PING drives innovation home with Dell Compellent Storage Center SAN with Dell Fluid Data technology

- Intelligent Data Management
- Server Consolidation
- Services
- Virtualization

"The ability to provision, change and move storage easily from one host server to another brings the promise of virtual servers to reality. Dell Fluid Data makes Dell Compellent our preferred platform for deploying servers."

Eric Hart,
Network/Infrastructure Manager,
PING

Customer Profile

Company:	PING
Industry:	Manufacturing
Country:	United States
Employees:	< 1,000
Web:	www.ping.com

Business Need

PING's IT department sought to design a new infrastructure that would support the business operations—from design to delivery—in an environment that embraced change. Facing a forklift upgrade on an old SAN that had reached capacity and couldn't adapt to PING's changing business requirements, the IT department sought a flexible, scalable solution.

Solution

PING implemented a Dell™ Compellent Storage Center SAN with Dell Fluid Data™ architecture. The solution proved to be the right fit for PING due to its scalability, flexibility, true virtualization and intelligent software applications to support the changing performance and capacity demands driven by constant innovation.

Benefits

- **Advanced thin provisioning allows the team to accommodate unexpected growth patterns from the design team**
- **55 percent of data migrated to low-cost drives with automated tiered data, set up in hours instead of months**
- **True storage virtualization makes it easy to provision, maintain and make changes to Microsoft® Hyper-V™ servers**
- **Single scalable platform allows PING to add hardware as the company grows**

Frustrated with his putting, Karsten Solheim designed a new putter in his garage that made a pinging sound when it hit the ball. That innovation marked the beginnings of a golf club manufacturer that has shaped golf history. On the links, PING is synonymous with innovation. The company is constantly looking for new ways to perfect its approach to delivering custom-fit performance to players. In recent years, PING has shortened engineering development cycles, implemented lean production processes and redesigned core business applications to create an agile and responsive infrastructure.

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>
> *Eric Hart,*
> *Network/Infrastructure Manager,*
> *PING*

To stay on par with progress, the IT department needed to design a new infrastructure that would support the business operations—from design to delivery—in an environment that embraced change. Facing a forklift upgrade on an old SAN that had reached capacity and couldn't adapt to PING's changing business requirements, the IT department sought a flexible, scalable solution.

Dell Compellent Storage Center SAN with Dell Fluid Data architecture proved to be the right fit for PING, meeting its performance demands for scalability, flexibility, true virtualization and intelligent software applications to support the changing performance and capacity demands driven by constant innovation.

The right equipment makes a difference

Adding capacity in the previous environment was difficult, requiring a massive restriping procedure. Dell Compellent supports the continual adoption of new technologies on a single, scalable platform, allowing PING to adapt to the changing business requirements by scaling capacity or functionality on demand with minimal system downtime. Not only can PING scale hardware as the company grows, it doesn't have to repurchase base software licenses as it adds capacity, connectivity and capabilities.

In addition to being able to grow alongside the business without artificial limitations, Dell Fluid Data technology allows PING to add the right amount of capacity at the right time without over-purchasing disks. Dell Compellent Dynamic Capacity advanced thin provisioning capabilities provide an

Technology at Work

Services

Dell™ Compellent Copilot Support

Hardware

Dell Compellent Storage Center SAN with Dell Fluid Data™ technology

Software

Dell Compellent Data Progression

Dell Compellent Dynamic Capacity

Microsoft® Exchange Server

Microsoft Hyper-V™ Server

Microsoft SharePoint®

Microsoft SQL Server®

Oracle® database software

Oracle Solaris

Windows® File Sharing

Windows Server® 2008 R2

unmatched storage agility that allows the team to quickly respond to requests from developers and keep PING's innovation growing. Eric Hart, Network/ Infrastructure Manager at PING, compares storage to a credit card you want to manage responsibly.

"Just as you don't want your credit card to be declined at an important customer dinner, you don't want your storage to max out for your staff," says Hart. "With Dell Compellent we have the ability to meet unusual growth patterns, like when an employee unexpectedly loads a large amount of information onto a SharePoint site and our database blossoms."

Automated tiered storage keeps costs down

PING stores all corporate data, including back-office information, production data, engineering design and marketing communications artwork, on its Dell Compellent Storage Center SAN. Like many organizations, a substantial portion of PING's data is rarely accessed over time, but still needs to be stored online. But with capacity and performance requirements on the rise, storing older data on high-performance disks is an expensive proposition.

As a result, the team considered a company-wide initiative to improve information lifecycle management but realized that sorting through and classifying the data would mean months of work for the entire company. Dell Fluid Data management offered a smarter alternative. The patented Dell Compellent Data Progression automated tiered storage technology classifies PING's data based on actual use patterns. A powerful data movement and management engine uses that intelligence to dynamically migrate block-level data to the optimal tier. That means critical data, including product design, manufacturing and marketing, is stored on high-speed drives, while historical design and business data automatically migrates down to lower-cost disks. Currently about 55 percent of PING's data resides on lower-cost drives, and the company has saved money by adding cost-effective, high-capacity drives to increase capacity.

Copilot is my caddie

Dell Compellent Copilot Support constantly checks and verifies system status and reports all issues in real-time. Offering personal support and professional expertise, Copilot Support has been more than a traditional call center for the PING IT team, often taking on the role of advisor as well. "With the web-based interface, it's easy for us to share screens with our Copilot engineer and get support and education at the same time," says Hart.

Dynamic data through true virtualization

Dell Compellent's virtual storage technology complements PING's Windows Server 2008 Hyper-V virtual servers, allowing PING to scale from a virtualized pool of storage without disruption and process multiple requests in parallel to improve system performance and utilization. This shared pool of resources eliminates the guesswork of capacity planning and simplifies storage provisioning. With Hyper-V and Dell Compellent, PING has consolidated multiple servers, saving 25 percent of projected hardware costs and reducing initial deployment and management costs by 60 percent.

"Dell Compellent has made virtual servers practical for us," says Hart. "The ability to provision, change and move storage easily from one host server to another brings the promise of virtual servers to reality. Dell Fluid Data makes Dell Compellent our preferred platform for deploying servers."

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