

StarWind Virtual SAN: Configuration Guide for VMware vSphere [ESXi], StarWind Deployed as a Controller VM using PowerShell CLI

2026

TECHNICAL PAPERS



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About StarWind

StarWind is a pioneer in virtualization and a company that participated in the development of this technology from its earliest days. Now the company is among the leading vendors of software and hardware hyper-converged solutions. The company’s core product is the years-proven StarWind Virtual SAN, which allows SMB and ROBO to benefit from cost-efficient hyperconverged IT infrastructure. Having earned a reputation of reliability, StarWind created a hardware product line and is actively tapping into hyperconverged and storage appliances market. In 2016, Gartner named StarWind “Cool Vendor for Compute Platforms” following the success and popularity of StarWind HyperConverged Appliance. StarWind partners with world-known companies: Microsoft, VMware, Veeam, Intel, Dell, Mellanox, Citrix, Western Digital, etc.

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Annotation

Relevant Products

This guide is applicable to StarWind Virtual SAN and StarWind Virtual SAN Free (Version V8 (Build 15260, CVM Version 20231016) and later).

For older versions of StarWind Virtual SAN (Version V8 (Build 15260, OVF Version 20230901) and earlier), please refer to this configuration guide: [StarWind Virtual SAN: Configuration Guide for VMware vSphere \[ESXi\], VSAN Deployed as a Controller VM using PowerShell CLI](#)

Purpose

This guide provides a comprehensive outline on how to deploy and configure StarWind Virtual SAN within the VMware vSphere environment and create StarWind devices using the Web UI. It includes links to the system requirements, RAID settings, best practices, and steps to ensure a seamless setup and integration.

Audience

The guide is created for IT specialists, system administrators, and VMware professionals who are keen on deploying and configuring StarWind Virtual SAN on VMware vSphere.

Expected Result

Users will possess a robust understanding of the steps and best practices for deploying and configuring StarWind Virtual SAN in a VMware vSphere environment.

Starwind Virtual San For Vsphere Vm Requirements

Prior to installing StarWind Virtual SAN Virtual Machines, please make sure that the system meets the requirements, which are available via the following link:
<https://www.starwindsoftware.com/system-requirements>

Storage provisioning guidelines: <https://knowledgebase.starwindsoftware.com/guidance/how-to-provision-physical-storage-to-starwind-virtual-san-controller-virtual-machine/>

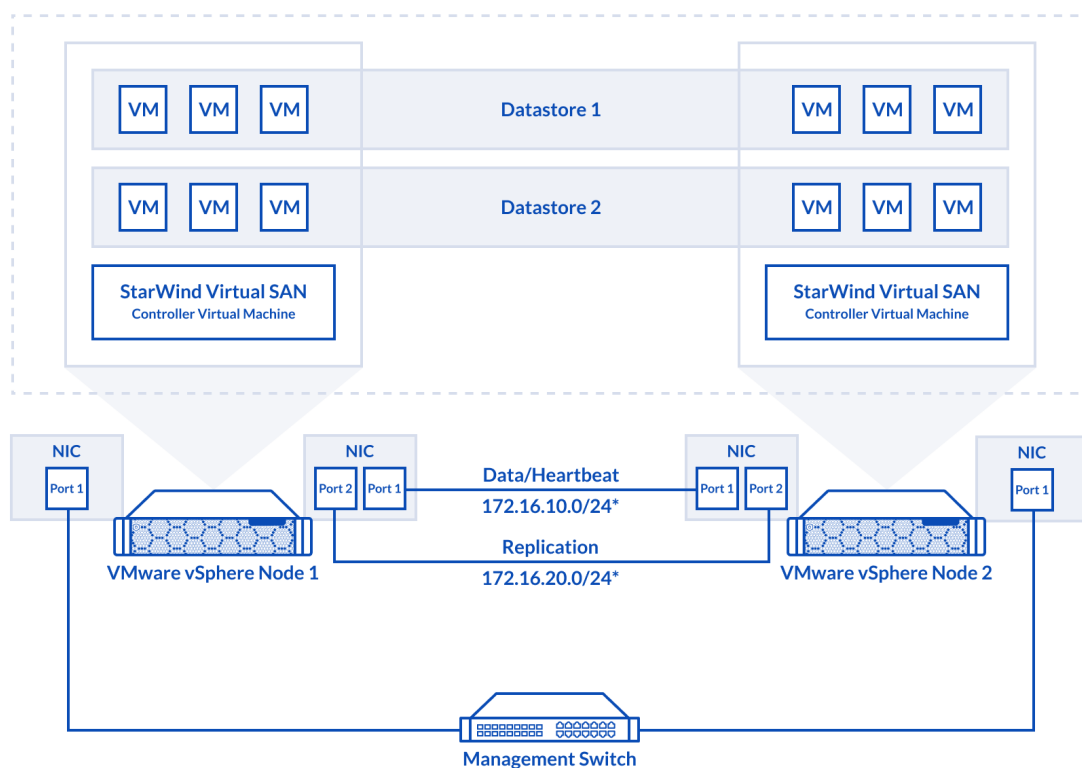
Recommended RAID settings for HDD and SSD disks:
<https://knowledgebase.starwindsoftware.com/guidance/recommended-raid-settings-for-h>

[dd-and-ssd-disks/](#)

Please read StarWind Virtual SAN Best Practices document for additional information:
<https://www.starwindsoftware.com/resource-library/starwind-virtual-san-best-practices>

Pre-Configuring The Servers

The diagram below illustrates the network and storage configuration of the solution:



1. ESXi hypervisor should be installed on each host.
2. StarWind Virtual SAN for vSphere VM should be deployed on each ESXi host from an OVF template, downloaded on this page:
<https://www.starwindsoftware.com/release-notes-build>
3. The network interfaces on each node for Synchronization and iSCSI/StarWind

heartbeat interfaces should be in different subnets and connected directly according to the network diagram above. Here, the 172.16.10.x subnet is used for the iSCSI/StarWind heartbeat traffic, while the 172.16.20.x subnet is used for the Synchronization traffic.

NOTE: Do not use iSCSI/Heartbeat and Synchronization channels over the same physical link. Synchronization and iSCSI/Heartbeat links and can be connected either via redundant switches or directly between the nodes.

vCenter Server can be deployed separately on another host or as VCSA on StarWind VSAN highly-available storage, created in this guide.

Preparing Environment For Starwind Vsan Deployment

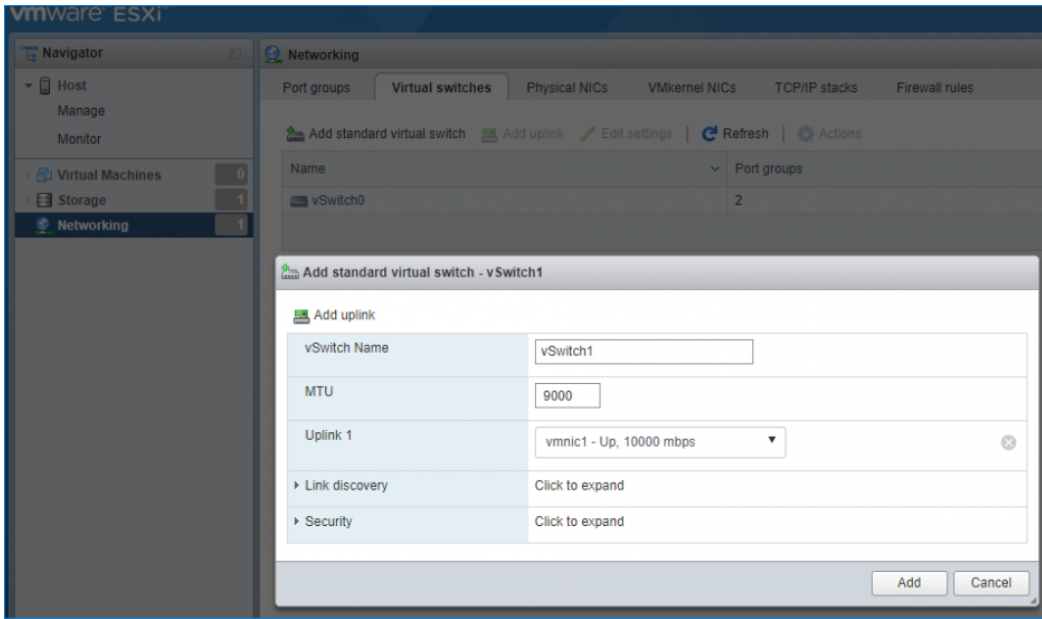
Configuring Networks

Configure network interfaces on each node to make sure that Synchronization and iSCSI/StarWind heartbeat interfaces are in different subnets and connected physically according to the network diagram above. All actions below should be applied to each ESXi server.

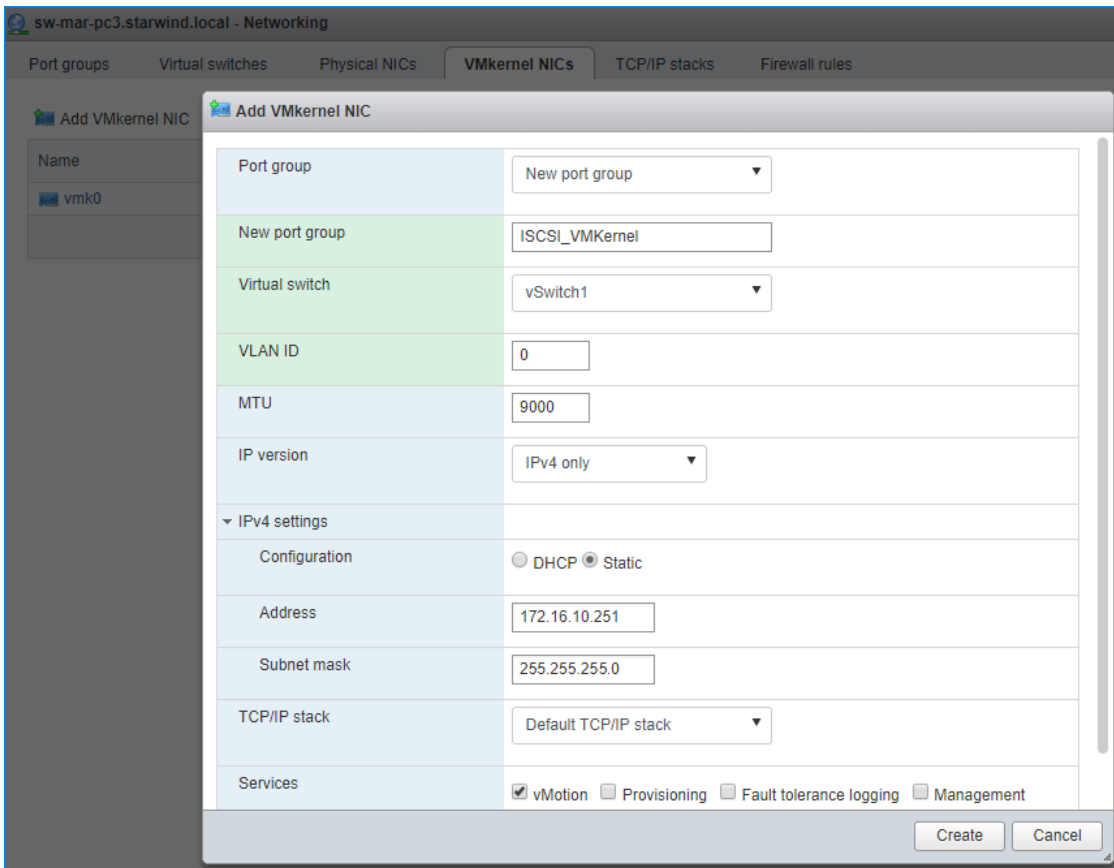
NOTE: Virtual Machine Port Group should be created for both iSCSI/ StarWind Heartbeat and the Synchronization vSwitches. VMKernel port should be created only for iSCSI traffic. Static IP addresses should be assigned to VMKernel ports.

