

► Challenge

To update an increasingly difficult storage environment, which would improve manageability and provide backup and disaster recovery without costly upgrade expenses.

► Solution

Implementation of an iSCSI based SAN over two sites. Two Nexsan ATABeast disk vaults with 10.8 TB of storage at each location attached to two SANRAD V-Switch 2000 FC, linked by a gigabit Ethernet, that combine as an interoperable dual port iSCSI gateway with SANRAD StoragePro.

► Benefits

- Provided BIS with an efficient disaster recovery system
- A more robust and scalable centralized backup and restore environment
- Enabled BIS' customers to maintain their own backup policies and schedules so they feel in control of their data
- Increased storage availability
- Integration with existing infrastructure
- Scalable hardware and software provides a platform for future solutions

"By working with Hawke we have a platform from which we will offer more solutions and we will work with it to take it to the next level. We are going to have multiple enhancements to the products we offer in terms of online backup and storage."

Raj Bosamia, Head of Product Development
BIS LIMITED



BIS Ltd. Looks to SANRAD for Business Continuity Solution

Leading data storage provider implements SAN into existing IT infrastructure

Overview

BIS Limited was founded in 1996 to supply tailored IT services to customers located in the City of London. It is an established supplier of high performance enterprise infrastructure solutions to major corporations in insurance, finance, legal and media business communities.

It has provided data storage and online backup solutions for three years on a reseller basis, packaging and hosting solutions from third party providers. Given the high client expectations, it is critical for BIS to have a reliable, robust and secure IT infrastructure, capable of storing vast amounts of data. However, its legacy environment could not handle the rising volume of work and was becoming increasingly difficult to manage.

Challenge

BIS needed to refresh their storage environment and introduce a more flexible solution that would:

- Provide offsite backup and disaster recovery
- Centralize storage
- Increase storage space
- Improve manageability
- Re-use existing infrastructure for low TCO
- Create a base for new services

BIS' strategy is to deliver cutting-edge services using the latest standards to guarantee the highest levels of service flexibility and scalability. Customer requirements over the last two years have changed a great deal, as data volumes and the need for more storage have increased.

Limitations in the existing infrastructure meant BIS could only back up data at one site and offer limited disaster recovery capabilities. With a diverse and demanding client base, the company's biggest concern was the replacement of older storage applications and the implementation of new technology to improve adaptability.



“The existing infrastructure could not keep pace with customer demand or the sheer volume of data that needed to be stored in a resilient and fail safe environment,” says Raj Bosamia, Head of Product Development, BIS Limited. “It offered little in the way of business continuity, which was critical given the information we store and the type of clients we work with.”

With the old infrastructure unable to keep pace with business demands, BIS took the strategic decision to move away from reselling third party components and devise its own solution. Scalability was critical to future-proof its investment and provide a foundation to roll out new solutions when they were required. BIS already had some elements in place, such as data centers and connectivity between them, but needed a SAN infrastructure for disaster recovery and increased resilience in the middleware.

Solution

Hawke visited the company and produced a comprehensive analysis of the current infrastructure in a series of technical workshops. By investing this time up front to understand what the company needed, Hawke was able to produce a full evaluation of its storage needs.

Working closely with BIS, Hawke implemented an iSCSI based SAN over two sites. This consisted of two Nexsan ATABeast disk vaults with approximately 10.8 Terabytes of storage at each location attached to two SANRAD V-Switch 2000 FC, linked by a gigabit Ethernet, that combine as an interoperable dual port iSCSI gateway with SANRAD StoragePro Management Services.

This provides a cost-effective iSCSI based SAN with continuous access and effective storage management through IP connectivity and network volume management. It enables rapid data recovery in the event of a network problem and replicates the data on the file server for full fail over and disaster recovery.

These carefully selected and installed components ensured a smooth integration with BIS’ existing disks and two back up servers. The solution has also increased infrastructure resilience and provided BIS with an efficient disaster recovery system. The entire solution, from initial analysis to going online, was delivered in six weeks.

Conclusion

BIS’ new iSCSI SAN is integrated with its existing infrastructure to provide a cost-effective storage solution with higher data availability, reduced management and room for the business to grow. It has given the company a more robust and scalable centralized backup and restore environment, from which BIS can offer more resilient storage capability to its customers.

“The solution has enabled us to go to market very cost-effectively to offer a service that the market wants and needs at a price they’re willing to pay,” says Bosamia. “We already have six customers, with more in the pipeline... The key thing is the manageability from a customer point of view – they want to maintain their own back up policies and schedules so they feel in control of their data. Because the solution utilizes V-Switches we can add more storage very easily and without having to replace components or re-architect the entire infrastructure.”

Moving to an iSCSI SAN-based infrastructure has ensured that BIS can back up data at more than one site, for complete fail over and make business continuity a selling point to potential customers. They can take on more work, confident with the back up and restore solution in place for full disaster recovery.

A close working partnership has developed and together BIS and Hawke are looking at a number of other projects. “By working with Hawke we have a platform that enables us to offer more solutions and we will work with it to take our products to the next level,” says Bosamia. “We are going to have multiple enhancements to the products we offer in terms of online backup and storage.”