one of the client's key IT employees left the company and an ITsavvy engineer filled in for several weeks.

"That's service," the client's technical support director said. "We liked the wealth of technical knowledge that ITsavvy had. It was very helpful that they knew what we were trying to do and they knew our environment well. It allowed them to strategize the right solution."

Their Success

Within a few months of server and storage consolidation, the client saw positive results. "Right away, we started reaping the benefits of simplified storage and simplified backup," the technical support director said. "As we made additional purchases, we didn't have to buy tape backup with every server, which was important because of the rapid server growth. We've been able to grow our data center much more easily."

In addition to reducing cost by doing more with fewer servers, server consolidation reduces labor cost, facilitates upgrades - such as patches; speeds data backup operations, and reduces the complexity of restore operations.

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On top of allowing more efficient use of resources, a SAN's pooled storage eliminates the need for extra capacity and standby storage on each server. This not only reduces cost, but also reduces headaches for organizations such as the client's.

Virtualization dramatically improves resource efficiency and availability – reducing the time it takes to manage servers. Considering the size of the company, the client's IT department is relatively small, so this was a significant help – allowing them to do more with less.

For virtualization, as with server and storage consolidation, the financial benefits reach beyond reduced hardware and software costs. Virtualization makes the most out of infrastructure and increases operational efficiency. Companies realize additional cost savings with reduced utility bills and a smaller IT footprint – freeing up square footage for other operations.

Recent years have been challenging for the publishing industry. But because their infrastructure was efficient and lean, the client was able to satisfy IT needs with very little new capital investment.

The client's results were successful because ITsavvy had the resources, technical expertise, and experience to design, provide, and service the best possible solutions. While organizations can obtain technology from a variety of sources – they only get the full benefit of what they pay for with expert service and consulting.

The Bottom Line

“The customer service was and is great,” the client's director of technical support said. “We've never had any issues. They've always been very responsive. We even call one of the engineers on his cell phone from time to time and he will get access to our system and walk us through the solution right there on the fly. Finding a technology partner that you trust and then having a long-term relationship with them is important. When there's a new project or application, ITsavvy knows us and our technical environment very well. This allows us to get started on a solution and get it implemented much faster. They know exactly what we're talking about and we can hit the ground running. We've had a long relationship with ITsavvy because of their technical expertise, their broad knowledge of storage solutions, and their responsiveness.”

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Solution Details

- Server consolidation using VMware vSphere, also some desktop virtualization for certain remote applications. VMware's vSphere allows for much better utilization of server resources as well as reducing management requirements for a large server environment.
- Storage consolidation using EMC CLARiiON CX-series SANs (Storage Area Networks), both with servers connected via fibre channel Cisco switches as well as iSCSI connected servers. EMC's CLARiiON SAN technology builds a foundation and enables virtualization in a highly available environment as well as providing numerous disaster recovery benefits.
- Disaster recovery offsite replication using EMC RecoverPoint along with a standby VMware environment at the disaster recovery site. EMC's RecoverPoint provides advanced SAN to SAN replication enabling dynamic Recovery Point Objectives (RPO) and bandwidth reduction.
- Backup centralization using CommVault Simpana as well as Quantum Scalar tape libraries. CommVault enables centralized efficient backup for small to large enterprises with Simpana while supporting the latest application and server technologies. Quantum offers best of breed tape technology with their Scalar line.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,

please contact an ITsavvy Client Executive.

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ITsavvy is an end-to-end value added IT product and solution reseller with offices nationwide. With 99% of in-stock orders shipping same day and \$8 Billion in daily inventory, we fulfill our client's needs and deliver peace of mind.

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The ITsavvy Solution

HARDWARE

- EMC CLARiiON storage
- EMC RecoverPoint
- Cisco Fabric switches
- Quantum Scalar tape library

SOFTWARE

- VMware vSphere
- CommVault Simpana backup software

PARTNERS

- EMC
- VMware
- CommVault



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