Ethernet SAN Optimizes vSphere Environment for Atlantic Media Company

Challenge

An affordable shared storage solution for server virtualization project that can grow in line with virtual machine growth while improving availability and simplifying manageability.

Solution

Coraid® EtherDrive® SRX3500

Benefits

By turning to Coraid to build an Ethernet SAN, Atlantic Media found a solution that outperformed its Fibre Channel and iSCSI alternatives for a fraction of the cost. More importantly, they could configure and deploy new storage in minutes while adding only the storage they needed to scale out exactly in line with virtual machine growth.

Customer Overview

Based in Washington, DC, Atlantic Media Company is a rapidly expanding media enterprise whose mission is to inform, elevate, and challenge the national discourse. Atlantic Media's flagship publications – The Atlantic, National Journal, and Government Executive – are among the most influential media outlets in America, engaging opinion leaders from Pennsylvania Avenue to the Pentagon, Wall Street to Harvard Square. Impacting over 1.5 million decision makers spanning the ranks of business, politics, government, and academia, Atlantic Media is a unique company in a dynamic industry.

Business Challenge

The web pages that host Atlantic Media's nationally acclaimed publications are under high global demand 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. With increasing web traffic to its online publications, Atlantic Media was suffering from server sprawl, rapid storage growth, and lack of a server failover solution. To address these challenges they decided to deploy a server virtualization solution to simplify their compute infrastructure and a shared storage system that could grow easily, provide simplified management, and integrate seamlessly with VMware vSphere to support the company's disaster recovery initiatives.

Technical Challenge

Before the virtualization project, Atlantic Media's legacy web infrastructure consisted of individual physical servers with internal direct attached storage. With the servers isolated from each other, information from one server could not be shared across systems and if a server failed there was no failover for disaster recovery.

Dave Mouyal, Network Systems Administrator for Atlantic Media felt like he was living on the edge, one server issue away from a disruption in service. Dave's goal was to consolidate his servers to reduce complexity and footprint in the data center, add server failover capability for redundancy and reduce his workload. Atlantic Media's next storage system had to be simple to manage, simple to setup, accessible to multiple servers, grow as needed, provide for server failover, and be within the budget.
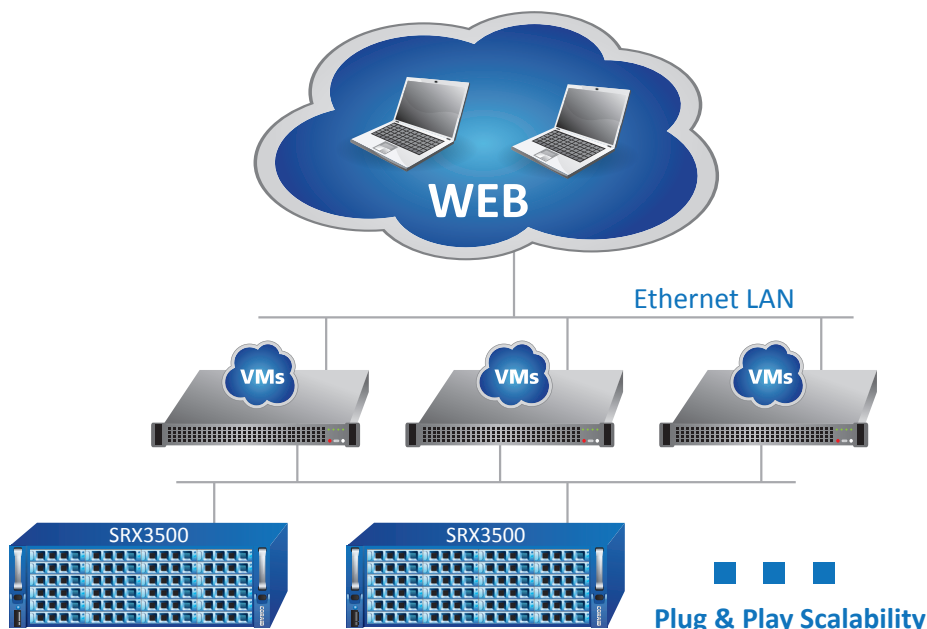
Solution

To achieve these requirements, Atlantic Media deployed two Coraid EtherDrive SRX3500 Ethernet SAN disk arrays to provide a shared storage solution for its VMware vSphere servers. Atlantic Media had explored other storage options including Fibre Channel and iSCSI solutions but the price and complexity of these systems were prohibitive. "I really liked the Coraid EtherDrive storage solution for its simplicity and flexibility," said Dave Mouyal, Atlantic Media.

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With the Coraid EtherDrive SRX3500, Atlantic Media found a solution that outperformed the Fibre Channel and iSCSI alternatives for a fraction of the cost. More importantly, they can configure and deploy new storage in minutes and expanding capacity is as easy as adding another EtherDrive SRX3500 shelf to the Ethernet network. This allows Atlantic Media to implement a pay-as-you-go storage infrastructure that scales exactly in line with their virtual machine growth.

"The Coraid EtherDrive storage systems were one of the easiest deployments I have done in my life."

.....Atlantic Media Company

WEB

Ethernet LAN

VMs   VMs   VMs

SRX3500   SRX3500

Plug & Play Scalability

Benefits

After deploying the Coraid storage systems, Atlantic Media Company has been impressed with the ease of use, performance and reliability of the EtherDrive storage arrays. As a result, Atlantic Media has cut its storage administration burden by over 50%. New storage can be deployed in minutes instead of hours or days, freeing its IT team to pursue high-value activities. "The Coraid EtherDrive storage systems were one of the easiest deployments I have done in my life, a couple of screws and a command line. Coraid Ethernet SAN is a no brainer; it is so simple compared to Fibre Channel," said Dave Mouyal, Atlantic Media Company.

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