



Biotech Firm GTx, Inc. Handles Rapid Data Growth with an Economical IP SAN

“The 18000 stores data from the SQL server, Exchange server, and our file server. Now we don’t have to waste money guessing how much storage we are going to need and if we guess wrong, having to buy extra disks.”

Al Bailey
Manager of Information
Technology, GTx, Inc.

An iSCSI-enabled Adaptec Snap Server 18000 Provides Block and File Storage, Scalable Capacity, and Savings

Based in Memphis, Tennessee GTx, Inc. (NASDAQ: GTCXI) is a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to the discovery, development, and commercialization of therapeutics for serious men’s health conditions and oncology. The company’s drug discovery and development programs are focused on small molecules that selectively modulate the effects of estrogen and androgen hormones. Research, development, and clinical programs continuously generate large amounts of data to be stored, protected, and managed by an IT staff of three.

The Challenge

Accommodating Rapid Data Growth Without Breaking the Budget

The challenge of data management is complicated by the fact that GTx generates both block data from applications such as databases and file data. To accommodate the block data, the company was storing all its data on ten Direct Attached Storage (DAS) servers. This created isolated pools of storage in which some servers were underused while others were full to capacity. As capacity sat unused in some servers, GTx was buying and installing extra disks for the full servers. It was a costly and inefficient way to store data.

“Sometimes we bought too much capacity. Sometimes we didn’t buy enough. We were looking for a SAN that would let us make better use of our space,” Al Bailey, Manager of Information Technology, said.

Expecting his data to double or even triple in the coming year and tired of the cost in money and time of expanding his existing DAS infrastructure, Bailey began looking for a better solution. He knew that a Storage Area Network (SAN) would allow him to allocate storage capacity as it was needed, but the traditional Fibre Channel SAN solutions from IBM and EMC he explored were out of his budget. Even buying software that would allow him to make the most efficient use of all his existing storage was cost-prohibitive. The only solution that made sense was an IP SAN based on iSCSI-enabled Network Attached Storage (NAS) equipment.

Snap Server 4500 Cuts Backup from Overnight to Hours

And Bailey had experience with Snap Servers. When he had been looking for an easily expandable server for his remote disaster recovery hot site, he had chosen a Snap Server 4500 NAS

GTx™

The Men’s Health Biotech Company

Executive Summary

An inflexible existing infrastructure made it difficult and expensive to keep up with rapid data growth

Solution

Snap Server 18000 with iSCSI capability

Benefits

Saves wasted money and wasted space

Faster than existing DAS servers

Easy expandability for rapid data growth

Storage of database information, email, and files on a single server

appliance because its capacity could easily be increased with Snap Disk expansion arrays. Once it was installed, it provided performance beyond his expectations.

In the DAS network configuration, each server had its own tape drive attached. As data grew, so did the backup window, until it became impossible to back up everything overnight. Using the Snap Server 4500 for disk-to-disk backup, a complete data backup that couldn't be completed overnight in the DAS scenario, was finished in just hours.

He knew he needed a higher-capacity solution for his onsite storage and wanted a solution that offered the performance and ease he had experienced with the Snap Server 4500.

"We originally chose the Snap Server 4500 for its expandability. It's performed way above our expectations. It's actually faster than some of our DAS servers with SCSI. When we heard that the Snap Server 18000 was even faster, we knew it would be a sure winner."

The Solution

An Ethernet-Based iSCSI SAN

The Snap Server 18000 is attached through the Ethernet to the three servers which account for the most rapid growth: the main file server, the SQL server, and the main Exchange email

server. The Snap Server 18000's iSCSI functionality allows the block data from Sequel and Exchange to be stored on the same server as files, saving money and maximizing storage resources.

High Availability

To increase data availability, the Snap Server 18000 is configured for RAID 5 with a hot spare drive. The Snap Server 18000 also offers hot-swappable SATA disks drives, redundant power and cooling, dual-Gigabit Ethernet ports, battery-backed nonvolatile memory (NVRAM), and UPS support to maximize system and data availability.