NOTE: It is recommended to set MTU to 9000 on vSwitches and VMKernel ports for iSCSI and Synchronization traffic. Additionally, vMotion can be enabled on VMKernel ports.

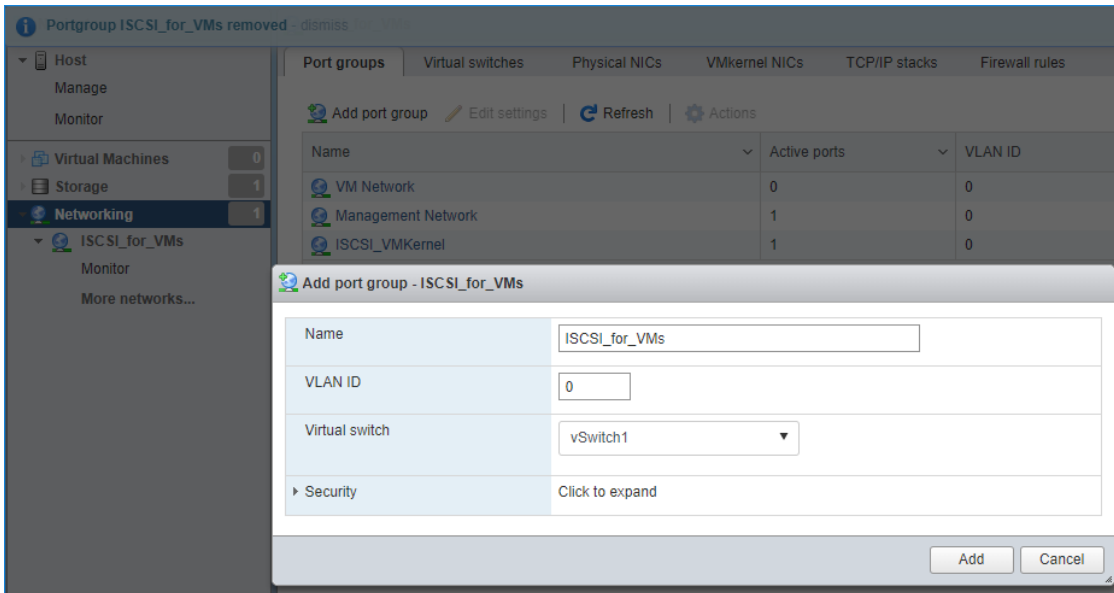
1. Using the VMware ESXi web console, create two standard vSwitches: one for the iSCSI/StarWind Heartbeat channel (vSwitch1) and the other one for the Synchronization channel (vSwitch2).



2. Create a VMKernel port for the iSCSI/ StarWind Heartbeat channel.



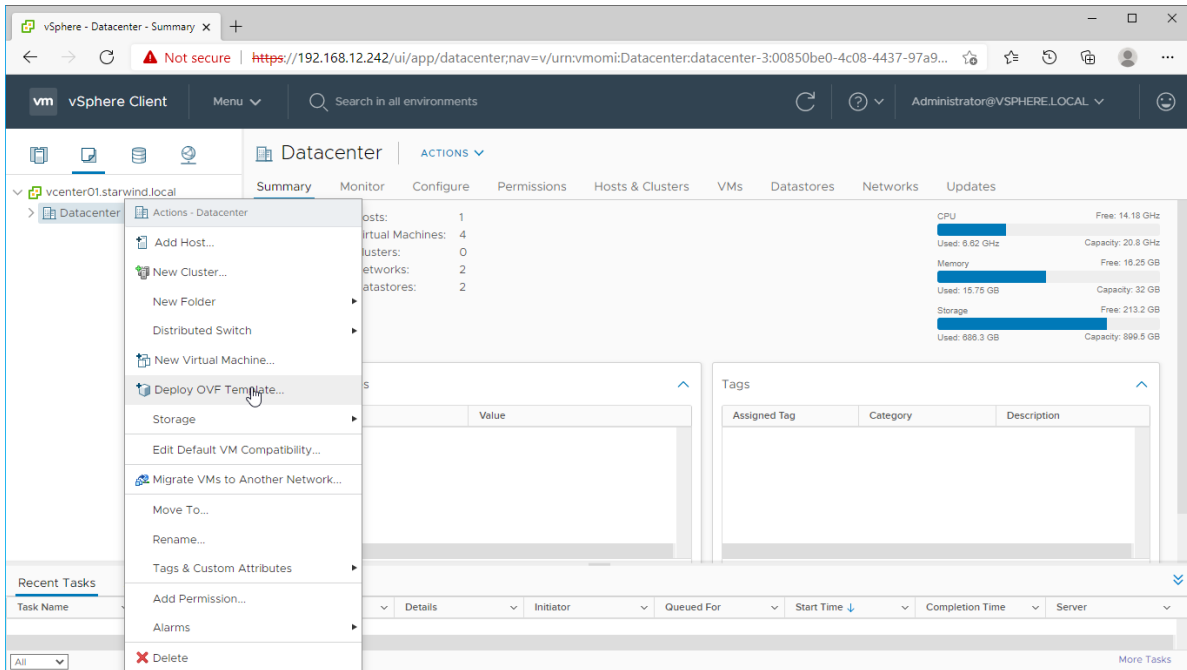
3. Add a Virtual Machine Port Groups on the vSwitch for iSCSI traffic (vSwitch1) and on the vSwitch for Synchronization traffic (vSwitch2).



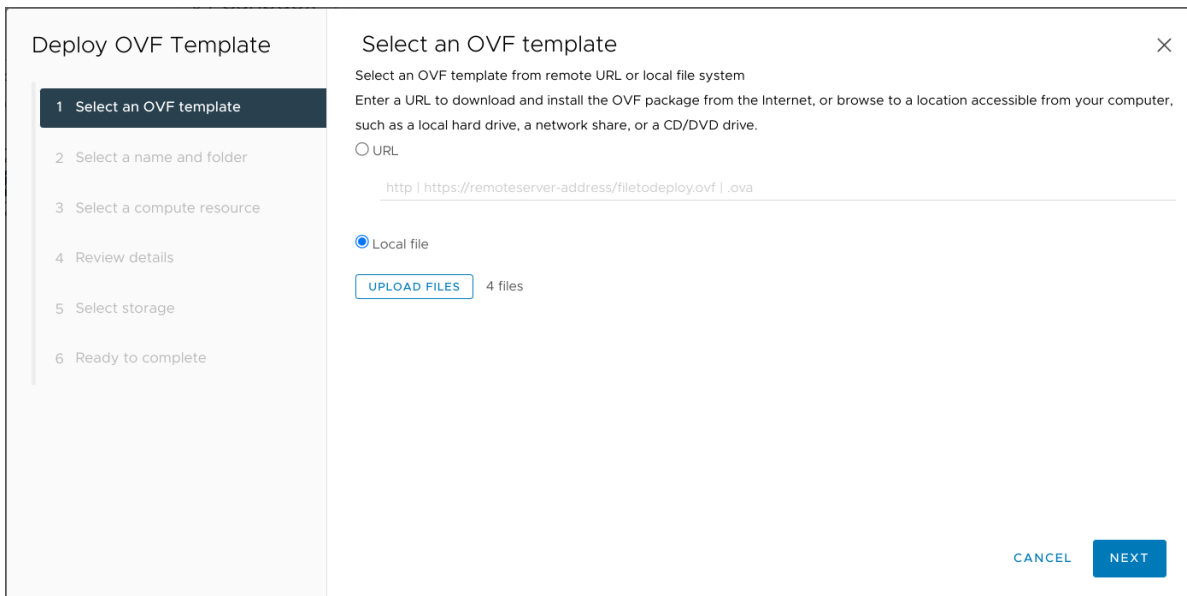
4. Repeat steps 1-3 for any other links intended for Synchronization and iSCSI/Heartbeat traffic on ESXi hosts.

Deploying Starwind Virtual San For Vsphere

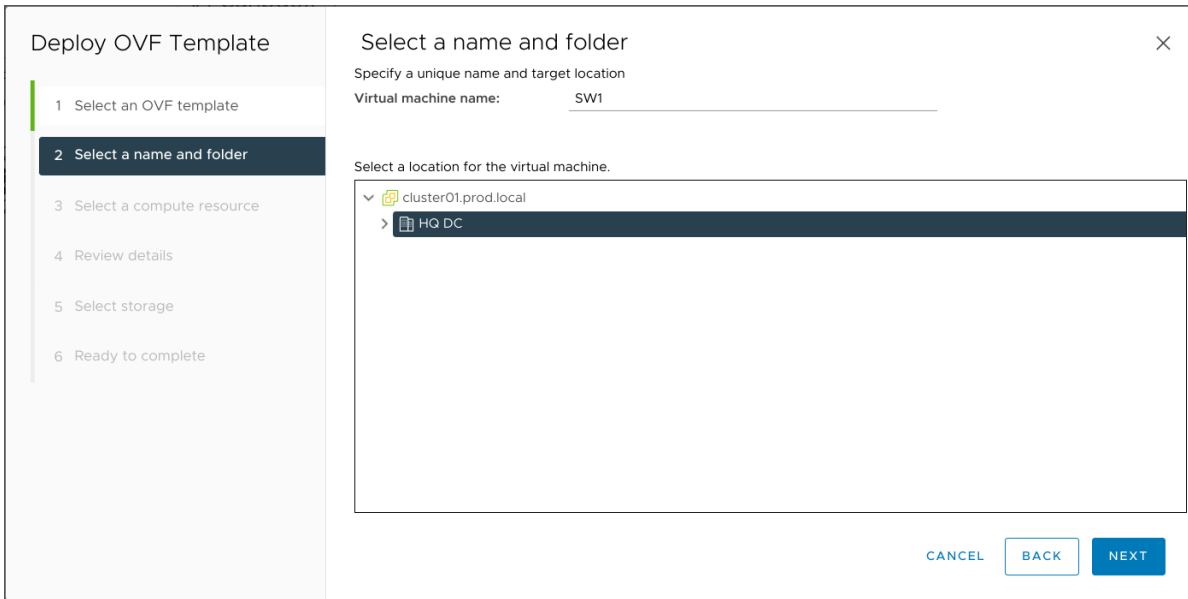
1. Download zip archive that contains StarWind Virtual SAN for vSphere:
<https://www.starwindsoftware.com/starwind-virtual-san#download>
2. Extract the virtual machine files.
3. Deploy the control virtual machine to the VMware vSphere. Right-click on the Datacenter, cluster, or node menu and select the "Deploy OVF Template..." option from a drop-down menu.



