

Tintri solves EMC complexity issues at Saint Michael's College



Overview

Saint Michael's, or St. Mike's as it is affectionately called by its students, is a Catholic undergraduate college of approximately 2,000 students studying the liberal arts and sciences on a scenic 440-acre campus just outside of Burlington, Vermont. Ranked 89th best national liberal arts college by U.S. News and World Report 2014, students choose St. Mike's not only for its ideal location but also for its commitment to excellence. The college puts great thought and care into what students learn – and how they learn it. It is because of this commitment that the college invests in technology that allows them to offer the highest levels of service to their student body.

New Virtualized Infrastructure Brings Storage Complexity

In an ongoing effort to improve the student experience, St. Mike's invested in a virtualized desktop infrastructure in 2013 with a solution from VMware Horizon View and Unidesk. Although the new environment provided the needed desktop services, the EMC storage environment that supported it was adding layers of complexity that taxed St. Mike's IT resources.

Joe Pawlaczyk, Associate Director, IT Data Center at St. Mike's, said "We have budget for capital, but we can't add people. We need a platform that is easy to manage. Having one storage partition to manage is much easier than having to carve the system in multiple partitions." When he heard that Tintri would allow him to manage the environment from a single pane of glass, he thought that this might be the storage solution to address his current issues. He looked forward to a high and predictable quality of service for virtual machines without the huge cost of capital and management.

Simplicity Brings Better Performance

Pawlaczyk describes their Tintri experience: "The ease of use and management over the EMC platform, the set up and ongoing operations, are all significantly easier. It works as advertised." They have witnessed significant performance improvements not only within the IT environment, but other groups outside of IT as well. The Applications Team runs some disk intensive processes that used to take a couple of hours to complete. On the Tintri, the processing time has been cut in half."

VM-Aware Storage for the Server and DR Environment

The VDI deployment was so successful that they decided to implement Tintri for their server virtualization and disaster recovery as well. Their primary datacenter is located 5 miles from campus, with a 10GB link to the DR site which is actually on-campus. St. Mike's consolidated their roughly 100 virtual servers to the Tintri platform. This included Exchange, SQL and the college's ERP system.

Industry

- Education

Geography

- Burlington, Vermont

Website

- www.smcvt.edu

Virtualization environment

- VMware vSphere 5
- VMware Horizon View with 150 desktops
- Unidesk
- Previous storage environment: EMC

VM profile

- Windows, Linux
- Applications: Exchange, SQL, SharePoint, ERP, web servers, print servers

Key challenges

- Increasing cost of management to support the storage for VMs
- No new hiring of IT resources
- EMC platform management presented complexity and cost

Tintri solution

- Tintri VMstore™ T540 and T650

Primary use case

- Delivering virtual desktops to 150 users
- Server virtualization
- Disaster Recovery

Business Benefits

- Reduced management costs, doing more with less
- Reduced complexity translates to higher productivity
- Time savings extend to non-IT staff

Leaving Complexity Behind

Joe and the rest of the IT staff at St. Mike's are happy to leave the complexity of the EMC boxes behind. "The advertised performance benefits, which attracted us to Tintri in the first place, are 100% accurate," says Pawlaczyk. He adds, "The simplified management was the big selling point for us."

"The ease of use and management over our legacy EMC platform is significant. Setup was much simpler and the amount of time spent on operational support is much lower."

—Joe Pawlaczyk, Associate Director, IT Data Center



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