



The Raiders are a professional football team originally based in Oakland, California. The Raiders compete in the National Football League (NFL) as a member club of the league's American Football Conference (AFC) West division. The team officially moved to Las Vegas, Nevada in 2019.

In addition to being a great football franchise with a winning team, the Oakland Raiders are known as IT innovators as well. Not willing to "just go with the status quo," the franchise's IT team decided to think out-of-the-box during the Raiders' recent data center infrastructure refresh.

The Challenge: Simplifying Management and Improving Performance

The Raiders had been using NetApp storage systems for running all internal workloads, including the organization's general and administrative software solutions, and email services for nearly 200 employees. The Raiders' IT admins had been spending dozens of hours each month managing the aging NetApp storage systems.

"Our IT team is responsible for ensuring high performance for all of the applications that run our business," noted Matthew Pasco, Vice-President, Information Technology for the Oakland Raiders. "Unfortunately, our legacy storage environment was slow and difficult to manage. Our IT admins were spending far too much time allocating capacity to ensure an acceptable level of performance for each of our key applications and services."

When it came time to refresh the legacy storage environment, "We decided to look at some of the more innovative solutions that are available on the market today," Pasco reported.

The Solution: Tintri VMstore and Tintri Global Center

The Raiders purchased two Tintri VMstore systems in 2013, and in 2017 expanded the VMstore deployment to their entire virtual environment. "The decision to go with VMstore was actually quite simple," Pasco said. "We were very impressed with the ease-of-use, high performance, and all of the virtual machine-level statistics we get with the solution. VMstore is essentially a hands-off platform. It manages itself, so we don't have to do anything to make sure everything is running well."

Pasco was also impressed with Tintri's Global Center management interface. "The VMstore systems are very tight," he reported. "The management interface is easy to use and very intuitive—but since the underlying performance of the VMstore systems is so great, we hardly ever need to look at all of the great VM-level metrics it provides."

The Oakland Raiders upgraded their two VMstore systems in 2017 to obtain more capacity and performance. "The NFL is becoming much more IT-centric," explained Pasco. "A lot of the applications that we previously relied on, including big-data analytics and online collaboration tools, have now been brought into the data center. That growth in IT services is what spurred our additional investments in VMstore."

The Results: Reduced Management Overhead and OPEX with Fast ROI

By moving to VMstore, the Raiders' organization was able to reduce operating expenses (OPEX) for its IT infrastructure by 50% to 74%, enabling it to pay back the investment in just under six months.

Challenges

- Refresh aging legacy storage systems with higher performance and simplified management

Solution

- Tintri VMstore
- Tintri Global Center

Results

- Eliminated dozens of hours per week of storage management
- ROI in under six months
- Reduced OPEX by 50-74%
- Enabled IT team to focus on more strategic projects
- Faster application performance



"With VMstore, management time dropped to nearly zero," Pasco commented. "The greatest indicator of success for any well-run IT organization is when no one complains. Our end users will probably never stop us in the hallway to thank us for applications that run fast, but we can live with that. We haven't had any complaints about system performance since moving to VMstore, so that confirms our confidence in the new solution."

The 2017 data center refresh also included upgraded networking and compute resources from Cisco. "The Tintri VMstore value proposition around ease-of-use, flexibility, and linear scalability are common to the Cisco UCS compute platform as well. The two solutions complement each other very nicely," Pasco noted. "The entire installation took our team under an hour."

VMstore ultimately improved the Raiders' win-loss record, according to Erwin Daria, Tintri systems engineer for the Raiders Franchise. "When the Raiders first became a Tintri customer in 2013, their win-loss record was only 4-12. In 2016, they were 12-4 and made the playoffs. Coincidence? Probably... but I'd like to think Tintri had something to do with it!"

VMstore has enabled the Raiders' IT team to work on more strategic projects, not just managing storage. "VMstore does enable us to support the IT needs of our franchise and team leaders without giving a second thought to the underlying infrastructure," Pasco concluded. "Whenever we're asked to deploy a new application or service, we don't have to embark on a long-drawn-out analysis of whether or not we have the infrastructure and IT resources to run it. Since we're nearly one hundred percent virtualized and everything is running on VMstore, it's easy to say 'yes, we can do that' to all requests with complete confidence. With VMstore, we're now able to meet our franchise's IT needs with ease—and that makes us all winners."

"With Tintri VMstore, we're now able to meet our franchise's storage needs with ease—and that makes us all winners."

Matthew Pasco, Vice-President, Information Technology, Oakland Raiders

Experience Different! For more information on how Tintri VMstore can turbo-charge your business success through a simple, Intelligent Infrastructure, visit tintri.com/vmstore.