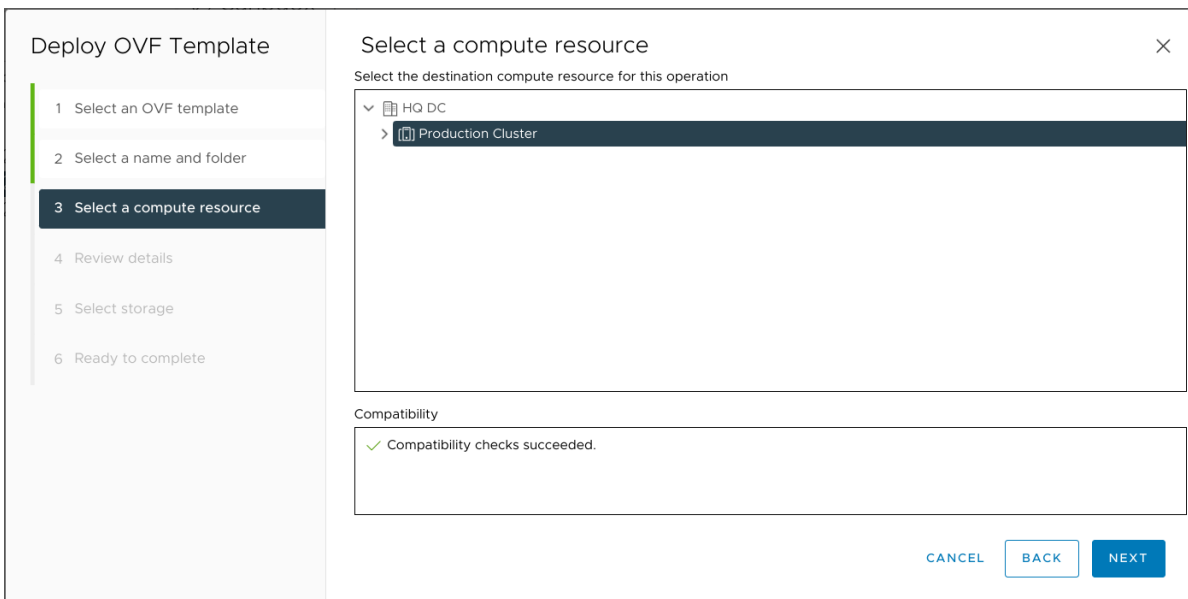
4. In the first step of the wizard, point to the location of the OVF template. Select the VM files and click Next.



5. Specify the VM name and target location.



6. Select a compute resource intended to run the StarWind vSAN CVM



7. Review the template details. Click Next.

Deploy OVF Template

- Select an OVF template
- Select a name and folder
- Select a compute resource
- Review details**
- Select storage
- Select networks
- Customize template
- Ready to complete

Review details [X]

Verify the template details.

⚠ The OVF package contains advanced configuration options, which might pose a security risk. Review the advanced configuration options below. Click next to accept the advanced configuration options.

Publisher	No certificate present
Product	StarWind Appliance
Vendor	StarWind Software Inc.
Download size	Unknown
Size on disk	Unknown (thin provisioned) 30.0 GB (thick provisioned)
Extra configuration	disk.EnableUUID = true nvram = ovf:/file/file2

CANCEL BACK NEXT

8. In the second step of the wizard, specify the virtual machine provisioning type, VM Storage Policy, and select the direct-attached storage for the appliance system drive. Click Next.

Deploy OVF Template

- Select an OVF template
- Select a name and folder
- Select a compute resource
- Review details
- Select storage**
- Select networks
- Customize template
- Ready to complete

Select storage [X]

Select the storage for the configuration and disk files

Select virtual disk format: Thick Provision Lazy Zeroed

VM Storage Policy: [Dropdown] ⚠

Disable Storage DRS for this virtual machine

Name	Storage Compatibility	Capacity	Provisioned	Free	Type	Cluster
Datastore	--	10 TB	3.38 TB	6.61 TB		

Compatibility

✓ Compatibility checks succeeded.

CANCEL BACK NEXT

9. Select the destination network for each network adapter assigned to the VM.

The default naming for virtual switches:

- the Management virtual switch is “Management vSwitch”,
- the iSCSI virtual switch is “Data/iSCSI vSwitch”,
- the Synchronization virtual switch is “Replication/Sync vSwitch”.

Specify corresponding network connections according to your virtual network naming. Click Next.

The screenshot shows the 'Select networks' step of the 'Deploy OVF Template' wizard. On the left, a progress bar lists steps 1 through 8, with step 6 'Select networks' highlighted. The main area is titled 'Select networks' and contains a table for mapping source networks to destination networks.

Source Network	Destination Network
Management Network	Management
Data Network	Data network
Replication Network	Replica network

Below the table, 'IP Allocation Settings' are shown: IP allocation is set to 'Static - Manual' and IP protocol is 'IPv4'. At the bottom right, there are 'CANCEL', 'BACK', and 'NEXT' buttons.

10. Specify the hostname, static IPv4 address, gateway, DNS, and additional network settings for Management and iSCSI/Data network interfaces:

The screenshot shows the 'Customize template' step of the 'Deploy OVF Template' wizard. On the left, the progress bar highlights step 7 'Customize template'. The main area is titled 'Customize template' and shows a validation message 'All properties have valid values'. Below this, a section for 'Management interface network settings' contains several fields:

Property	Value
Hostname	SW1
IPv4 address for Management interface	192.168.12.206
IPv4 netmask for Management interface	23
IPv4 gateway for Management interface	192.168.12.1
DNS Server for Management interface	192.168.12.17

At the bottom right, there are 'CANCEL', 'BACK', and 'NEXT' buttons.

NOTE: To manage the StarWind appliances via the StarWind vCenter plugin, the static IPv4 address must be assigned.

Deploy OVF Template

- 1 Select an OVF template
- 2 Select a name and folder
- 3 Select a compute resource
- 4 Review details
- 5 Select storage
- 6 Select networks
- 7 Customize template
- 8 Ready to complete

Customize template ✕

	192.168.12.1
DNS Server for Management interface	DNS Server for Data interface (example 8.8.8.8)
	192.168.12.17
▼ Data interface network settings	3 settings
IPv4 address for Data interface	IPv4 address for Data interface (example 172.16.10.10)
	172.16.10.100
IPv4 netmask for Data interface	IPv4 netmask for Data interface (example 24)
	24
MTU for Data interface	MTU for Data interface (example 9000)
	9000
▼ Enable additional services	1 settings
Enable SSH	SSH is disabled by default. Select the checkbox to enable it
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CANCEL
BACK
NEXT

NOTE: if a DHCP server is available on the given network, you can skip setting the additional parameters for that interface.

11. Review the deployment summary information and click to start the VM creation.

Deploy OVF Template

- 1 Select an OVF template
- 2 Select a name and folder
- 3 Select a compute resource
- 4 Review details
- 5 Select storage
- 6 Select networks
- 7 Customize template
- 8 Ready to complete

Ready to complete ✕

▼ Select networks

Network mapping	3
Management Network	Management
Data Network	Data network
Replication Network	Replica network

IP allocation settings

IP protocol	IPV4
IP allocation	Static - Manual

▼ Customize template

Properties

```

Hostname = SW1
IPv4 address for Management interface = 192.168.12.206
IPv4 netmask for Management interface = 23
IPv4 gateway for Management interface = 192.168.12.1
DNS Server for Management interface = 192.168.12.17
IPv4 address for Data interface = 172.16.10.100
IPv4 netmask for Data interface = 24
MTU for Data interface = 9000
Enable SSH = True
                    
```

CANCEL
BACK
FINISH

12. Repeat the VM deployment on each other ESXi hosts.

NOTE: In some cases, it's recommended to reserve memory for StarWind VSAN VM.

NOTE: When using StarWind with the synchronous replication feature inside of a Virtual Machine, it is recommended not to make backups and/or snapshots of the Virtual Machine with the StarWind VSAN service installed, as this could pause the StarWind

Virtual Machine. Pausing the Virtual Machines while the StarWind VSAN service is under load may lead to split-brain issues in synchronous replication devices, thus to data corruption.

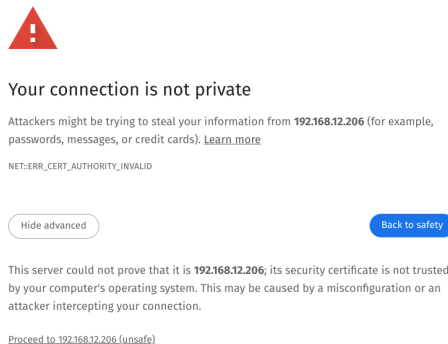
Initial Configuration Wizard

1. Start the StarWind Virtual SAN Controller Virtual Machine.
2. Launch the VM console to view the VM boot process and obtain the IPv4 address of the Management network interface.

NOTE: If the VM does not acquire an IPv4 address from a DHCP server, use the Text-based User Interface (TUI) to set up the Management network manually.

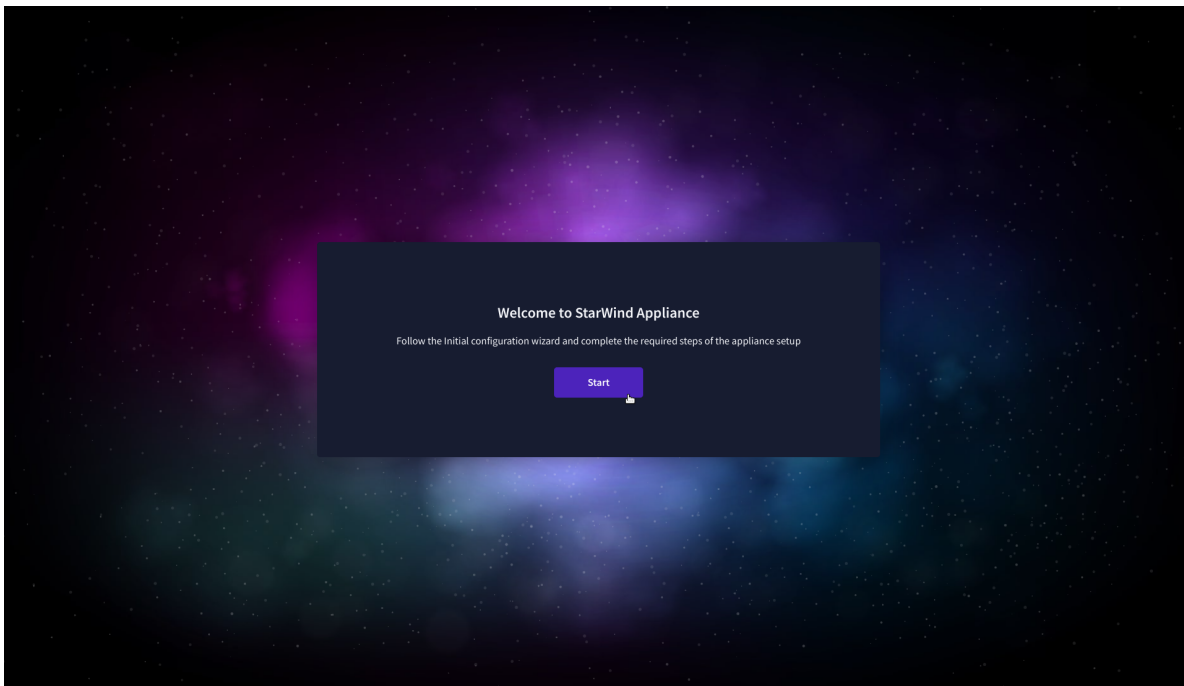
Default credentials for TUI: user/rds123RDS

3. Using a web browser, open a new tab and enter the VM's IPv4 address to access the StarWind VSAN Web Interface. On the Your connection is not private screen, click Advanced and then select Continue to...

