Champion Solutions Group Chooses Tintri for Customer Environments and Internal Production Systems

Champion
SOLUTIONS GROUP

Tintri Ranks First out of 20 Storage Providers for Manageability, Reporting, High Performance, and Affordability

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Industry
- IT Service Provider; Tintri Premier Partner

Geography
- Boca Raton, Florida

Virtualization environment
- VMware vSphere 6
- Citrix XenServer

VM profile
- A wide range of database servers, application servers, web servers, and business applications

Key challenges
- Find the best storage platform for CSG's internal production systems and its clients' virtualized environments.

Tintri solution
- Tintri VMstore™

Primary use case
- Tintri was chosen as the only storage platform for CSG's internal production environment and hundreds of client installations.

Business benefits
- Simplifies storage management – eliminates the need to hire storage specialists
- Improves visibility into storage performance – speeds troubleshooting and reporting
- Reduces data center footprint – each Tintri requires just 4U of space

Company Information

Champion Solutions Group (CSG) provides the technology services and solutions that enable its customers to reduce IT costs, increase productivity, and mitigate risk. Founded in 1979 in Boca Raton, Florida, Champion focuses on virtualization, cloud, and data management; with deep technical skillsets in design, implementation, and solution management. CSG's 540 technical and business professionals now serve thousands of clients across the eastern United States, predominantly in healthcare, hospitality, banking, and the financial service industries.

A Tintri Premier Partner

Champion Solutions Group became one of Tintri's first Premier Partners back in 2011. "I was first introduced to Tintri four years ago at a VMworld Solutions Forum," noted Kevin Vogl, vice president of virtualization and cloud at Champion Solutions Group. "I attend these kinds of events to identify products that will enable us to provide more value to our customers. Tintri was one of the few solutions I brought back that year and is now the standard storage platform for the majority of our virtualization clients."

Using Tintri for CSG's Production Workloads

In addition to reselling the Tintri solution to clients, CSG is now using Tintri internally for its key production workloads. "We recently adopted VMware as our sole hypervisor for our virtualized applications," Vogl said. "Since we are a large hardware reseller, we have the ability to use any storage platform we want for our environment. We put 20 different storage vendors through an extensive set of tests, and Tintri came out on top in every single measure. I seriously doubt any other company has ever gone through such an extensive vetting process to pick a product! The tests were conclusive, and we will be using Tintri as our standard storage platform for our production workloads going forward."

"Tintri is helping us break into accounts we have never touched before and expand our footprint at existing customer installations," noted Lee Cherry, senior account manager at Champion. "We've been in business for over 36 years, and are pretty conservative when it comes to new technology decisions. When our customers hear that we are using Tintri internally in for our own production environment, it's an added plus for us as it shows our direct buy into the Tintri technology."

"Tintri was built for virtualization. It's easy to install and manage, the visibility and reporting capabilities are excellent, and our customers get the performance they need at a price point they can afford. That's a winning combination that can't be beat by any other storage vendor."

Kevin Vogl, Vice President of Virtualization and Cloud, Champion Solutions Group

Simple Management

When asked what criteria he used when choosing a new storage solution, Vogl replied: "We wanted to find a storage system that could provide simple yet comprehensive reporting, fit in a small form factor, and of course, deliver high performance at a reasonable price," stated Vogl. "But the most important criteria for us was easy manageability. Our VMware administrators are not storage specialists. Most of them have no experience creating LUNS, creating SCSI IDs, worldwide addresses, or working in the SAN environment. We didn't want to buy any solution that would require us to manage our storage environment in the 'traditional way' anymore."

CSG's VMware administrators were quickly convinced of the value of the Tintri platform after seeing a demo, according to Vogl. "We plugged in the Tintri device and VMware found it automatically. That was all our admins had to do to configure and run Tintri in our VMware environment – it just showed up as a data store, and they immediately started moving all of our virtual machines over to the Tintri."

"Our customers' admins are typically managing multiple storage platforms," added Cherry. "That's why Tintri makes so much sense for our client base. They are thrilled to learn that their IT teams do not have to attend lengthy training sessions to become storage administrators. They can just plug the Tintri systems in, start moving loads over, and they're good to go."

Comprehensive Reports and Easy Troubleshooting

The second big selling point for Tintri is its comprehensive reporting functionality, according to Vogl. "Tintri provides capabilities that are above and beyond what vCenter offers in terms of visibility and reporting. VMware does a great job of managing its own environment and provides good statistics on the virtual machines, but it doesn't provide enough information to troubleshoot performance issues. When a server is running slowly, it is impossible to determine if it's a problem with memory, storage, the server, latency, or something else. That's where Tintri really shines. Tintri's application-aware storage provides VM-level visibility, control, insight, and agility into the entire virtual environment. You can't get that level of visibility and reporting from any of the other storage solution on the market today."

High Performance

"In addition to its superior management and reporting functionality, Tintri's performance is also quite impressive," noted Vogl. "From a price for performance standpoint, Tintri is way ahead of the curve. We are getting over 100,000 IOPS per second on the Tintri system. We put every load we could think of onto the VMstore system see if we could max it out, but we were still getting more IOPS than we could consume. Plus, Tintri only fills up 4U in the rack. It's a great fit for our customers' virtual environments."

The Perfect Companion for VMware vSphere 6

"The recent release of vSphere 6 was a huge leap for VMware," Vogl explained. "The size of the virtual machines and the amount of storage you can put in vSphere 6 is amazing, but if you don't have a backend storage platform that can handle that amount of load from an IOPS perspective, you will encounter serious bottlenecks. vSphere 6 is a big win for VMware, as well as Tintri, which is the ideal platform for vSphere 6 deployments."

Concluding Thoughts

When asked why he chose Tintri, Vogl replied, "Many storage vendors will tell you that you need to buy all-flash arrays or add more spinning disk to get the performance you need for your compute-intensive applications, but you can run any of those workloads on Tintri for better I/O performance – without having to invest in over-priced traditional storage or all-flash solutions. Tintri was built for virtualization. It's easy to install and manage, the visibility and reporting capabilities are excellent, and our customers get the performance they need at a price point they can afford. That's a winning combination that can't be beat by the other storage vendors."

"Our Storage Brand Manager stopped by my office last week and told me that Tintri is the greatest new technology he has seen in 25 years of managing storage," Vogl concluded. "And that's quite an endorsement from a guy who comes from an IBM background. That alone confirmed that I made the right choice with Tintri. We love the Tintri VMstore systems. Whenever we put Tintri in for one of our client installations, we never take it out. Never."

About Tintri

Tintri builds smart storage that sees, learns and adapts, enabling IT organizations to focus on virtualized applications and business services instead of managing storage infrastructure. Tintri application-aware storage eliminates planning and complex troubleshooting by providing VM-level visibility, control, insight and agility, with all flash performance for virtualized environment and the cloud. Tintri powers hundreds of thousands of virtual machines running business critical databases, enterprise apps, desktops and mobile apps, and private cloud deployments. Tintri helps global enterprises such as AMD, F5 Networks, GE, NEC, NTT, Miller Coors and Time Warner maximize their virtualization and cloud investments. For more information, visit www.tintri.com and follow us on Twitter: @Tintri.

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