CT4 Builds World-Class Desktop-as-a-Service Offering with Tintri Storage

Tintri Speeds Installation, Enables Static User Pricing, and Increases Application Availability for 10,000 End Users

CT4 Cloud Technology Business

CT4 is a leading Australian business IT solutions provider specializing in consulting, cloud hosting, virtual desktop platforms, disaster recovery, and managed IT. With a head office in Brisbane, Australia and data center locations in Brisbane, Sydney, Perth, Singapore, Auckland, London, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, CT4 is well-placed to service customer business hosting requirements across the Asia Pacific region.

IT and Business Challenges

"Our biggest challenge was not being able to price storage appropriately for our desktop as a service (DaaS) engagements," stated Craig Adams, CT4's CIO. "We weren't able to establish a static price for storage. We can do that for compute, we can do that for network, and we can do that for software licensing. But we weren't able to do it at the storage level because there was too much fluctuation in storage usage and insufficient visibility at the VM-level. As a result, we had to increase the margin we put on top of our base price of service to our customers, which was starting to price us out of the DaaS market."

Looking for New Storage

"We first heard about Tintri late last year," Adams reported. "One of our consultants had recommended Tintri for a customer project he was working on. He explained that Tintri's VM- and application-aware storage was a perfect fit for that client's scenario. That's when I had one of those 'light bulb moments' – I realized that Tintri would be perfect for our service provider business as well."

CT4 migrated from its legacy storage environment to Tintri in 2014. "We started by running demonstrations in southeast Asia and Australia with our Tintri evaluation unit," said Adams. "It's our proof of concept environment for VMware's new release of Horizon View that includes new functionality from their Desktone acquisition. That evaluation unit performed so well for our POC environment, we decided to purchase a Tintri T620 for our DaaS operations."

Faster Installation

Even though CT4 has only been using the Tintri unit for a few months, the benefits are already impressing the service provider's IT team. "The first benefit we experienced was Tintri's fast time to installation," said Adams. "Installing and configuring one of our traditional storage arrays always took two full days, whereas the Tintri only took about 15 minutes."

Live Data Migrations

The second benefit surfaced when CT4 experienced a hardware failure in one of its legacy storage units. "It was a pretty significant failure, one of the two controllers within the unit failed," Adams reported. "If that remaining controller had failed as well, we would have dropped 50 clients. One of those is a major government client, and downtime is never an option for that client's environment."

Industry
- IT Solutions Provider

Geography
- Queensland, Australia

Website
- http://www.ct4.com

Virtualization environment
- VMware® vSphere™ 5. 5
- VMware Horizon DaaS 6

VM profile
- Applications: ERP, CRM, Finance, Legal, Business Intelligence, Business Information Modelling (3D), Accounting.

Key challenges
- Lacked the ability to determine storage price per user
- Installing existing storage arrays took two full days
- Existing vendor could not deliver on 4-hour support commitment

Tintri solution
- Tintri VMstore™ T620

Primary use case
- Tintri is being used as the primary storage platform for 150 desktop-as-a-service customers with over 10,000 end users.

Business benefits
- Reduced storage installation time from 2 days to 15 minutes
- Gained the ability to migrate live data in 1 hour, versus 7 days with existing platform
- Established static pricing for storage, lowering costs for customers and creating predictable profit margins for CT4
- Improved the ability to meet SLAs, increasing customer satisfaction

CT4 had a four-hour support agreement with its existing storage vendor, but Adams was told it would be at least seven days before they could get replacement parts for the failed unit. "We were in a very bad situation," Adams admitted. "As a service provider, our service levels are everything. And with only one controller, we weren't able to meet our SLAs."

Luckily for Adams and the IT team, they had already purchased the Tintri array. "Since our current vendor couldn't respond to our emergency, we made the decision to use one of our Tintri boxes. We performed a live swap-out, with all of our customers still running their businesses. It took just one hour to migrate all of those customers onto the Tintri box! That was massive. To be able to install, configure, and migrate workloads to the Tintri box that quickly is incredible – it's simply unbelievable. I've worked with all sorts of technologies in my 20-plus years in IT, but I have never seen a storage unit that's as agile, flexible, and easy to install as Tintri. The person who performed the actual installation was one of our Tier 1 technicians. Even though he was not a storage specialist, he was able to complete the entire installation and migration within an hour."

Better Performance

The CT4 IT team had been trying to troubleshoot several performance problems on the existing storage arrays for several months. "One of our government clients had a number of issues around contention," noted Adams. "Everything would slow down significantly when they ran their data-intensive monthly reports. As soon as we put in the Tintri unit, the contention problems completely went away. They can now run their reports during production hours without impacting application performance."

Accurate Pricing Models Lead to Improved Profit Margins

One of the greatest advantages Tintri provides to CT4 is the ability to establish consistent pricing policies for all of its DaaS customers. "With Tintri, I can easily determine how many users I can get on each storage array," Adams explained. "We are now able to pin storage usage down to a static cost per user. With that knowledge, we identified our base price of storage, and then added a much smaller margin on top of that number. That not only enables us to offer more competitive pricing to our customers, it makes it much easier to ensure adequate profit margins for CT4 on all of our customer engagements."

Everyone Loves Tintri, from the CEO to the End Users

"Everyone at CT4 absolutely loves Tintri, right down the management stack," Adams reported. "Our CEO loves Tintri from a business perspective. We have a great relationship with Tintri and a joint partnership that is very productive. Then, moving down the stack, our financial group is also sold on Tintri. It's not just the initial price point of purchasing the unit, it's the flexible way that Tintri enables us to buy the units. They also like the ability to establish static pricing per desktop VM."

"Moving down from the financial group, our project managers are also very happy with Tintri because it takes far less time to install, configure, and migrate VMs – enabling them to complete customer engagements much faster with less complexity. And then there's our technical staff, their jobs are significantly easier with Tintri since the environment is so easy to manage. They can easily isolate VMs in terms of performance, the units are very responsive, and Tintri Support is awesome. And last – but certainly not least – our customers are happier. Their systems are faster, more reliable, and their ROI is much higher. Across our entire business, there isn't a single person who has questioned our decision to switch storage platforms. Everyone in our company loves Tintri. And that's an extremely rare outcome for any technology acquisition."

"Going forward we will be buying 100% Tintri," Adams concluded. "We will be replacing all of our existing storage arrays over time, and all new customer deployments will be on Tintri storage.

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> **—Craig Adams**, Chief Information Officer, CT4

Tintri