

MAXTA CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY: VSS MONITORING



VSS Monitoring, a leader in Network Packet Brokers (NPB)

Leading Brokering Packet Provider Leverages Maxta Storage for Simplicity and Improved Performance of Testing & Development VMs

Overview

VSS Monitoring, a Danaher company (a Fortune 200 company) is a world leader in network packet brokers (NPB), providing a unique systems approach to enable network-wide and link-layer visibility, access and offload for a broad ecosystem of network monitoring and security tools. More than a thousand customers in over 120 countries from the telecom, enterprise, government and financial sectors have deployed VSS Monitoring's solutions.

The engineering IT organization is responsible for maintaining the infrastructure that is used to develop their network packet broker systems. The engineering group runs a diverse set of applications in a virtualized ESX environment, including testing and development of its solutions. With an expected large growth in usage of two particular virtual machines requiring massive amounts of IOPS and hoping to extend the life of its engineering IT infrastructure beyond its initial 3-year expectancy, VSS Monitoring looked for a way to improve performance without spending an unreasonable amount of money.

Key Customer Requirements

Because of the desire to get its cluster of hosts to last for a longer period of time before undergoing a hardware refresh, while simultaneously solving the storage performance issues it was facing, VSS Monitoring began looking for a solution that would help meet its mission-critical objectives while staying within budget parameters. **The requirements for a new solution included:**

- ① Improved performance to handle high read/write requests of VMs
- ② The addition of enterprise-class data services and high-level features that it didn't currently have with its existing array
- ③ Simplicity of storage management
- ④ Low IT overhead from a capital and operational standpoint



The engineering department at VSS Monitoring looked at several hardware options to help it deal with existing problems as well as to get ahead of future needs, particularly with the increased usage of its high-read, high-IOPS virtual machines. The company considered a Dell Equallogic iSCSI SAN array, a solution it had previously evaluated before implementing its existing Drobo B1200i servers for network storage; as well as EMC VNXe Series iSCSI solutions. Faced with an expenditure of \$100,000 for a new array both proved to be far more expensive during a cost analysis than Maxta's highly resilient, scalable distributed VM Storage platform (MxSP), which provided all the features and functions VSS Monitoring needed for 80 percent less cost.

Maxta Proves to be a 'No-Brainer' in Solving Performance Woes in Virtualized Environment

VSS Monitoring's engineering team runs development software to simulate key functions on two virtual machines – one running a Concurrent Versions System (CVS) program and another the software developers use to write code, which heavily leverages the CVS VM. The test and development process quickly opens hundreds of small files, taking the disk array from essentially idle to almost full load, requiring massive amounts of IO for 30 seconds to a minute or more. While the existing array was able to process the requests, it was not able to do it fast enough for the engineering team and resulted in complaints about impacted performance from other users of the more than 60 VMs deployed by VSS Monitoring.

"The test and development VMs would require a high amount of IOPS and unfortunately with a shared architecture it would cause a performance hit to all of our virtual machines in the cluster." said Mike Leland, VSS Monitoring Data Center Engineer. "Once we transitioned the high IOPS VMs to Maxta, those complaints disappeared and everyone on the iSCSI array is happy again.

"The performance of our system with Maxta's software platform is orders of magnitude faster. We're looking at about twice as many IOPS depending on the workload. It's a large improvement over what we had before as far as storage performance."

Business Benefits

With the price tag of the hardware solutions VSS Monitoring was evaluating at least five times more expensive and IT overhead orders of magnitude higher, Maxta provided VSS Monitoring with the CAPEX and OPEX savings it was looking for and allowed Mike and his VP of engineering to quickly and easily obtain purchase approval from the company CFO. Massive performance improvements and additional enterprise features made Maxta an attractive option.

With the implementation of Maxta's software platform into the company's storage architecture, VSS Monitoring has been able to:

1. Delay the need for a costly and time-consuming hardware refresh
2. Improve the performance of its virtualized architecture to satisfy current needs and expected future growth
3. Cut the time of deploying new VMs from template from as much as 17 minutes to 3
4. Open code-editing files on high IOPS VMs in seconds rather than the 5 or 6 minutes it was experiencing from the iSCSI array
5. Utilize enterprise data services, such as high availability, VM snapshots and cloning, that it previously didn't have with its iSCSI array and thought would not be possible at Maxta's price point

Customer solution at a glance

Primary applications

Engineering software, QA testing, development and some IT services

IT infrastructure

- 3 Dell R620 servers with 64 GBs RAM each
- VMware ESX Environment
- 60-65 virtual machines
- Maxta Storage Platform (MxSP)

Summary

By implementing the Maxta Storage Platform, VSS Monitoring was able to significantly improve the performance of its virtualized test-and-development environment while satisfying its enterprise-class functionality and simple-to-manage needs at a cost savings of as much as 80 percent. Maxta is also helping VSS Monitoring delay a hardware refresh of its engineering IT infrastructure to extend life expectancy by at least two years while allowing continued company growth and increased utilization of mission-critical VMs. Maxta provided VSS Monitoring with the features and functions it promised that were equal or superior to competitive solutions for a lot less.



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