StorTrends®

Performance Storage. Proven Value.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

CUSTOMER STORY

CUSTOMER: University of Maryland Department of Transportation

CHALLENGE: The department needed a solution that offered true tiering, user-friendly GUI all at a reasonable price.

The University of Maryland Department of Transportation has transitioned over 90% of their physical servers to virtual machines from VMware.

The department is now managing 17 VMware ESX virtual servers, two physical servers from HP, several Microsoft SQL databases, DOTS-specific shared drives and directories, the DOTS website, and a host of other applications and systems.

Helping the University of Maryland Students, Staff, and Visitors Park and Ride

Introduction

Serving over 37,000 students and 13,000 staff (not to mention hundreds of daily visitors), the University of Maryland's Department of Transportation Services (DOTS) in College Park, MD is responsible for the day-to-day management of every single campus parking spot and the fleet of 60+ vehicles of the Shuttle-UM transit service.

Needless to say, the 400+ DOTS employees are very, very busy people.

To provide the type of service students, staff and visitors have come to expect, DOTS has implemented a number of innovative technology solutions to help streamline key processes. Take parking permits for instance. The University of Maryland DOTS was among the first campuses in the country to implement a virtual permit system for parking using the vehicle's license plate as the permit. It's a truly remarkable system: license plate recognition cameras are mounted to enforcement trucks which scan license plates as they drive through the different lots ensuring vehicles are registered to park in that lot.

That data is then analyzed in real-time by a proprietary software system managed by DOTS. If the license plate number comes from a vehicle with a valid permit, all is well. If the system fails to find a match, a citation is issued. The system is even elegant enough to accommodate permit holders with rentals. The user simply adds the license plate number of their temporary car to their account.

A Familiar Story: A Transition from a Well-Known Vendor

Tim Robinson, DOTS IT Coordinator and Systems Administrator, is responsible for managing all of the systems DOTS employees use in support of their mission. As data growth continued unabated, Tim and his team recognized that the time had come to move from a traditional "physical" IT infrastructure to a virtual one.

To that end, he and his team have transitioned over 90% of their physical servers to virtual machines from VMware™. Fast forward to today, Tim and his team are now managing 17 VMware ESX virtual servers, two physical servers from HP, several Microsoft SQL databases, DOTS-specific shared drives and directories, the DOTS website, and a host of other applications and systems.

For a number of years, Tim and DOTS had relied on a different storage area network solution to manage the data output from DOTS systems. It wasn't a bad product according to Tim – just expensive. It also featured, in Tim's eyes, a relatively inelegant GUI. So as DOTS neared the end of its current maintenance contract, Tim thought it would be a good idea to look around to see what other storage vendors had to offer. It's at this point that he found StorTrends from American Megatrends, Inc. (AMI).

Why StorTrends: Quality Storage, Proven Value.

As Tim researched storage options, he came across an AMI StorTrends Account Executive at a local IT tradeshow. The two got to talking. Tim learned about the core architecture of the array, how StorTrends offered true Tiered Storage, a highly user-friendly GUI through its ManageTrends™ software platform, and importantly, a very reasonable price point.

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> " *StorTrends had literally every single feature I was looking for: tiered storage, data dedupe and archiving, innovative data replication and WAN optimization – everything. And when I saw the GUI and how easy it was to use, I knew I had to take a further look.* "
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> *- **Tim Robinson**,*
> *DOTS IT Coordinator and Systems Administrator,*
> *University of Maryland Department of*
> *Transportation Services*

"At this point, I became very curious. StorTrends had literally every single feature I was looking for: tiered storage, data dedupe and archiving, innovative data replication and WAN optimization – everything. And when I saw the GUI and how easy it was to use, I knew I had to take a further look." As Tim learned more, he became more and more convinced he had found a true gem. "StorTrends was the perfect fit for my environment. We also needed a product that could hold up to 15 drives in a single enclosure. StorTrends met every one of our requirements."

When he got the statement of work, Tim's decision was final. "All this time, I had a number in my head for what all of this might cost. When I got the final bid from AMI, I was literally blown away. I couldn't believe I was getting all of this capability for the price on the SOW. Throw in the four-year term of the maintenance contract and I was ready to sign." Sold on both the quality and value of the StorTrends solution, Tim and his team made the decision to purchase and implement the StorTrends Dual Controller iSCSI SAN. That solution replaced DOTS' legacy storage array and now serves as the department's primary storage box.

Moving Forward with StorTrends:
Since implementation, Tim and his team have migrated LUNS VMs from the legacy storage array to the StorTrends solution. That process has been seamless, eased by the highly usable ManageTrends GUI with the included VMWare Plugin.

Performance, most importantly, has been solid. IOPS are stable, processing speed is great, and the array is nowhere close to touching top-end CPU/memory.   In addition to the solid system performance, Tim is highly pleased with his experience to date with AMI.

"It's not an easy thing to quantify, but part of the reason I chose StorTrends was the attitude and professionalism of their sales staff. The people I worked with were down-to-earth, humble, and true storage technology experts. I never felt like they were selling me. They are just good people-- bottom line. It sounds trite, but that matters to me."

Tim is confident that he'll be able to complete his journey to a 100% virtual IT environment with StorTrends. As DOTS looks to the future, he sees StorTrends as the right partner to help the department implement their disaster recovery plans. In the coming months, Tim and his team plan to purchase additional storage from AMI for use in their secondary site. With truly revolutionary WAN optimization and proven DR experience, Tim is confident that StorTrends is up to the task. When it comes to time, Tim will be sharing that story, too.

For more information on the University of Maryland Department of Transportation, please visit: http://www.transportation.umd.edu/

For more information on StorTrends from American Megatrends, Inc., please visit: http://www.stortrends.com