StoreVault™
A NetApp Division

customer success stories

Intense lighting lights up its IT environment with StoreVault

customer overview

Intense Lighting, founded in 2001, has a clear business approach, offering quality products, short shipping lead times, competitive pricing, and excellent service to customers. After only six years in the business, Intense Lighting has achieved tremendous growth and has proven to be a major player in the specification lighting market.

With the introduction of the new Arista™ series and the Vortech series, Intense Lighting maintains a reputation for consistently bringing new and innovative products to market. They also offer multiple designer finishes that are unique to the industry – and were the first manufacturer to bring the oil rubbed bronze "Mocha" finish to the market.

customer challenges

Intense Lighting has 80 employees using 37 computers and 6 HP servers, and manages 500+ gigabytes of direct attached storage. Symantec Backup Exec 11d is used to back up data to a Sony AIT 1 tape drive. Restoring a database or file from these tapes was time consuming, taking at least 2 hours to find, load and restore the tape for just 5-6 gigabytes of data – longer if the tapes were offsite.

Intense Lighting was growing rapidly and so were its storage requirements. Company-wide, data had grown by 70% in the last year. Five new servers with attached RAID arrays were added, however the new arrays were still not expected to meet long-term data growth.
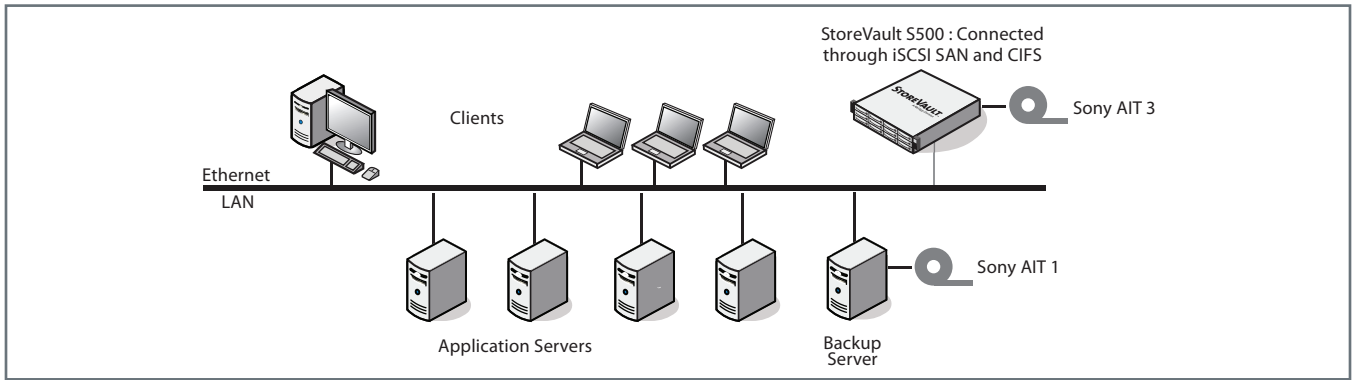
New product additions to their portfolio, along with a yearly product catalog release, have resulted in the steep growth of marketing data. In addition, Intense Lighting soon plans to move from a paper-based information system to a paperless system, which will require the daily scanning of hundreds of pages of information. All of these factors meant that their storage requirements would soon reach a terabyte.

In addition to data growth, SQL Server and Exchange databases were scattered across multiple arrays that required logging in to each of the attached servers for administration. The process of connecting to each server and backing up the databases was time-consuming and cumbersome. Adding storage to existing servers was a nightmare as it required buying new drives, backing up the old data, rebuilding the array on the server and restoring the data - a 24 to 48 hour process.

solution: StoreVault S500 and SnapManagers for SQL Server & Exchange

Josh Huisken, IT manager at Intense Lighting, wanted a solution that would put a stop to server and storage proliferation. This was possible with VMware along with centralized storage that would grow on demand. Josh was talking to EMC for SAN storage, when he read about StoreVault in Windows IT Pro. Upon further reading and inquiry, Josh decided to buy VMware with StoreVault. With this combination, he could easily add virtual servers onto his current physical servers and grow storage on demand with StoreVault.

StoreVault S500 : Connected
through iSCSI SAN and CIFS

Sony AIT 3

Clients

Ethernet
LAN

Sony AIT 1

Application Servers

Backup
Server

Final Network Diagram

Josh also wanted to simplify his SQL Server and Exchange backup and recovery processes. He now runs one StoreVault system with 6 drives including RAID-DP and a hot spare. The main database for Microsoft Great Plains (GP) with SQL Server backend, along with the Exchange e-mail database, are housed on the StoreVault's iSCSI LUNs. All users' data and directories are now on StoreVault CIFS volumes. SnapManagers for SQL Server and Exchange provide instant backups and restores using StoreVault Snapshots. SQL Server snapshots are taken twice a day and Exchange snapshots are taken at least once a day. GP is a large database and SnapManagers are a great benefit, as they automate backups and do away with the process of plugging in backup tapes every time a restore is required.

StoreVault data is also backed up daily to a Sony AIT3 tape device, directly connected to the StoreVault using NDMP. Tapes are also taken offsite monthly for disaster recovery purposes. For the future, Josh plans to use StoreVault Replication software to automatically replicate data to a remote StoreVault system for disaster recovery, eliminating tape altogether. Future plans also include running SQL Server and Exchange concurrently with VMware, using the StoreVault for storage

customer experience
Josh says, "I would have purchased StoreVault when it first came out, if only I'd known about it earlier". The initial StoreVault deployment at Intense Lighting was up and running in one hour, including rack mount, configuration, and software installation. The VAR, Insight Investments, played a pivotal role in helping Josh configure, price and getting him up to speed on the product.

Regarding SnapManagers, Josh says, " The outstanding speed, convenience and ease-of-use of SnapManagers have made my life a lot easier. If one of the databases gets corrupted I don't have to spend hours restoring my data from tape. I can instantly restore my data from the snapshots – even remotely, when I'm on the road. SnapManager snapshots are a 'no-brainer' and quicker and easier to use than my tape backups for fast recovery."

customer benefits
After deploying StoreVault, Josh feels there is no need to add more servers or arrays to support his company's expanding business needs. Additional storage can be added on the fly with "zero" downtime. All storage is in one location for ease of management and backups, affording him extra time for other more productive activities. StoreVault has provided an easy, fast, and secure environment with minimal overhead for a one-man IT shop.   Josh also credits SnapManagers for SQL Server and Exchange with keeping his company's IT costs down and eliminating the need for another IT person. "The backups almost run themselves and are extremely fast. Backing up my Exchange database using Symantec Backup Exec would take around 14 hours. That process now only takes about 8 minutes using SnapManager for Exchange - including verification. The SnapManager interface makes it easy to schedule snapshots and automated e-mails tell me when the backup jobs are finished. I don't have to manage the backups, check the logs or switch tapes out like I used to."

 The reviews in Windows IT Pro, ease of use, snapshot capability; simplicity and lower business price point were the decisive factors in Josh's decision to go with the StoreVault and SnapManagers. At Intense Lighting, data storage shines with StoreVault

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About NetApp
NetApp creates innovative storage and data management solutions that accelerate business breakthroughs and deliver outstanding cost efficiency. Discover our passion for helping companies around the world go further, faster at www.netapp.com.

For more information on the StoreVault line of products, go to **www.storevault.com.**

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