

Sweden's Solid Park uses and sells Tintri systems



Tintri storage improves performance, speeds troubleshooting, and cuts administration time for Solid Park's data centre and customer environments.

www.solidpark.se

Industry

- IT Service Provider and Distributor

Geography

- Nordics

Virtualisation environment

- Traditional Storage

VM profile

- Mixed customer workloads

Key challenges

- Poor performance on previous systems
- Lacked capability to easily troubleshoot storage issues

Tintri solution

- Tintri VMstore™ T850 systems

Primary use case

- The Tintri systems are being used in Solid Park's data centers for hosting and outsourcing services

Business benefits

- Reduced system administration time by 40%
- Provided the ability to see across the host, network, and storage systems to immediately identify the source of any issues
- Obtained the performance of all-flash systems at a more economical price point

Company Information

Solid Park Ost AB is one of Sweden's largest providers of IT services. It delivers infrastructure and service operations for small and medium-sized companies, including IT operations, systems development, outsourcing, application management, consulting, virtual server environments, data storage and Office 365 Cloud Solutions. Founded in 2005 in Västerås, Solid Park now employs over 90 technical and business professionals, with offices in Stockholm, Norrköping, Linköping, and Katrineholm, Sweden.

IT Challenges

Some of the service provider's customers were complaining about inadequate performance on their legacy storage systems. It was also difficult to obtain an overview of system performance and if a customer complained of poor application response times, it was nearly impossible to determine where the problem was.

Looking for a New Solution

When the time came to upgrade its existing storage systems, Solid Park made the decision to look around for alternatives instead of renewing their current agreement. They started by considering the move to an all-flash system in order to improve performance. "Flash systems compress data by three to eight times to get the same amount of logical surface," noted Anders Andersson, operational manager at Solid Park's IT centre. "However, the cost for flash media is five to six times higher than for traditional systems. So it's questionable if users get enough out of compression to make up for the difference in cost."

After reviewing the alternatives, Solid Park made the decision to purchase two Tintri T850 systems. "We were very impressed with Tintri's hybrid approach," Andersson said. "Almost all activity goes to flash memory first and cold data is then transferred to rotating disks. This makes the system far more economical than a completely flash-based system. Another approach would be to use some flash-based systems for our most demanding applications and services, and other less-expensive systems with rotating disks for data that is used less frequently. But on the whole, it is more economical to use Tintri throughout. The savings and performance improvements have enabled us to use a flash-based system for all storage."

“By using what we sell, we also ensure that we know the products inside out. We have gathered experience through specializing in Tintri that enables us to offer our customers new insights for developing their IT environments.”

Johan Åkerlund, Managing Director, Solid Park

Magnus Osterlund, Senior VMware and Wintel Architect at Solid Park, added, “We were very excited to migrate our customer workloads to Tintri. We literally see the change in performance and available capacity in real time, without the need for ‘Dead Chicken Voodoo’ or expensive third-party plugins... just plain VM-aware storage out of the box. Exactly like it should be!”

Storage Designed for Virtualisation

Tintri storage is specifically designed for virtualized applications—it provides the capability to automate every storage action at the virtual machine (VM) level. This greatly simplifies storage management and enables organizations to guarantee application performance. “Traditional storage environments are not built for virtualisation,” Andersson said. “Input and output relates to a volume or LUN, not a VM. As a result, you need to restrict the number of VMs per LUN to no more than 10 to 20, and the data volume to maximum 2 TB. But there can be as many as 100 LUNs to operate. If one VM expands, you may need to re-organise your entire environment. A lot of work goes into moving, removing, creating and expanding VMs and LUNs. All of this goes away with Tintri. It's just one big data store that can be installed in 15 minutes.”

Easier Administration

The Tintri systems require very little administration, according to Andersson. “The system is self-configuring and there isn't much to adjust,” he noted. “All of this simplicity enables us to focus on the applications and ensure they work well, instead of working so hard on the storage infrastructure. We have saved 40% of our storage admin time, which we can now devote to optimizing the rest of the environment.”

Better Visibility Leads to Easier Troubleshooting

“Tintri offers an easy way to see and to rectify any issues,” noted Andersson. “Traditional storage systems only let you see what goes on at the LUN level. As a result, it is difficult to draw conclusions from the information. In contrast, Tintri shows you exactly what is happening with the VM, the host, the network, and the storage system. Before Tintri, we had been troubleshooting an issue on one of our VMs for nine

months. Once we moved the environment over to Tintri storage, the problem was found—and corrected—in under an hour.”

Easier Upgrades

“Upgrades can be a complicated process on other storage platforms,” Andersson noted. “But with Tintri, you just tick a button in the graphical interface and the system does the rest. With two active controllers, typically used by traditional systems, you can never load either one to more than 50% during upgrades, as one controller has to be able to take the entire load. Tintri uses a smarter system with active and passive control, where the passive one is upgraded first. This prevents system performance from degrading during the upgrade. The whole process is automatic and non-disruptive on the Tintri platform.”

Using What They Sell, Selling What They Use

Solid Park was so impressed with the performance of the Tintri systems in their own data centre, that they are now reselling Tintri storage systems to their customers. They usually recommend the Tintri 800-series systems, with the industry's highest data density, which can manage up to 100 TB and 3500 virtual machines in just four rack units. “It's our policy to operate high quality equipment in our IT centers,” concluded Johan Åkerlund, Managing Director at Solid Park. “By using what we sell, we also ensure that we know the products inside out. We have gathered a lot of valuable experience through specializing in Tintri that enables us to offer our customers new insights for developing their IT environments.”

About Tintri

Tintri VM-aware storage is the simplest for virtualized applications and cloud. Organizations including GE, Toyota, United Healthcare, NASA and 6 of the Fortune 15 have said “No to LUNs.” With Tintri they manage only virtual machines, in a fraction of the footprint and at far lower cost than conventional storage. Tintri offers them the choice of all-flash or hybrid-flash platform, converged or stand-alone structure and any hypervisor. Rather than obsess with storage, leaders focus on the business applications that drive value—and that requires that they keep storage simple.



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