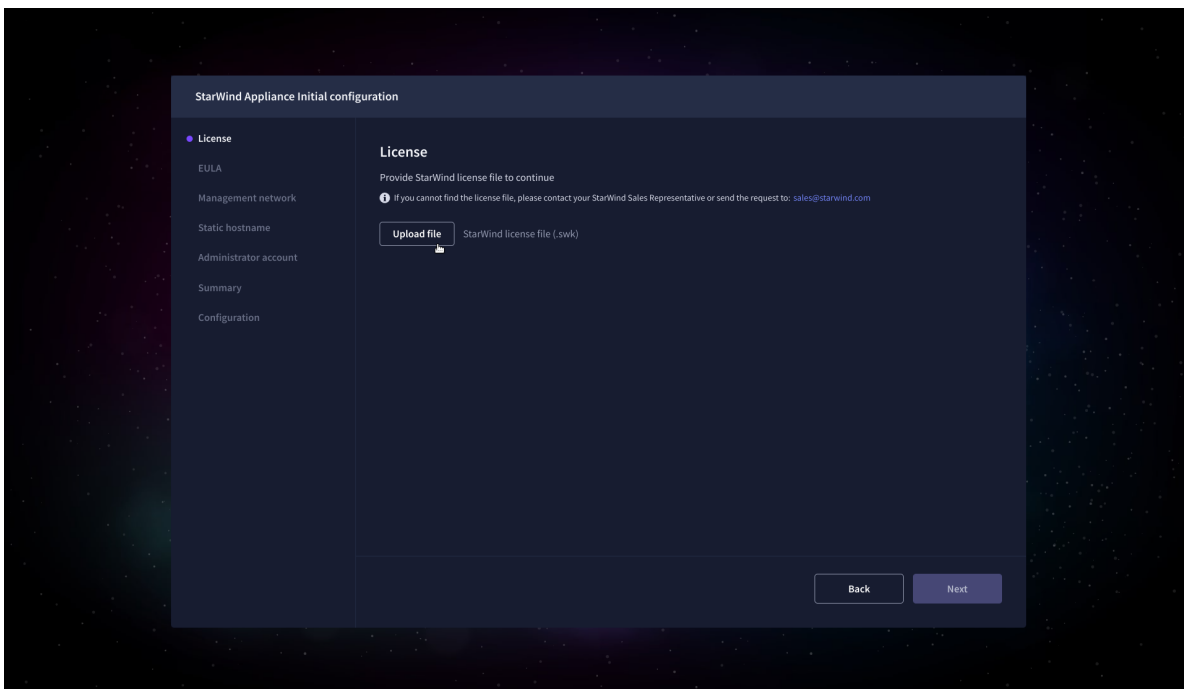


4. On the Welcome to StarWind Appliance screen, click Start to launch the Initial

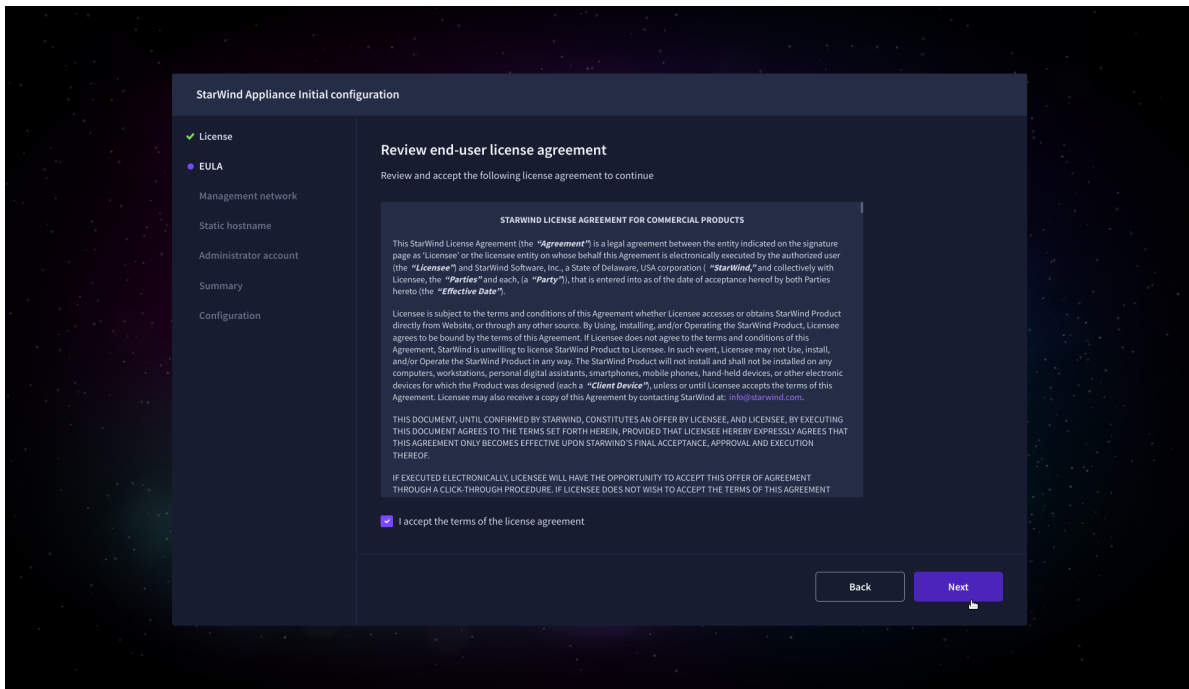
Configuration Wizard.



5. On the License step, upload the StarWind Virtual SAN license file.

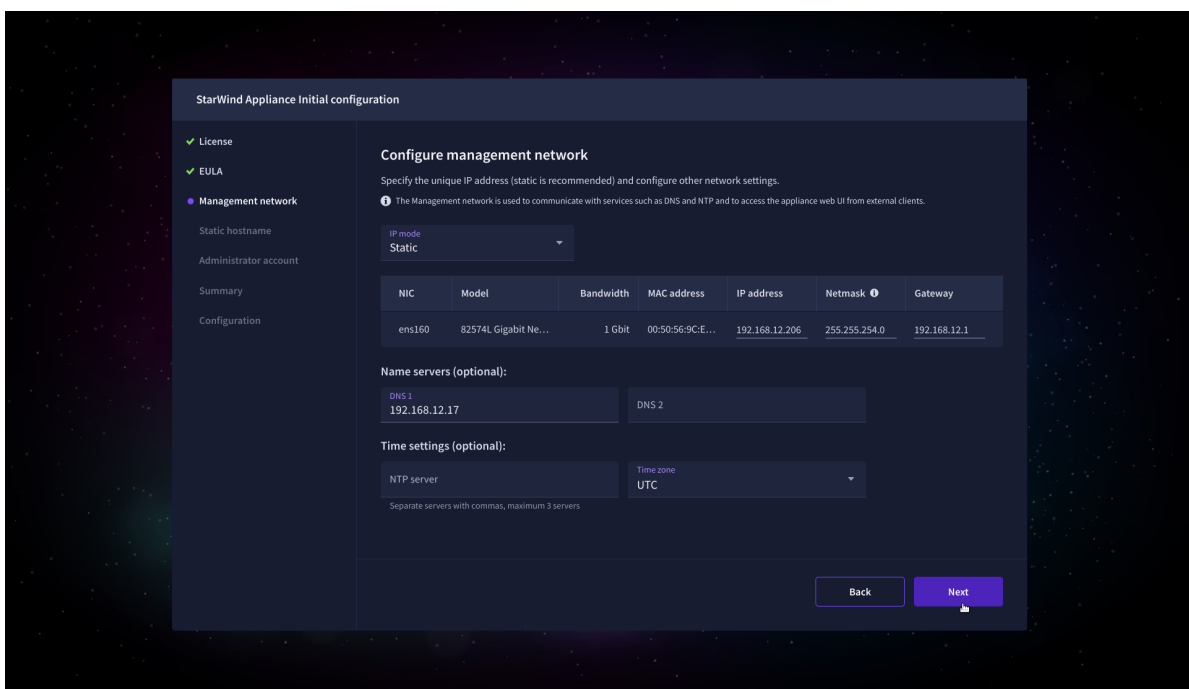


6. On the EULA step, read and accept the End User License Agreement to continue.

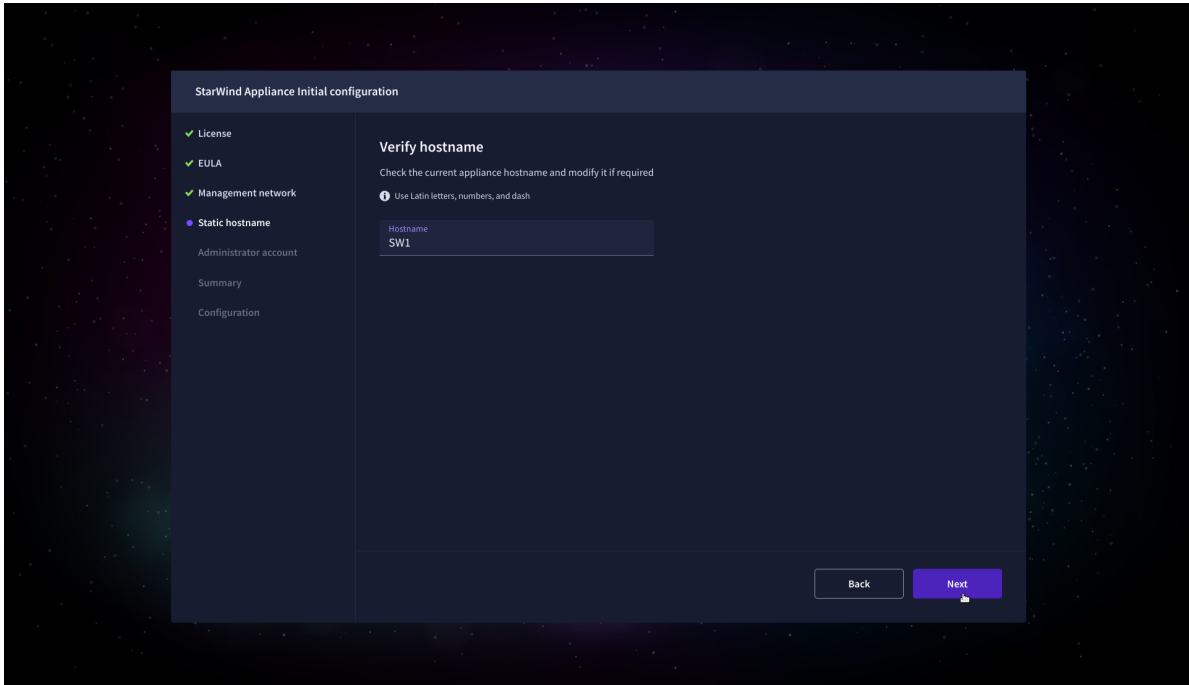


7. On the Management network step, review or edit the network settings and click Next.

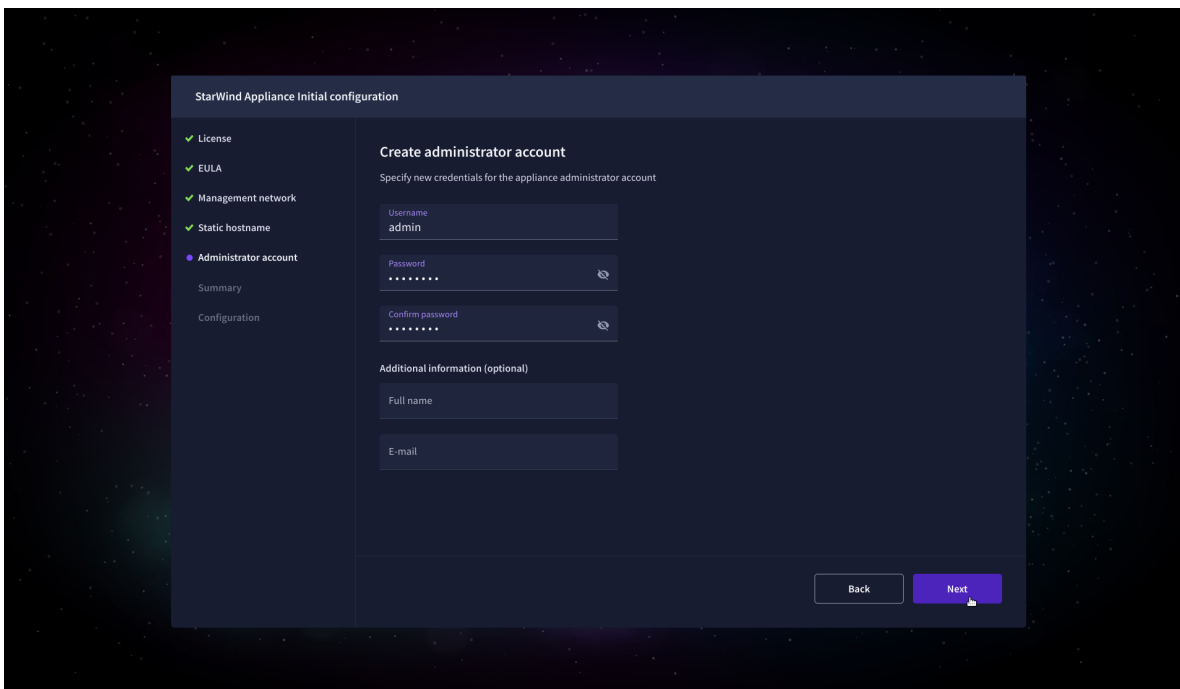
IMPORTANT: The use of Static IP mode is highly recommended.



