

Health Information Associates eliminates storage performance pain with Infinio

Faster application response time translates directly into bottom-line benefits, better customer service

Background

Health Information Associates (HIA) is a privately held company based in Pawleys Island, SC. Founded in 1992, HIA provides expert medical records coding support, education, and compliance auditing services to hundreds of hospitals nationwide.

The IT team at HIA is led by Daniel Day, Director of Information Systems. In addition to typical office applications, HIA coding support specialists are heavily dependent on a web-based data entry application. These specialists' productivity, efficiency and job satisfaction are tied to the performance of this system. As the demands of the business grew, high storage response times began to cause problems. Day searched for the most cost-effective solution to their storage performance problem, and found Infinio.

Infinio Accelerator is a software-based storage acceleration solution that uses a small amount of RAM from each ESXi server to create a shared cache. As I/O requests are offloaded from central storage and served locally, performance increases. This performance layer effectively separates the issue of IOPS from that of storage capacity, allowing companies like HIA to improve performance without replacing their storage system.

Environment and challenges

The three-member IT team at HIA puts a premium on keeping systems running optimally while working with a limited budget. Three host servers running VMware vSphere 5.5 support 20+ virtual machines, including their business application and web servers, as well as other applications such as Microsoft SQL, Microsoft Exchange, and Microsoft SharePoint. They chose a less expensive central storage system with larger, slower drives to maximize capacity while keeping costs down.

"We made a budget-based decision on storage, then later saw the pain of how slow it was," Day explained. "Our coding support specialists would key something in, and then have to wait several seconds before they could move on to the next field. It slowed everything down, and was really frustrating for them."



COMPANY

Health Information Associates (HIA)

INDUSTRY

Medical records coding & compliance

BENEFITS

- 40-50% storage offload
- Increased responsiveness for web-based applications
- Enhanced end user productivity

"Now we have the best of both worlds – the performance we need without the high cost of new storage."

DANIEL DAY, DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS, HIA

Looking at alternatives

HIA first considered adding new drives to the storage system, but quickly found that upgrading to faster drives would not only stretch their budget beyond its limits, but would also require significant down time to install. They would also have lost a considerable amount of storage space by moving to faster, but smaller, drives.

"That option didn't sound appealing," Day said. "I had heard about a new generation of products that speed up VMs by providing better storage performance, and online searches led me to Infinio."

Day liked the non-disruptive nature of the Infinio installation process and the ability to run a free 30-day trial. "It was a very simple trial process," Day added. "After the first week we made some adjustments to the cache size, and found it made a big difference to our end users' experience. I didn't see any need to look further - Infinio was what we needed, and at the right price."

With Infinio adding a performance layer to the infrastructure, HIA is able to enjoy the capacity benefits of its storage system without suffering the performance pain. An average of 40-50% I/O offload provides fast response time for end users without requiring the company to replace its storage array.

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Foundation for new projects

With the storage performance problem solved, HIA is now free to turn its attention to new projects, such as implementing Exchange Unified Messaging, something Day would have been hesitant to do before Infinio.

"Now I can consider other hosted applications, because I know the performance will be there," Day said. "The more we can do for our end users, the happier they are, and the better they can serve our clients. The performance gains with Infinio do affect our bottom line. It makes a real difference.

"Sometimes I kind of forget about it - Infinio just works, and is there providing benefit in the background," Day added. "If only everything was like that!"

To learn more about Infinio Accelerator, contact us at 617.374.6500, visit us at www.infinio.com, or follow us @infinio.

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