

Case Study

Tintri VMstore



Jonathan Neale

Operations Manager at Sempervox

✔ Review by a Real User

✔ Verified by PeerSpot

What is our primary use case?

VMstore provides fast storage for virtual hosts. We deploy VMstore in various environments. Traditionally, we have primarily deployed it to on-premise servers. However, that has changed in the last two years. More companies are moving to 365, so you have more of a hybrid solution. Either works well because the box is highly adaptable. We're using a T820 currently, but we just signed an order to buy a T7000 series.

We're a telecommunications and IT company. We have a small data center in Leicester that started as a large server room with servers running services for customers who asked us to do different things. The business grew to the point where we hosted virtual machines and remote desktop services for multiple companies. We had to create a proper hosting environment,

so we added the Dell Blade and Tintri array. It's housed in a single data center we own and operate.

We currently have six businesses running from that Tintri box, and the end-user accounts number about 500.

How has it helped my organization?

Previously, we managed individual servers as hosts with virtual machines running inside. We consolidated about seven individual hosts into one VMstore joined to a Dell blade array that we purchased at the same time. That saves a massive amount of time on ongoing maintenance management. VMstore probably reduces administration time by about 15 to 20 percent. It also saves significant power costs

because we've turned off about nine servers in the last seven years.

What formerly may have taken up a terabyte or two on a server only requires half that on the VMstore. It has increased efficiency while saving time and power costs. It's easier to use and a huge step up in reliability. Overall, it's a high-speed storage solution, which was a significant upgrade.

VMstore has made our company more profitable. We've increased our retail sales and margins while decreasing the time spent managing the solution. We sold this as a significant upgrade to a premium service when moving customers to this new array. Depending on the customer, we increased our retail charges for these services by between 10 and 15 percent. Without fail, every customer paid for it, and they were pleased with the service.

What is most valuable?

I like Tintri's Global Admin feature and the solution's performance. It's incredibly fast storage, which was a significant upgrade for us when we deployed it seven years ago. The Tintri snapshots are brilliant and incredibly reliable.

The visibility at the VM level is another feature we wanted, and it didn't disappoint.

The replication, snapshots, and setting QoS are also critical features. It not only has those features but also lots of fast storage arrays that have similar features. Other fast storage arrays require some PowerShell commands and a lot of

configuration to set up or enable those things. It's effortless with VMstore. You tick a couple of boxes and apply. You can send a message from the Slack bot, and I'll do it for you.

What needs improvement?

Tintri's Cloud Connector currently only goes to AWS and IBM Cloud, and we don't use either because we're Microsoft Silver Partners. It would be great to get the Cloud Connector feature with Azure. If it's not already on Tintri's roadmap, that's something I'd like to see.

While the performance and capacity monitoring GUI is excellent, I'd like to see multiple windows simultaneously. You can see various statistics, but it would be great to have that across several frames to monitor more things simultaneously. That's a minor issue.

For how long have I used the solution?

We've used VMstore for seven years.

What do I think about the stability of the solution?

VMstore is incredibly stable. It has not missed a heartbeat in seven years. The only issue we ever had was caused by a Microsoft update to Active Directory, not Tintri.

What do I think about the scalability of the solution?

The scalability internally through VMstore is quick and easy. Scaling up the physical boxes is also dead easy. You buy another box, plug it in, connect it, and away it goes in 30 minutes.

How are customer service and support?

I rate Tintri support nine out of 10. Tintri support was excellent when we paid for it, but we stopped paying for it. Even though we stopped paying for support, an army of Tintri people, especially our account manager, helped us in our recent crisis caused by the Microsoft update, and it was hugely appreciated.

How would you rate customer service and support?

Positive

Which solution did I use previously and why did I switch?

We had a Dell EqualLogic P4000 Series SAN that we no longer used for live customer data because it was so old. We used to have one Dell server per customer, which was unsustainable in terms of the time, effort, and power it takes to manage so many servers. It wasn't just a

technology change—it's an entirely different way of thinking.