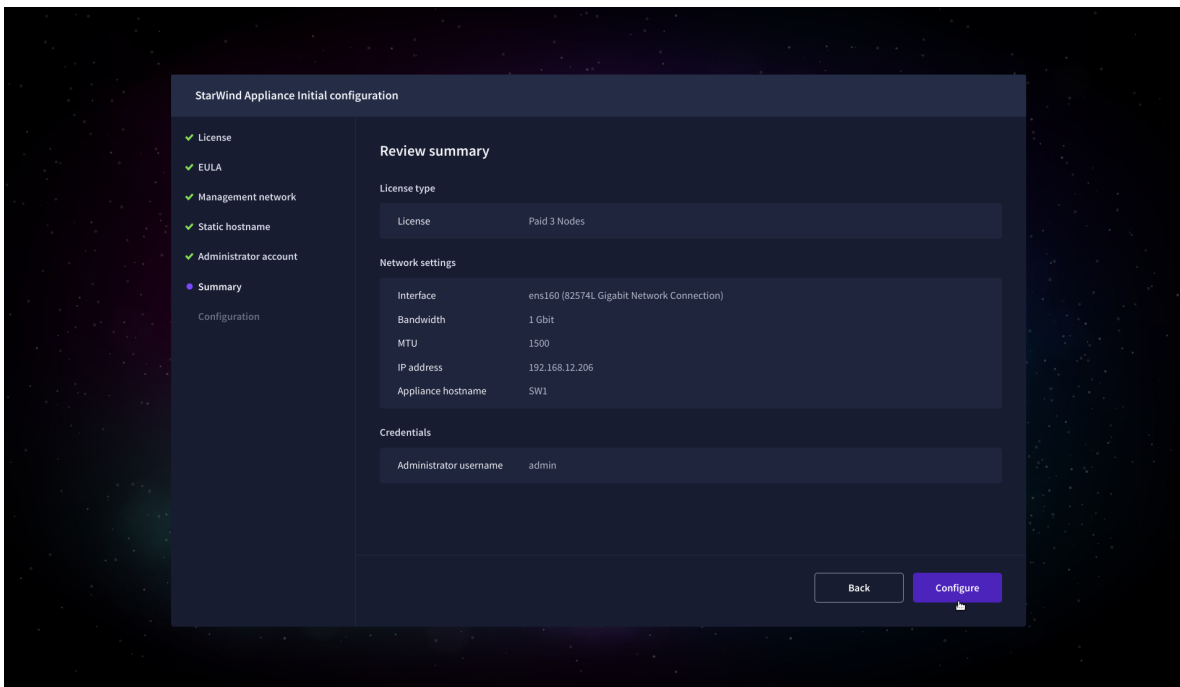
8. On the Static hostname, specify the hostname for the virtual machine and click Next.



9. On the Administrator account step, specify the credentials for the new StarWind Virtual SAN administrator account and click Next.

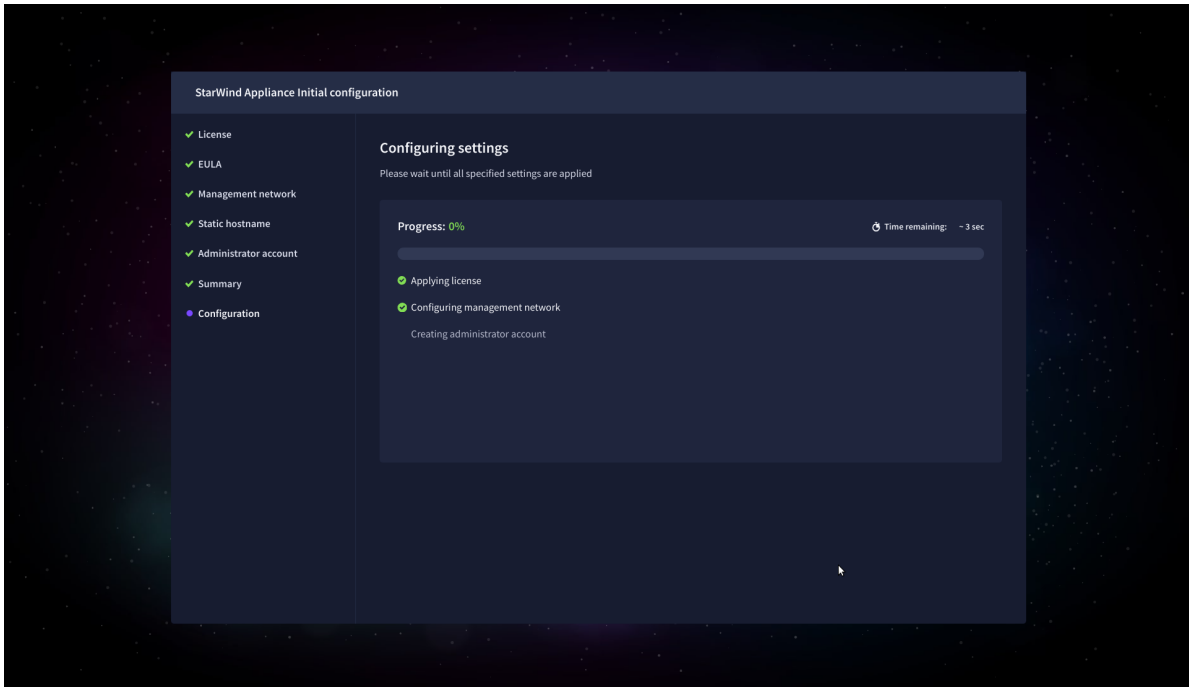


10. Wait until the Initial Configuration Wizard configures StarWind Virtual SAN for you.

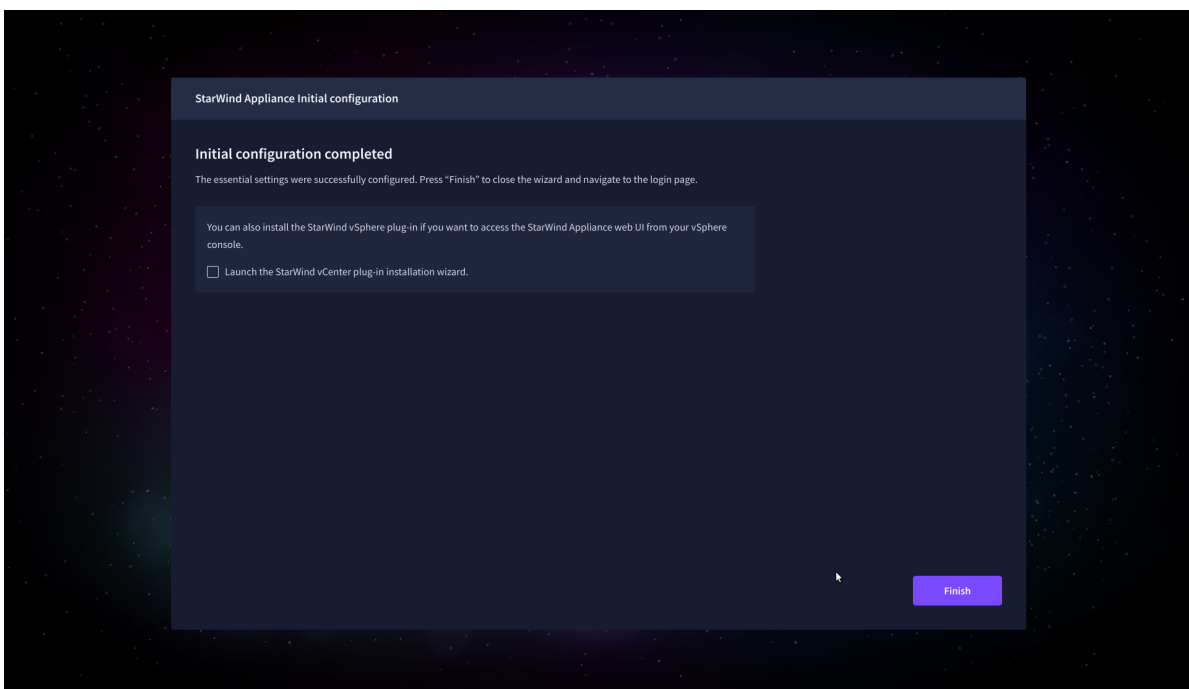


11. Please standby until the Initial Configuration Wizard configures StarWind VSAN for

you.



12. After the configuration process is completed, click Finish to install the StarWind vCenter Plugin immediately, or uncheck the checkbox to skip this step and proceed to the Login page.