Simple, Low-Cost, Scalable Expansion

In terms of capital expense, the Snap Server 18000 was less than half the cost of the Fibre Channel solutions. This savings will continue as data expands, since Bailey can cost-effectively expand his Snap Server 18000 up to 30TB with Snap Disk 30 expansion arrays. With the Instant Capacity Expansion (I.C.E.) feature, iSCSI volumes can be expanded and the additional capacity used immediately without costly system downtime. And when he needs new application servers, Bailey can choose smaller, more economical servers because they don't need any storage capacity.

Solution Features

No Underutilized Storage Capacity

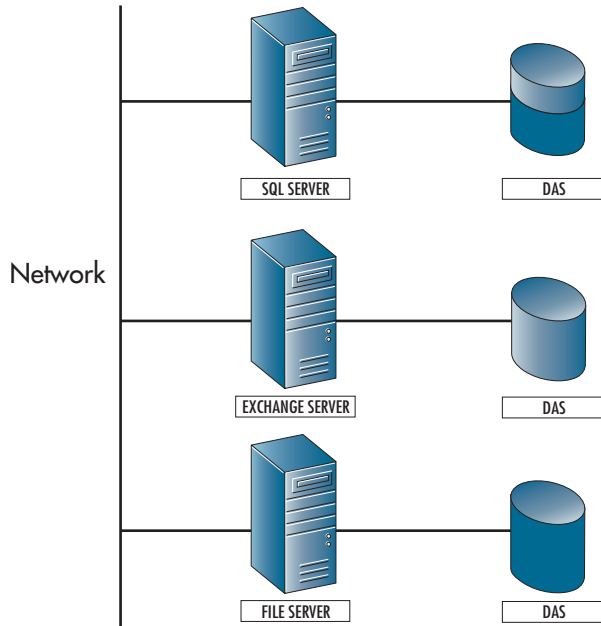
Because expansion is so simple with the Snap Server 18000, Bailey can add resources as he needs them, instead of guessing and wasting money if he guesses wrong.

Saving Thousands of Dollars

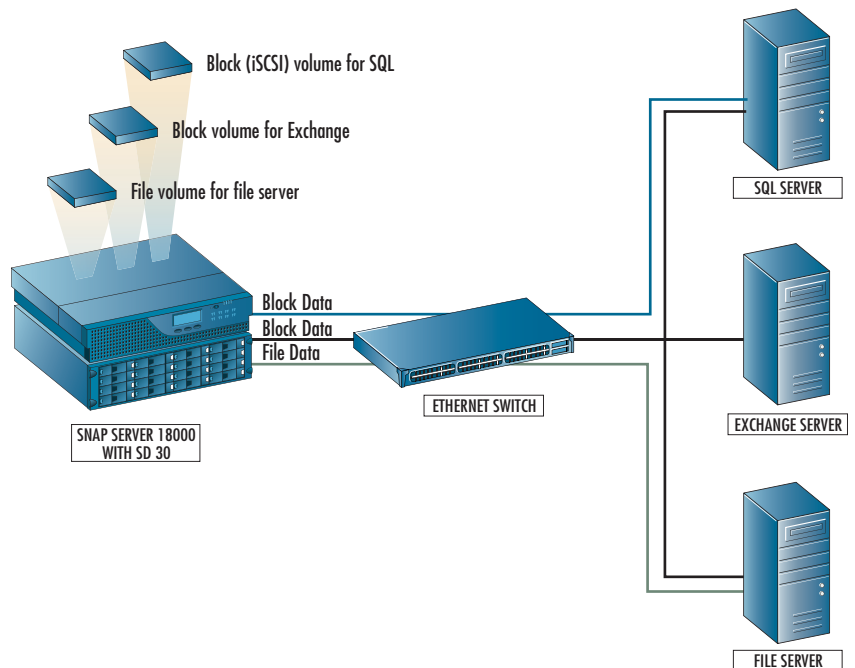
From a cost less than half that of Fibre Channel solutions, to a future in which the Snap Server 18000's up to 30TB of storage capacity allows Bailey to buy more economical, smaller capacity application servers, since there's no need to have storage space on them.

Easy Installation

"Installing the 18000 was very easy. I just went in, hooked it up and it was ready to go."



Before the Snap Server 18000



iSCSI SAN with the Snap Server 18000

snapserver™

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