

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Accounting Firm Crunched the Numbers and Reduced IT Infrastructure Costs by 80 Percent with Maxta Hyperconvergence

Lewis & Knopf is a full-service accounting and consulting firm with multiple offices in Michigan that specializes in entrepreneurial clients such as retailers, auto dealerships, manufacturing and distribution enterprises, construction companies, and providers of professional services.

According to the company, the keys to maintaining a healthy financial position are sound planning and wise choices. Sound planning and wise choices are also keys to maintaining a healthy infrastructure – just ask James Johnson, Information Technology Advisor at Lewis & Knopf.

More than ten years ago, Johnson made the choice to implement an EqualLogic SAN that ran for so long, he says it “probably outlived its creator.” While Johnson remained a fan of the SAN, it lacked many newer capabilities and features, and the cost of upgrades no longer made good financial sense.

Boxed In

Many IT pros will simply replace an aging SAN with a new model. Johnson considered this, but after some sound planning of his own, he realized a new SAN would one day be as outdated as his current box and he’d be in the same situation all over again.

Another concern with trading SAN for SAN was it still left him with separate infrastructures for compute, storage and storage networking as well as separate management and separate headaches. And since the company also had to replace its servers and switches, adding management complexity was neither wise nor sound.

When Johnson investigated hyperconvergence, he recognized the potential relief from managing separate infrastructures. He first encountered appliance-based products, but what he saw was all too familiar: a box, limiting his future scaling and locking him into costs to update and maintain. Just like a SAN, hyperconverged appliances

Customer challenges

- Aging SAN infrastructure that may have “outlived its creator”
- New SAN would still create storage management headaches
- Most “hyperconvergence software” were really expensive appliances

Maxta Benefits

- Choice of server vendor – runs on most industry-standard hardware
- Simplified administration saves IT time and improves resiliency
- Cost savings of 80 percent vs. traditional SAN

“I looked at a quite a few hyperconverged solutions, many of which promoted themselves as ‘Hyperconvergence Software.’ The hardware they would run on was pretty strict and I just didn’t want to be locked down.”

– James Johnson
Information Technology Advisor

Maxta Customer Success Story

Lewis & Knopf, CPAs, P.C.

forced him into repurchasing the software when he refreshed hardware only now he was refreshing on a server refresh cycle that is shorter than a storage refresh cycle.

“The SAN and the hyperconverged appliances both were, to me, pretty pricey,” Johnson said. “and I did not want to be locked into specific hardware.” That’s when I said I would rather deal with software versus hardware and appliances. With the software model I have control of the scale, and the software would always be mine.”

In addition to major cost savings, the company got a platform with better resiliency. “Maxta Hyperconvergence provides better fault tolerance. I don’t really have any worries.”

– James Johnson
Information Technology Advisor

When Software is Not Really Software

“I looked at a quite a few hyperconverged solutions, many of which promoted themselves as “Hyperconvergence Software.” The hardware they would run on was pretty strict and I just didn’t want to be locked down. I said, ‘no, that’s not the hardware that I want.’ I had to be really specific. So we ended up going with Maxta and I was able to install it on the hardware that I wanted, not the hardware they offered.”

Maxta’s hyperconvergence software, Johnson discovered, allowed him to choose from most brands of server hardware, to use any hypervisor, to add storage and compute resources independently as needed, and did not require the purchase of a new software license when he refreshed his servers.

IT infrastructure upgrades can come with a high price tag, and in an accounting firm that helps its clients achieve long-term financial security, it’s safe to say every dollar counts, and every dollar must be counted. Because Lewis & Knopf was upgrading the bulk of its current infrastructure, Johnson used sound planning and made wise choices to keep his costs reasonable. Johnson estimates that he saved as much as 80 percent by using Maxta software, Lenovo servers, and disk drives as compared to the of the traditional SAN and server model.

In addition to major cost savings, the company got a platform with better resiliency. “Maxta Hyperconvergence provides better fault tolerance. I don’t really have any worries,” said Johnson. “On the SAN, I would have to take the whole infrastructure down, whereas with virtualization everything will migrate itself over to another machine and still run. I can take one server in the cluster down for maintenance without even affecting application performance, then bring it back up.”

A Different Mindset, and a Different Kind of Service

He says the shift to hyperconvergence represents “a different mindset” from the bygone SAN, so he appreciated having Maxta’s full support resources during the deployment.

“I’m not sitting in a queue for 40 minutes, I’m getting someone that knows the products, who’s not reading off of a help card or a knowledge base. I’m looking forward to a long relationship.”



MAXTA, INC.

2350 Mission College Boulevard, Suite 703 • Santa Clara, California 95054
844-44-MAXTA • (669) 228-2800 • sales@maxta.com • maxta.com