

NETCO resolves backup and recovery issues and improves performance with Starfire Technologies using virtualization, IBM's TSM, and architectural design.

OVERVIEW:

NETCO's IT staff engaged Starfire to design and implement a server virtualization and storage management solution to support the move from a paper-based system to a document management solution.

BENEFITS TO THE CLIENT:

IT Systems:

- Virtualization achieved reduction from 31 servers to 1 server
- Improved Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery
- Significantly improved backup with TSM and hardware upgrade
- Ten-fold increase in SAN performance
- Disk to Tape facility established to allow effective off-siting of backup tapes

Business:

- Improved customer service
- Increase in business productivity
- ROI returned in just over a year

THE CLIENT:

NETCO is a national equity title company that grew from two locations in 1987 to nearly 70 offices in over 30 states with annual revenues exceeding \$70 Million.

NETCO's CHALLENGE:

NETCO's paper-based loan financing process needed to be automated in order to remain competitive, reduce costs, and improve service delivery and efficiency. The process of migrating to a document management solution caused technical problems in terms of server capacity and IT storage infrastructure and management.

The IT staff at NETCO were directed to establish an IT architecture that would support a digitized loan production process. This requirement involved developing effective storage and backup capabilities as well as a significant increase in server capacity. The pressure to solve the server and storage problem quickly presented the IT staff with a need to seek outside expertise in storage management and virtualization.

NETCO's IT professionals specifically chose Starfire from a wide field of contenders. Starfire was chosen for their expertise in virtualization, storage management, and storage infrastructure to design and implement a cost effective solution.



Rich Foster, NETCO's Senior Network Administrator commented, *"We knew we needed a lot of disk space. We talked to over fifteen vendors, some of whom put forth proposals with multi-million dollar price tags that were far outside of our budget. As luck would have it, help was on the way and it was the best help we could have possibly asked for."*

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SOLUTION:

Starfire recommended an enterprise information system architecture that included an overhaul of the existing backup process. The solution incorporated virtualizing the existing servers at a ratio of 31:1, plus updating the storage system (new disk and tape library) to utilize the effectiveness of TSM (Tivoli Storage Manager).

According to Foster, ***“Starfire uses a vendor neutral approach and truly partnered with NETCO. When Starfire began working with us their experience, courtesy, and steadfast commitment to professional excellence gave us the clarity to understand the scope of the project and what needed to be executed.”***

Starfire's solution enabled NETCO to minimize hardware support problems, rapidly deploy servers, efficiently and effectively backup all data, and increase the overall performance of their IT investments. Hardware due for retirement was virtualized using VMware ESX Server and made the replacement of NETCO's servers efficient and economical.

“In the case of some of the old hardware, namely some legacy NT servers, a hardware failure would have been disastrous. Now that these systems are in a virtualized environment they can failover in the event of a hardware problem,” said Rich Foster.

All business data is intelligently backed up to an IBM 3583 tape library using Tivoli Storage Manager to ensure business continuity and disaster recovery measures will be effective. Prior to the implementation of these elements, only the core database was backed up. Now the approach allows for cost effective and efficient off-siting by transferring data from disk to tape.

IMPACT:

NETCO can now process loans instantly, make electronic loan data available to customers in a matter of minutes, and retrieve any lost data on production systems on-demand.

“A non-biased third party auditor called the paperless initiative Starfire put in place the best he'd ever seen,” said Foster.

This case study demonstrates Starfire's expertise in Virtualization, TSM, and IT architecture, and in the storage management & infrastructure space.

We're ready to help you get it right the FIRST time.