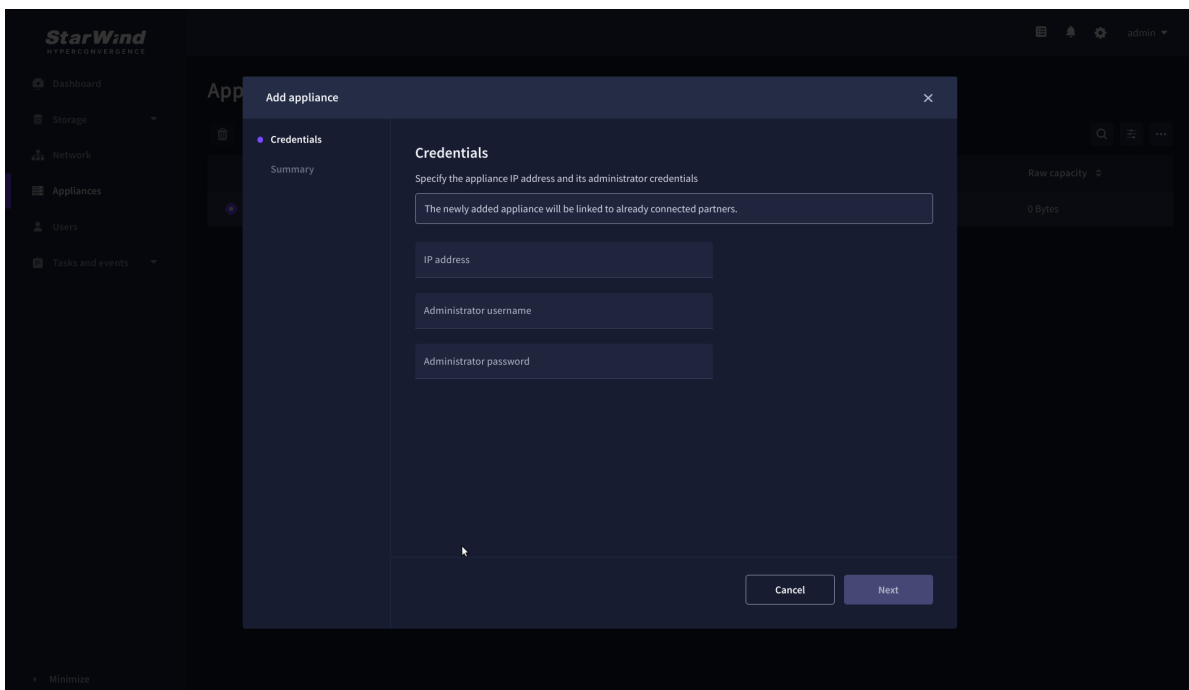


13. Repeat steps 1 through 12 on each Windows Server host.

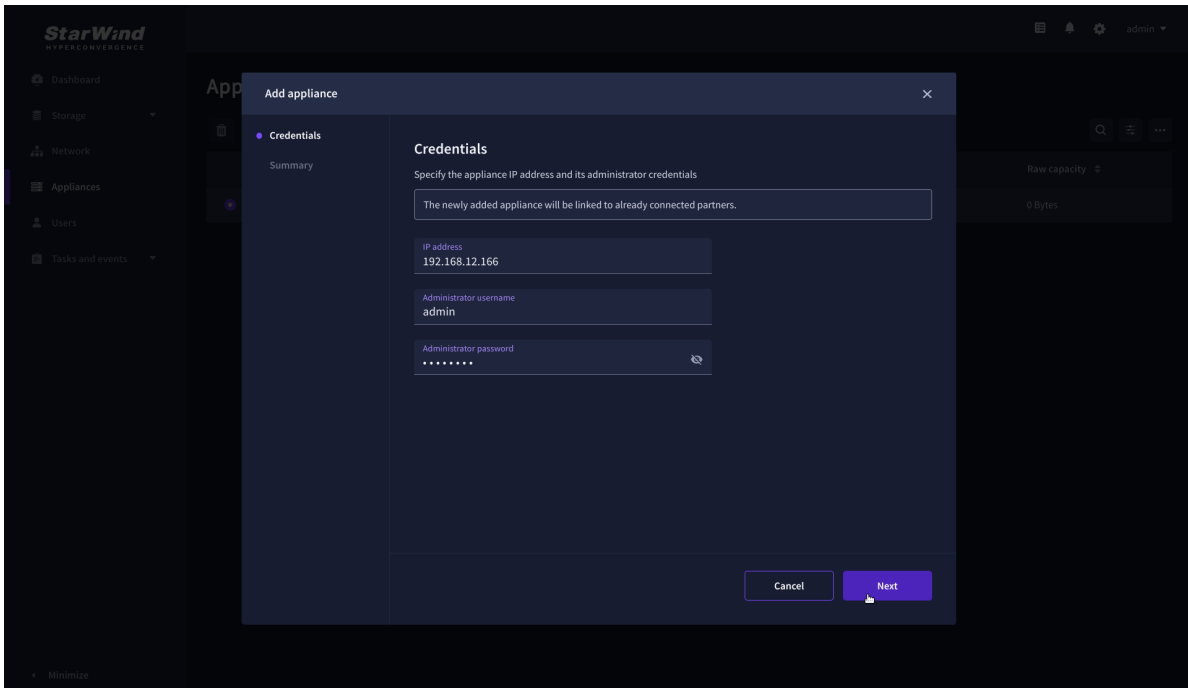
Add Appliance

To create replicated, highly available storage, add partner appliances that use the same StarWind Virtual SAN license key.

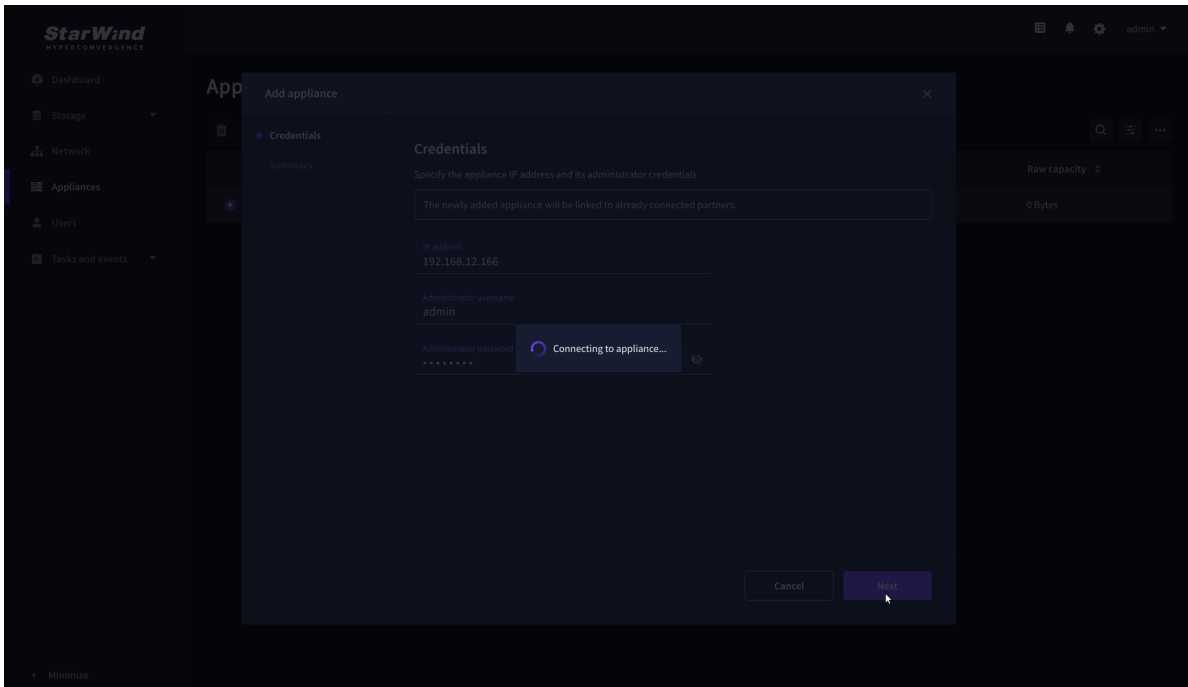
1. Navigate to the Appliances page and click Add to open the Add appliance wizard.
2. On the Credentials step, enter the IP address and credentials for the partner StarWind Virtual SAN appliance, then click Next.



3. Provide credentials of partner appliance.

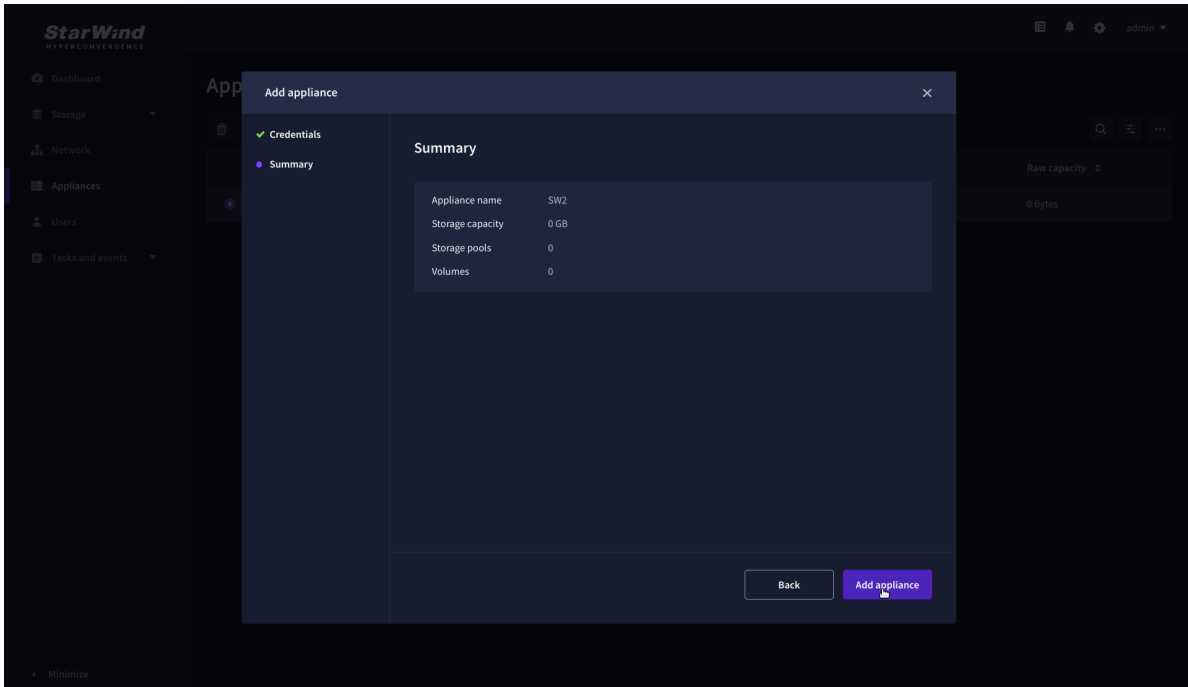


4. Wait for the connection to be established and the settings to be validated



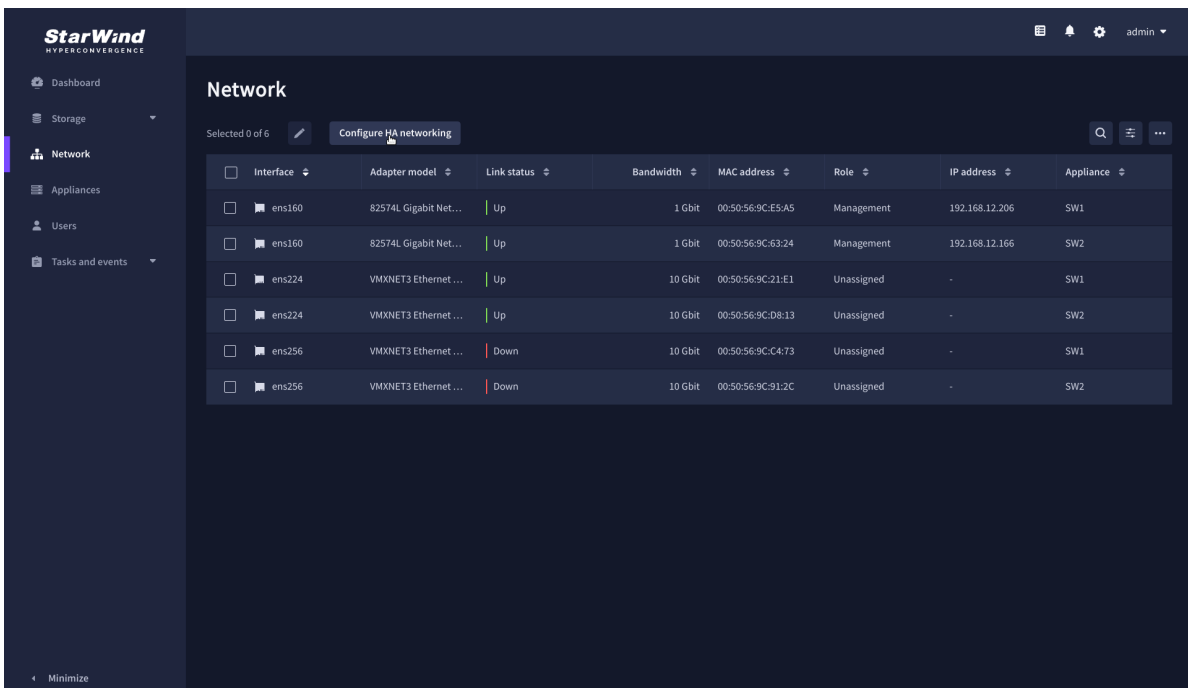
5. On the Summary step, review the properties of the partner appliance, then click Add

Appliance.



