

Implementing Cost-Effective D2D Backup and Recovery with StoneFly's Integrated IP SANs

Small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) represent the cornerstone of Calculated Research & Technology Corp.'s (CRT) customer base. The Salt Lake City systems integrator has been in business for more than 16 years under the direction of Timothy J. Aguilar, CEO. Many of Aguilar's customers, such as Tai-Pan Trading Co. (www.taipantrading.com), a home décor merchandiser, and Karen Foster Design (www.karenfosterdesign.com), a leading scrap booking design company, have relied upon tape backup systems over the years to meet their ongoing data management

requirements. With fast-paced business growth leading to escalating storage demands as well as a need for improved data availability, both companies recently turned to CR&T to breathe new life into their aging IT environments.

"Both clients were at the mercy of their tape backup systems, with restores taking inordinately long," said Aguilar. "We needed to find a cost-effective way to bring them into the 21st century with a more advanced storage solution, while also providing improved disaster recovery capabilities."

The Challenge

In the past, Hewlett Packard's (HP) Modular Smart Array (MSA) Series Storage Arrays represented the "go to" solution for Aguilar, whose client base relies predominantly upon HP technology for the bulk of its computing needs. However, working under a tight deadline, he found he couldn't get a hold of the HP product quickly enough to meet his customers' pressing deadlines. Researching the market for an affordable alternative, Aguilar evaluated iSCSI storage offerings from a number of market players. When he came across StoneFly,

Challenges

- **Outdated Tape Backup Systems do not Scale to Meet Escalating Storage Requirements**
- **System Restores were Slow and Inefficient**
- **Growing Business Demands Require High-Availability Storage Features**
- **Budget Constraints Drove Need for Cost-Effective IP SAN Technology**

Solution

StoneFly Integrated Storage Concentrators, which support up to 18TB of storage in a single chassis, feature the StoneFusion Intelligent Network Storage Platform supporting block-level virtualization, StoneFly Snapshot™, and StoneFly Reflection™ synchronous mirroring for advanced data recovery.

Benefits

- **Reduced restoration times from hours to minutes**
- **Disk-to-disk backup accelerates backup operations dramatically**
- **High availability features ensure superior data protection**
- **Expandable storage allows options for adding nodes and supporting primary, secondary and tertiary storage**
- **60-80% cost savings over traditional alternatives**

With ISC, StoneFly offers a comprehensive SAN that meets my customers' demands for high availability as well as fast, efficient D2D backup and recovery. The system was not only easy to set up, but it works like a dream. Customer restores that once took hours are now taking minutes – at a cost savings of 60 to 80 percent over traditional alternatives.

Timothy Aguilar
CEO

Calculated Research & Technology

Inc., a San Diego-based IP SAN provider and pioneer of iSCSI storage solutions, he was instantly impressed with the company's line of robust yet affordably priced storage products. Delivering advanced storage consolidation, efficient SAN-based backup and a highly scalable design, StoneFly IP SANs are popular among SMEs as well as departments and workgroups. Most importantly, Aguilar was pleased to find that StoneFly could ship him the IP SANs he needed almost immediately.

The Solution

Aguilar elected to install StoneFly's new Integrated Storage Concentrator (ISC) product line, which offers advanced, rapid to deploy IP SAN-in-a-box functionality. All ISC configurations include a StoneFly Storage Concentrator™ appliance; based on StoneFly's StoneFusion Intelligent Network Storage Platform which centralizes IP SAN management, offers storage virtualization, volume management, advanced storage services, StoneFly Reflection synchronous mirroring, and Stonefly Snapshot.

With up to 18TB of storage in a single system, ISC scales by adding expansion arrays or Storage Concentrator nodes, making it ideal for growing organizations such as Tai-Pan Trading and Karen Foster Design. Additionally, ISC IP SANs come with an abundance of high-reliability features, including advanced sub-array support with true RAID 6 data protection utilizing the latest Serial ATA high-speed disk drives.

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Before making his selection, Aguilar put the ISC through rigorous testing, including setting up a mirroring scenario with two RAID sets. "I mirrored AB to CD and then shut off one of the servers. The ISC system responded beautifully, with the AB data moving to the CD RAID set within minutes," he said. "After that, I was sold."

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Timothy Aguilar

The Benefits

Whereas a conventional high-availability cluster from a vendor such as EMC or NetApp might be priced from \$80,000 - \$100,000, Aguilar was pleased that he was able to purchase a complete dual-node StoneFly IP SAN for approximately \$30,000 – a price that includes storage virtualization, centralized SAN management and storage provisioning, Snapshot capabilities, and more comprehensive backup storage management than traditional D2D systems.

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In addition, Aguilar found the system to be easily expandable, allowing the customers to add secondary and tertiary storage as needed. From a cost standpoint, CRT and its customers also saved on add-on costs for by using software based iSCSI initiators and other items. Stonefly’s built in snapshot and mirroring features are typically expensive add-ons charged by many enterprise-class storage providers.

“With StoneFly, we got everything – a complete IP SAN in a box -- for one price,” said Aguilar. “This was my first experience with StoneFly and I can truly say that the ISC is one of my top three product finds I’ve come across. I will certainly be recommending StoneFly to other customers in the future.”



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