



Tintri Cures The Business Doctor's Growing Pains



Tintri's VM-Aware Storage (VAS) solution enables The Business Doctor to double its revenues in 12 months and more efficiently manage its resources, saving time and money

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Industry

- Technology/IT Service Provider

Geography

- Canberra, Australia

Virtualization environment

- VMware vSphere
- Traditional storage: Coraid

VM profile

- SAS applications
- Virtual desktops
- Database virtualisation
- Server virtualisation

Key challenges

- Inadequate storage capability and disk performance
- Slow latency
- Difficulty adding more virtualised workloads and services to the legacy system, thereby preventing the business from growing

Tintri solution

- Tintri VMstoreTM T650 series storage solution
- Replication, snapshot, restore

Primary use case

- Tintri's storage enabled The Business Doctor to grow its business by handling more virtualised workloads and meet its high standards for security, performance and uptime

Business benefits

- Increased storage performance
- Better control and reporting
- Superior capability to manage and add virtual workloads
- Gained the ability to restore systems without downtime
- Helped The Business Doctor to double its revenue in 12 months

The Business Doctor

The Business Doctor was established in 2005. Based in Australia's national capital, Canberra, it is a cloud managed service provider currently supporting more than 150 small and medium-sized enterprises across Australia and New Zealand. The Business Doctor runs the backend IT infrastructure and services for its customers, which are primarily in professional service industries like legal, finance, medical and government, and demand a very high level of security, performance and uptime. The company has enjoyed rapid growth over the last few years as more organisations demand cloud-based IT solutions.

Caleb George, the founder and director of The Business Doctor, says, "We keep the IT wheels turning and the engines running so our customers can focus on their own businesses and servicing their clients. For the first eight years we were growing slowly and steadily, but the last two years have been huge for us. We've seen a real hockey stick style upswing. People are becoming more aware of the cloud and it's uses, and are becoming less scared of it from a data security perspective."

Storage Challenges

The Business Doctor had been using Coraid for its storage solution but in late 2014 the system was close to its breaking point and was preventing the company from taking on new business. Caleb and his team were constantly trying to juggle existing workloads and there was no redundancy or fall back position in case of a disk failure and no capability to add more services or solutions to the system.

"The Coraid product worked to a certain point and then as we grew it couldn't hold up anymore," explains Caleb. "It was overly complex and had no capability. We were facing severe latency issues. Our storage would go over 10 to 12 milliseconds in latency, which doesn't sound like a lot but in storage it really hurts." Reliability problems, lack of capability and Coraid's own collapse further exacerbated the problems with The Business Doctor's legacy storage system. But according to Caleb, the most frustrating thing was its performance. "The product was not as advertised. All the features that were promised were not delivered. All in all, I spent a huge amount of money on a dud system."

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Caleb George, Founder and Director

When trying to bring a single host online and failing, Caleb knew he had to abandon the ongoing time, resources and dollar investments he’d put into Coraid. “I knew at that moment that I was done with spinning disks; we needed to go with a flash based solution,” he says.

Choosing Tintri

After looking at a number of different service providers, The Business Doctor arrived at a shortlist and undertook a rigorous three-month testing period in which each system was tested individually against a number of requirements. Caleb wanted a solution that was high speed, easy to use, easy to manage, and offered all the extra features and capabilities of a virtual SAN, such as reporting, QoS and the ability to replicate, snapshot and restore. He also wanted something that would give his business the ability to grow and scale.

At the end of the process, Tintri was chosen for its high performance, simple interface and ease of control. Caleb says that Tintri’s features and capabilities were superior to those of other vendors. “You can fire up a new host and have it up and running on the Tintri system in about five minutes flat. You can’t do that with any other SAN storage. It is literally the fastest storage I have ever used,” says Caleb.

Other solutions were too complicated and fiddly, and didn’t have the ease of use or reporting that The Business Doctor was after. “You get to a point in this industry that you don’t want to be wasting time, constantly turning knobs,” says Caleb. “You want some things that you can just leave. Storage should just work, you shouldn’t be mucking around with it. Tintri is like an all in one product. You just pull it out of the box, plug it in, turn it on, and you get information and reports straight away. It has a complex and clever design, but is really easy to use.”

No More Growing Pains

In the last 12 months alone, The Business Doctor has seen its revenue double, with the major upswing occurring in the final six months. With Tintri’s storage system in place, the company has been able to effortlessly increase its virtual workloads and more efficiently manage its resources, saving time and money. Caleb explains, “We no longer need to juggle workloads and worry about storage capability. If a client wants to add a service or solution, I can say yes, go ahead. Storage used to be one of our biggest pain points and now it is literally the last thing on my mind. I know that if I need to get another box I can just call Tintri and they’ll ship it out. Done. Up and running. I don’t even need to be there. With Coraid I was constantly thinking if I need another box, how am I going to configure it? What sort of switch do I need to have? Tintri has made a massive difference, and it will continue to. There is no way we could have grown so quickly if we didn’t go with the Tintri product.”

More Than a Box, a Life Support System

One feature that Caleb loves about Tintri is the restore function which he says has rescued him from difficult situations in recent months. “Recently some users have found their way to a malicious link or an email harbouring a 0 Day variant of the cryptolocker virus. It doesn’t matter how good your IT security or spam systems are, 0 Day variants are designed to bypass even the most sophisticated detection products. Thanks to Tintri, we can just roll them back one hour and they are completely up and running again—only a few minutes of downtime and no remnants of the threat, and all within minutes of detection. We no longer need to restore all the files from a backup and clean up servers, taking hours or even days. The Tintri product has literally saved us a huge amount of time and resources thanks to this feature alone. I sleep a little bit better at night knowing that we’ve got Tintri in place.”

“Tintri is phenomenal. Like it’s ability to create 100 machines in one go. You can right click on a snapshot and go create 100 of these. And you are up and running straight away. There are not many products out there that can do that so quickly. Most products will restore a snapshot within 10 minutes or 20 minutes. It’s a very clever little product. Tintri really does what it says it’s going to do on the box. And when you get to enterprise solutions, quite often products don’t do what they say on the box. Or the information isn’t there. The Tintri product is very open. This is what we do, this is what we don’t do. It’s very simple and easy. It takes the guess work out of storage.”

Tintri Support

“We had a bit of training at the beginning,” explains Caleb, “but that’s the thing, we didn’t really need it. The product is so easy to use. I show my team how to do a restore or a snapshot—it’s not that hard. We haven’t had to raise any support tickets so far. There was one time though when I got an email from Tintri to say one of the drives had dropped out and they were sending out a new one. Just switch it around and send it back to us. We weren’t monitoring it at the time so we didn’t realise anything was amiss. We didn’t have to worry about it. The unit was fixed straight away. I call that proactive support, which is pretty rare. That’s what we try to do with our clients as much as possible.”

Final Thoughts

“We pride ourselves on the security, uptime and performance of our systems, and that’s the reason we went with a product like Tintri. No other storage solution could handle what we required of it. Tintri has enabled us to put a lot more systems and solutions in place that help our clients to grow and take on new initiatives. And it has a good roadmap, which is really important to us. That was the major problem with Coraid, they just stagnated. We wanted a storage partner that can innovate along with us, and keep growing and rolling out new solutions,” concludes Caleb.



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