This wasn't our specialty. We did it for one or two companies because they asked and developed from there. As we started providing this service to more customers, we got more sophisticated. Eventually, we reached a point where we decided to build a proper hosted server storage array.

How was the initial setup?

VMstore was one of the most impressive deployments I've seen. It took 30 minutes. I remember walking away thinking, "Wow! They've just installed and delivered a SAN, connected it, and we've got a VM on it in 30 minutes. That's ridiculous."

We also did some preparation and planning before we deployed. We readied the new network where it was going to sit. The Dell blade array chassis was installed, and the blades were ready. The Tintri had arrived in a box about three days before, but we didn't touch it.

The Tintri engineer came, and I helped him rack it. He connected it, and within 30 minutes, we created our first VM. After that, the Tintri engineer remained on site for about three or four hours, going through stuff with my remote colleague and showing him how all the different features work.

After deployment, VMstore requires some maintenance like all solutions, but it is minimal compared to the more traditional SANs and a lot

less maintenance relative to managing multiple individual servers.

What was our ROI?

Server rentals for only one customer covered the entire cost of the box, so the rental income for everybody else we have hosted for the past seven years has been profit. VMstore has reduced our overall business costs in terms of time and power. VMstore is much more efficient and easy to manage, enabling us to decommission seven other individual servers, which has helped us reduce our power usage.

What's my experience with pricing, setup cost, and licensing?

The price could be lower, but the pricing structure is what it is. This requires a heavy upfront investment, and you recoup it. It's just the nature of the business. I'm sure every company would like to see the price decrease, but I would like to see the additional software and ongoing support costs lowered.

There are two support variants: Gold and Platinum. I would suggest adding a third rung to that ladder with minimal support, access to software upgrades, and maybe an SLA with a 48-hour or 72-hour ticket window. Tintri would get a massive response at that support level, especially for smaller businesses like us.

At the same time, I fully understand that if you offer a lower level of support, people will opt for that instead of premium support. However, it would be nice if there were a support option with reduced service. If you're paying less, you should get less. From our point of view, the main aspects are software upgrades, patches, and security features. We want to ensure the box is healthy and access a help desk with a 72-hour SLA. Something like that would be ample for us.

Which other solutions did I evaluate?

We had quotes from Dell, HP, Pure Storage, and NetApp. All the servers we use are Dell, so there was a significant comfort factor, but it ultimately came down to a decision between Dell SAN and Tintri SAN. On the one hand, it made sense to go with a Dell SAN because we already had a Dell blade array. However, at that stage, Dell was still building their SANs on a more traditional footing, where configuration and management were quite intensive.

The Tintri box was faster than the Dell, and it was much easier to build a VM. It was like night and day. You could send a message from the Slack bot, spin up two VMs, and the VMs were created seconds later. On the Dell SAN, it might take 15 to 20 minutes to do the same thing manually. We recognized Tintri as a leading-edge technology changing how it was done. We appreciated how the box operated, and it did disappoint.

About two years after we got our box, we were told that Tintri was in financial trouble, but we didn't panic because we knew how this technology market worked. We knew one of the bigger fish would swallow it up, and along came DDN. While it wasn't necessarily a factor, you want to ensure ongoing support and that the company will be around a year after you buy it.

When we purchased VMstore, it was a stable business, and there were no indications that it was in danger. When Tintri did become in trouble, we knew the product was good, and we knew how the storage market worked, so we were confident somebody would purchase it. When DDN did, we knew we were okay.

What other advice do I have?

I rate Tintri VMstore nine out of 10. I never give 10s unless it's perfect. The only perfect thing in this world is Liverpool FC. If you can, get a loaned box to try it out first. If Tintri has an old box somewhere or they allow you to get your hands on a box and connect it, I would be surprised if the IT company in question doesn't say, "Okay, this is good."

You read a lot of data and statistics and can say that it can do fast storage, SSDs, VME, etc. Ultimately, you don't know anything about a product or a service until you use it. Having a loaned device and getting engineers to play around with it live is invaluable.



Read 8 reviews of Tintri VMstore

[See All Reviews](#)