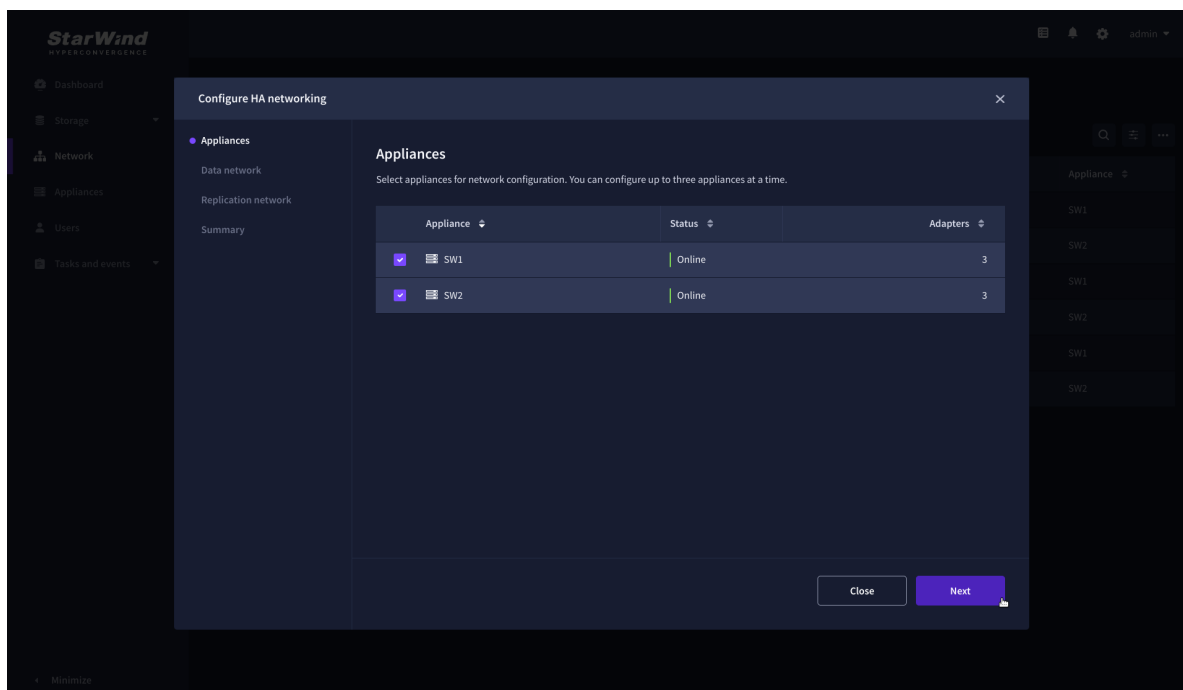
Configure Ha Networking

1. Navigate to the Network page and open Configure HA networking wizard.



2. On the Appliances step, select either 2 partner appliances to configure two-way replication, or 3 appliances for three-way replication, then click Next.

NOTE: The number of appliances in the cluster is limited by your StarWind Virtual SAN license.



3. On the Data Network step, select the network interfaces designated to carry iSCSI or NVMe-oF storage traffic. Assign and configure at least one interface on each appliance (in our example: 172.16.10.10 and 172.16.10.20) with a static IP address in a unique network (subnet), specify the subnet mask and Cluster MTU size.

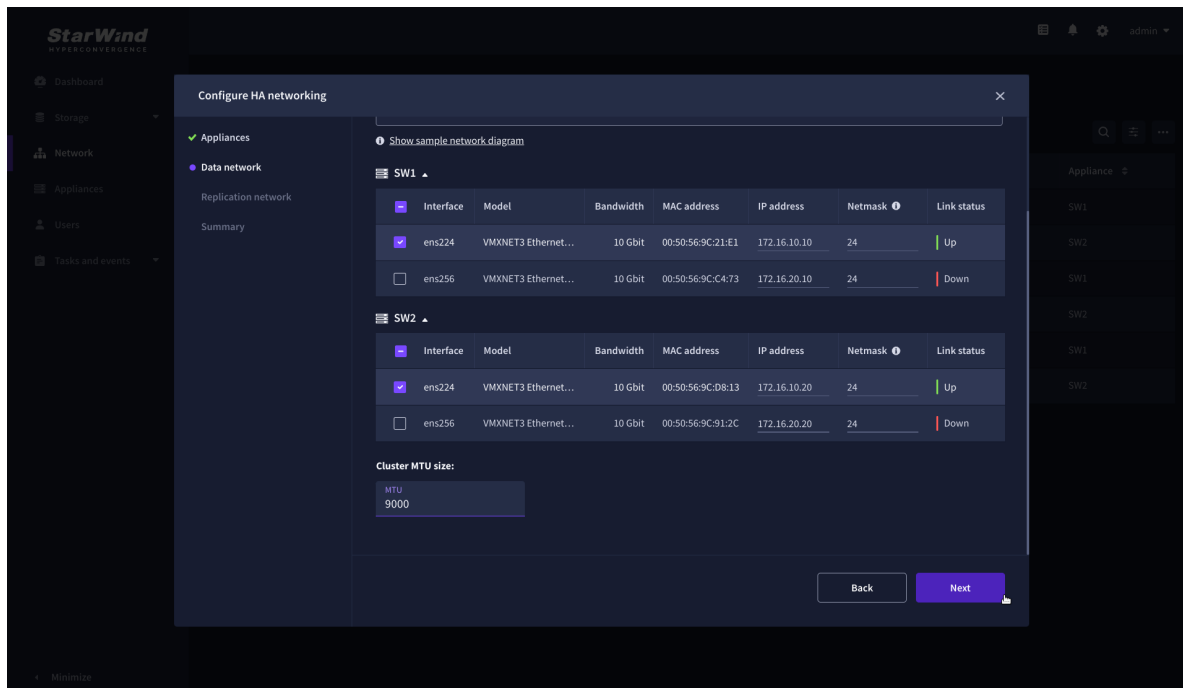
IMPORTANT: For a redundant, high-availability configuration, configure at least 2 network interfaces on each appliance. Ensure that the Data Network interfaces are interconnected between appliances through multiple direct links or via redundant switches.

4. Assign MTU value on all selected network adapters, e.g. 1500 or 9000 bytes. If you are using network switches with the selected Data Network adapters, ensure that they are configured with the same MTU size value. In case of MTU settings mismatch, stability and performance issues might occur on the whole setup.

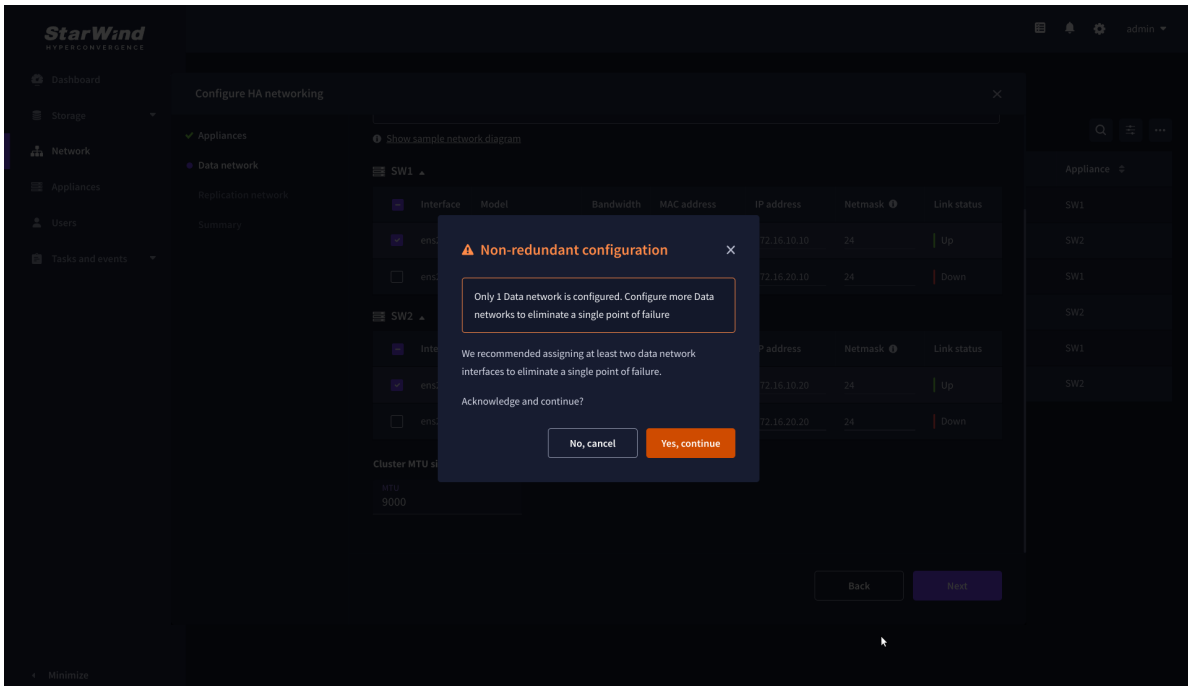
NOTE: Setting MTU to 9000 bytes on some physical adapters (like Intel Ethernet Network

Adapter X710, Broadcom network adapters, etc.) might cause stability and performance issues depending on the installed network driver. To avoid them, use 1500 bytes MTU size or install the stable version of the driver.

5. Once configured, click Next to validate network settings.



6. The warning might appear if a single data interface is configured. Click Yes, continue to proceed with the configuration.



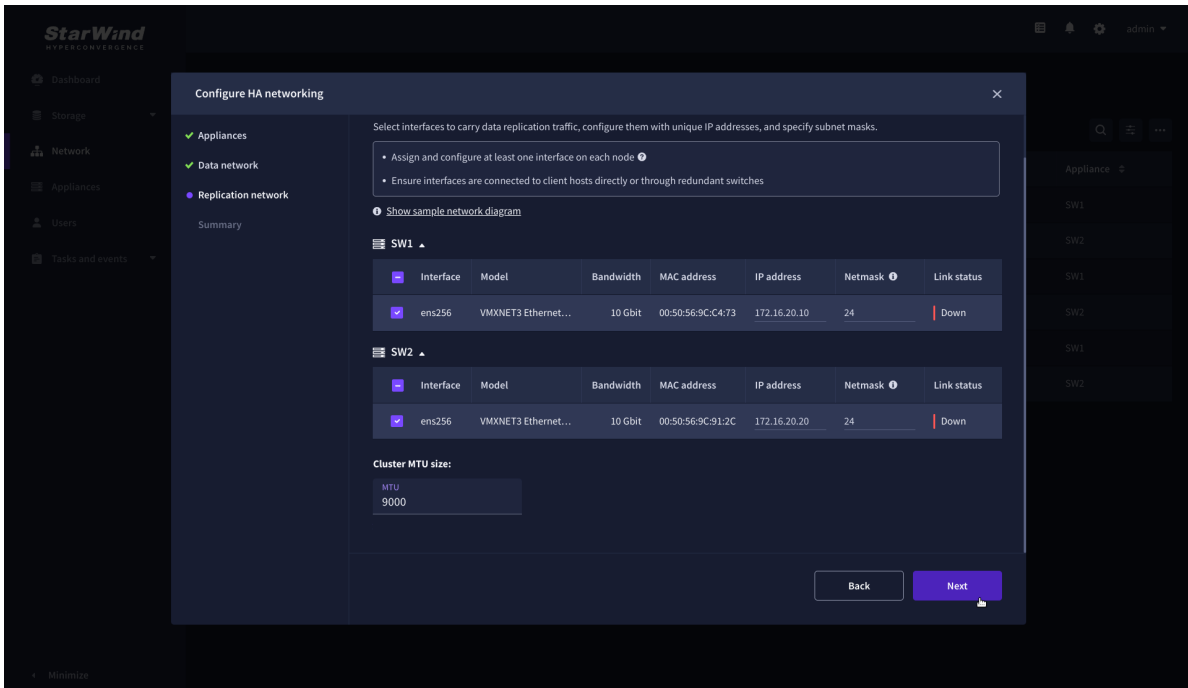
7. On the Replication Network step, select the network interfaces designated to carry the traffic for synchronous replication. Assign and configure at least one interface on each appliance with a static IP address in a unique network (subnet), specify the subnet mask and Cluster MTU size.

IMPORTANT: For a redundant, high-availability configuration, configure at least 2 network interfaces on each appliance. Ensure that the Replication Network interfaces are interconnected between appliances through multiple direct links or via redundant switches.

