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- Galina Bondarenko, President, Proxen



ORGANIZATION

Proxen Inc.

WEB

<http://proxen.com.ua>

INDUSTRY

Private Legal Firm.

KEY CHALLENGES

Needed to store and protect two decades of data and to increase data availability with server clusters for MS SQL Server and MS Exchange. Additionally, needed to find a reliably VMware backup and replication solution for multiple virtual servers running on VMware vSphere.

ENVIRONMENT

High Availability Server Cluster configurations with HP ProLiant servers and VMware vSphere.

SOLUTION

StarWind Enterprise HA.
Veeam Backup & Replication 3.0.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Provided easy to use solution with StarWind and Veeam to both back up VMware vSphere and to store and protect large amounts of server data as well as two decades of client documents. StarWind and Veeam worked perfectly together and the total solution was not only the top choice for product quality but was also truly affordable for the customer.

PROXEN LAW FIRM CHOOSES STARWIND ENTERPRISE HA AND VEEAM BACKUP 3.0

Proxen was founded in 1990, just before the dissolution of the Soviet Union and is the first private law firm to offer legal services in the Ukraine. Proxen is now one of the most respected law firms in the country and has received several awards including "Top 10 Best Law Firms" from the Ukraine publication "Law Practice". A lot of important client documents and legal data has been generated and archived over the 20 years in business. Proxen needed centralized and easy to manage storage to protect and maintain these large amounts of data. Just as importantly, Proxen had to protect multiple physical as well as servers running on VMware in addition to Microsoft SQL Server databases with critical case data and also Microsoft Exchange for the firm's email. All these servers had to be configured as server clusters to ensure high data and application availability and, for that reason, Proxen needed a reliable SAN.

Proxen's IT department was seeking a full solution that would allow them to transition from their existing direct attached storage without overspending the budget, but with the ability to scale and use existing infrastructure. Additionally, Proxen needed an enterprise-class backup and replication solution for its many VMware virtual servers. The full solution that they chose after months of IT due diligence was StarWind Enterprise HA 5.0 (High Availability Edition) with Veeam Backup & Replication 3.0 software.

PROBLEM

Proxen not only has large amounts of client data that need to be stored and protected, but also has multiple servers that must be clustered to increase application availability for the law firm. Galina Bondarenko, one of the co-founders, had previously stored data primarily in direct attached storage (DAS) but, as the firm has expanded, she realized that the existing storage infrastructure could not scale and accommodate the growth. Additionally, the firm moved to a VMware vSphere infrastructure which requires shared storage and to take advantage of all of the VMware features including VMware HA, VMotion, Storage VMotion, DRS and VCB. They upgraded to new HP ProLiant servers that ran VMware, Microsoft Exchange and SQL Server database and needed to implement shared storage and VMware backup solution quickly. The solution would need to combine increased application and data availability and protection of the VMware virtual servers.

SOLUTION

It was important that the solution be at a reasonable cost, that it works with the existing infrastructure, and that it would be easy to use.

Proxen IT team spoke to resellers in Europe, reviewed the options available and identified EMC CLARIION and DataCore SANmelody on the list of five iSCSI SAN vendors. StarWind made this list because it allowed Proxen to convert a standard Intel-based server running Windows 2008 R2 into a fully-functional SAN that had many of the features of an EMC CLARIION and other hardware solutions. But StarWind's price was significantly more affordable. Additionally, Proxen looked at various VMware backup solutions including a product from Vizioncore but Veeam Backup 3.0 consistently had better features and higher performance. Now, all that was left was to try both StarWind and Veeam together in a test environment. Both companies offered a "try before you buy" policy which made an evaluation simple. First, they created a backup of vSphere volumes using Veeam Back Up & Replication software. The backup was then sent to a StarWind iSCSI volume which was replicated using StarWind's Asynchronous Remote Replication feature to an offsite Disaster Recovery location. Finally, the backups were used to reestablish volumes at the Disaster Recovery location. Everything worked flawlessly.

Today Proxen has a scalable, enterprise-class storage and VMware disaster recovery solution which stores the wealth of data archives, provides shared storage for server applications and protects the VMware virtual infrastructure.

With the new shared storage and back up system in place, Galina Bondarenko remarks that StarWind iSCSI SAN and Veeam combination is a very powerful enterprise-class solution that surprisingly turned out to be truly affordable as well.

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ABOUT STARWIND

Since 2003, StarWind has been a pioneer in the iSCSI storage industry and has been the solution of choice for thousands of global customers in over 50 countries, from SMBs, to governments, and to Fortune 1000 clients.

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