

Challenge

Setup speed. Cost. System flexibility. Data security.

Benefits

Speedy setup, ease of management. High availability, unlimited snapshots. Cost controls, with no vendor lock-in.

Solution

NexentaStor™ 3.1.2
Simple HA Plug-in

BUSINESS OVERVIEW

Set up in May 2011, virtion GmbH's mission is to provide small and medium sized companies managed hosting services covering infrastructure services, application management services, and support services, along with server virtualization, storage virtualization, and data backup / recovery to its customers.

The aim of this German hosting company is to give customers the choice of running business applications on their own infrastructure or as a managed cloud service in an Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS) model. virtion also provides customers with the ability to outsource all of their internal and external services

CHALLENGES

virtion had to get the necessary infrastructure up and running to support its managed hosting services model—and the company had to do so quickly. Work began in June 2011 and, at present, virtion has two data centers in Frankfurt that host more than 200 virtual machines. Applications include SQL, MySQL, and Postgre, along with a number of customer-dedicated software packages, with Tomcat and GlassFish application servers.

To support the solution, virtion required flexible and cost-effective storage that included data security, specifically around availability and integrity, snapshot capabilities, and easy management. It also needed to support multiple storage network protocols because virtion uses SAN for certain servers and NFS/iSCSI for its virtual machines.

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

virtion opted for Nexenta for a number of reasons. For one, virtion's founder, Michael Kutzner, had previous experience with Sun Solaris, which gave him familiarity with the ZFS technology that underpins Nexenta.

Another significant benefit was Nexenta's hardware neutrality, which meant virtion was not locked into buying more expensive products from a particular vendor, or paying unnecessary mark-ups for standard features. Rather than be forced to acquire more expensive proprietary hardware, the company was able to use its in-house appliances with the Nexenta solution. Deployment went quickly and without any degradation in support or availability.

System Configuration

- NexentaStor 3.1.2 with
 - Simple HA Plug-in
 - Auto-CDP
- TK SC846, 2xIntel 4Core E5620, 2.4GHZ
- 48GB RAM
- 2x147GB SAS System disk
- 10x2000GB Seagate SAS2

"It was a very easy installation – with a fast set up and easy integration into our existing network and infrastructure. Installation time, cost, and security were all addressed so that the path for growth becomes easier."

Michael Kutzner
CEO
virtion



Ease of deployment was demonstrated by the fact virtion set up its storage infrastructure in a day – and did it all in-house. Along with the fast set up, installation and integration into the existing network and infrastructure was simple to achieve.

In addition to high availability, unlimited snapshots, and an easy to use interface, Nexenta also supports multiple storage network protocols, including SAN, NFS, and iSCSI.

Now, overall disk utilization is twice as good for virtion’s SAN-based solutions, and new capacity can be added easily and on the fly.

By deploying NexentaStor, virtion was able to use the hardware it wanted, at the cost it was prepared to pay, avoiding lock-in to more expensive proprietary hardware and vendor upgrade cycles.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Kutzner estimates that virtion has expended 50% less management time managing its storage as a result of implementing Nexenta. In addition, the company achieved cost savings of 60% compared to other storage solutions it looked at. virtion believes it is likely to save about €70,000 a year in administration costs.

NexentaStor features, such as hybrid storage pooling, unlimited snapshots, deduplication, and thin provisioning, are designed to help customers implement cost-effective, high performance storage. Going further, NexentaStor supports a wide range of protocols for unified storage, including CIFS, NFS, rsync, iSCSI, Fibre Channel, and SATA.

As NexentaStor is based on open source technology, users are not locked in to buying more expensive products from a particular vendor or paying unnecessary mark-ups for standard features. In addition, ZFS offers massively scalable storage environments with a virtually unlimited number of snapshots, free versioning, and high granularity of data protection.

BUSINESS IMPACT

High availability, unlimited snapshots, and ease of management made NexentaStor particularly suited to virtion’s managed hosting services model.

The company was able to deploy Nexenta in-house, without recourse to external providers, and it did so in a single day. In addition, the solution provided a more flexible storage environment with lower costs to the customer.

By deploying NexentaStor, virtion was able to use the hardware it wanted, at the cost it was prepared to pay, avoiding lock-in to more expensive proprietary hardware and vendor upgrade cycles.