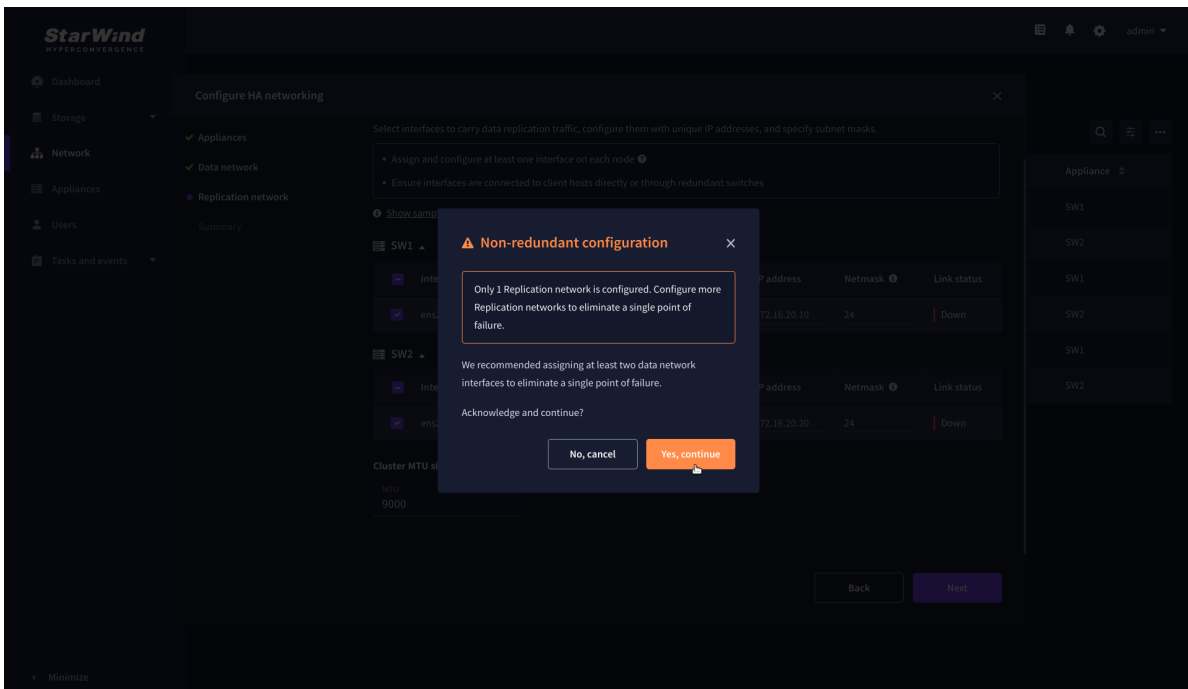
8. Assign MTU value on all selected network adapters, e.g. 1500 or 9000 bytes. If you are using network switches with the selected Replication Network adapters, ensure that they are configured with the same MTU size value. In case of MTU settings mismatch, stability and performance issues might occur on the whole setup.

NOTE: Setting MTU to 9000 bytes on some physical adapters (like Intel Ethernet Network Adapter X710, Broadcom network adapters, etc.) might cause stability and performance issues depending on the installed network driver. To avoid them, use 1500 bytes MTU size or install the stable version of the driver.

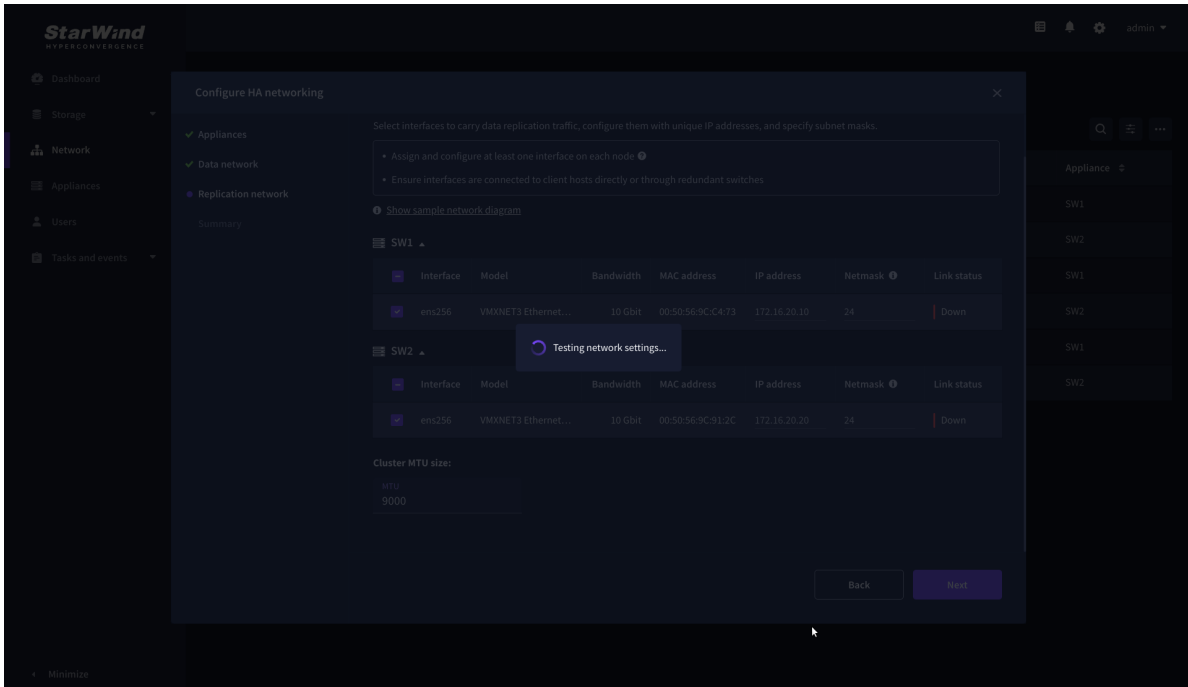
9. Once configured, click Next to validate network settings.



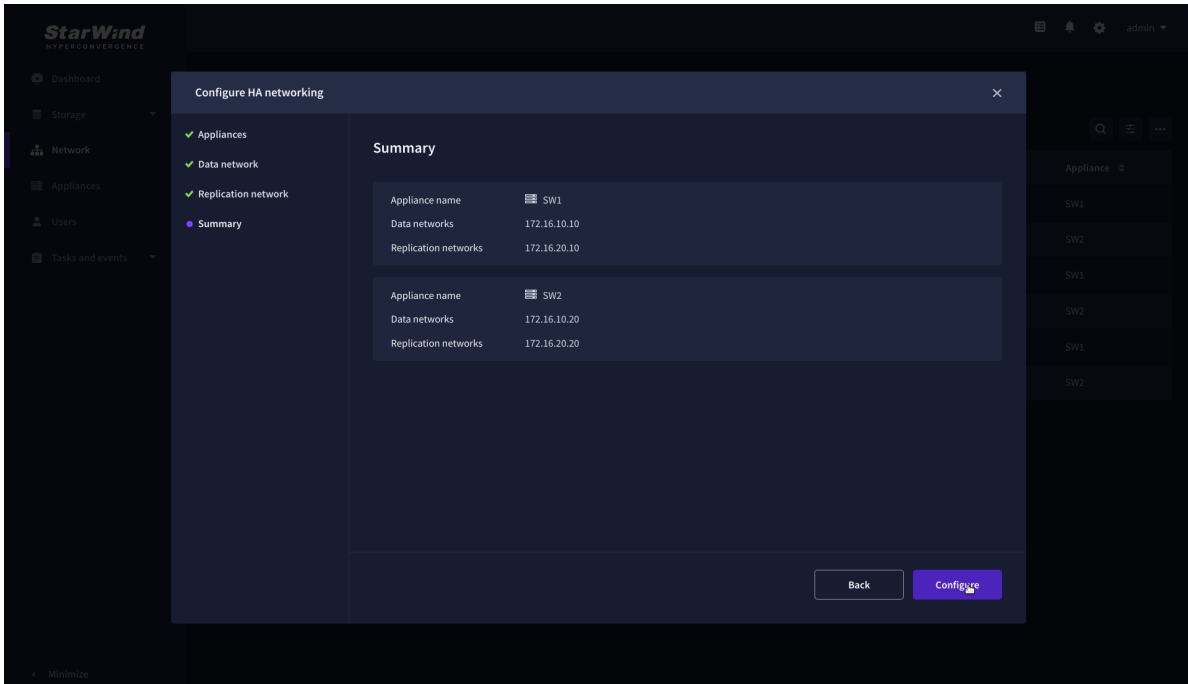
10. If only one Replication Network interface is configured on each partner appliance, a warning message will pop up. Click Yes, continue to acknowledge the warning and proceed.



11. Wait for the configuration completion.



12. On the Summary step, review the specified network settings and click Configure to apply the changes.



Add Physical Disks

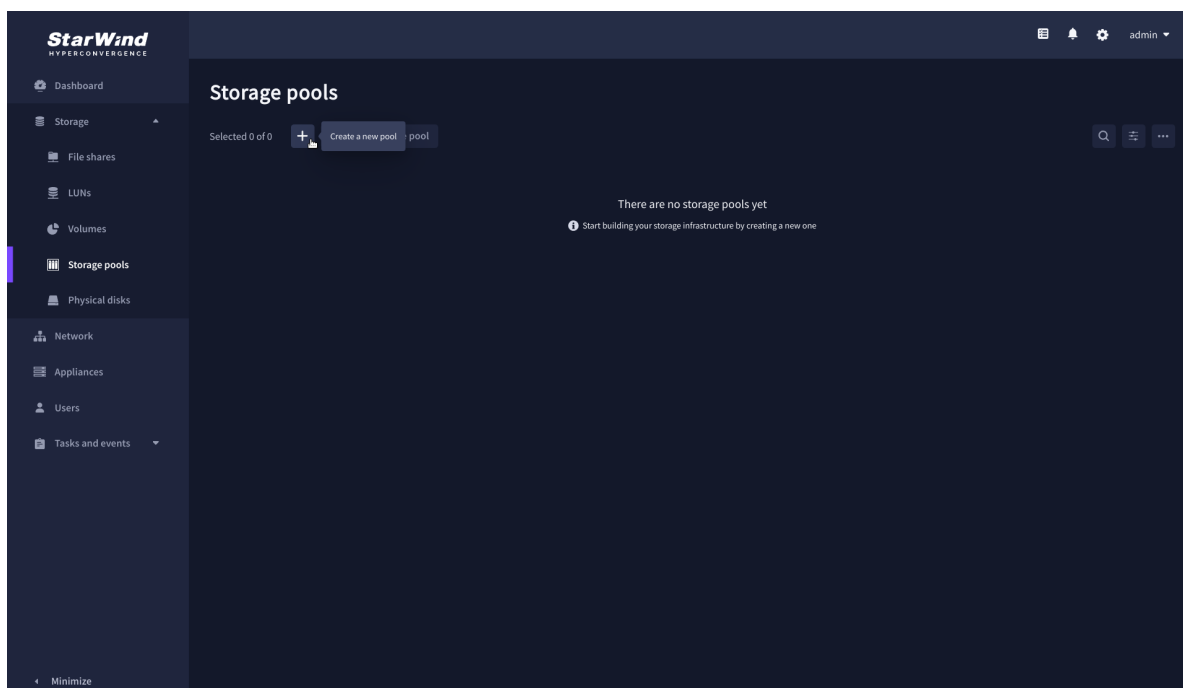
Attach physical storage to StarWind Virtual SAN Controller VM:

- Ensure that all physical drives are connected through an HBA or RAID controller.
- To get the optimal storage performance, add HBA, RAID controllers, or NVMe SSD drives to StarWind CVM via a passthrough device.

For detailed instructions, refer to [Microsoft's documentation on DDA](#). Also, find the storage provisioning guidelines in the [KB article](#).

Create Storage Pool

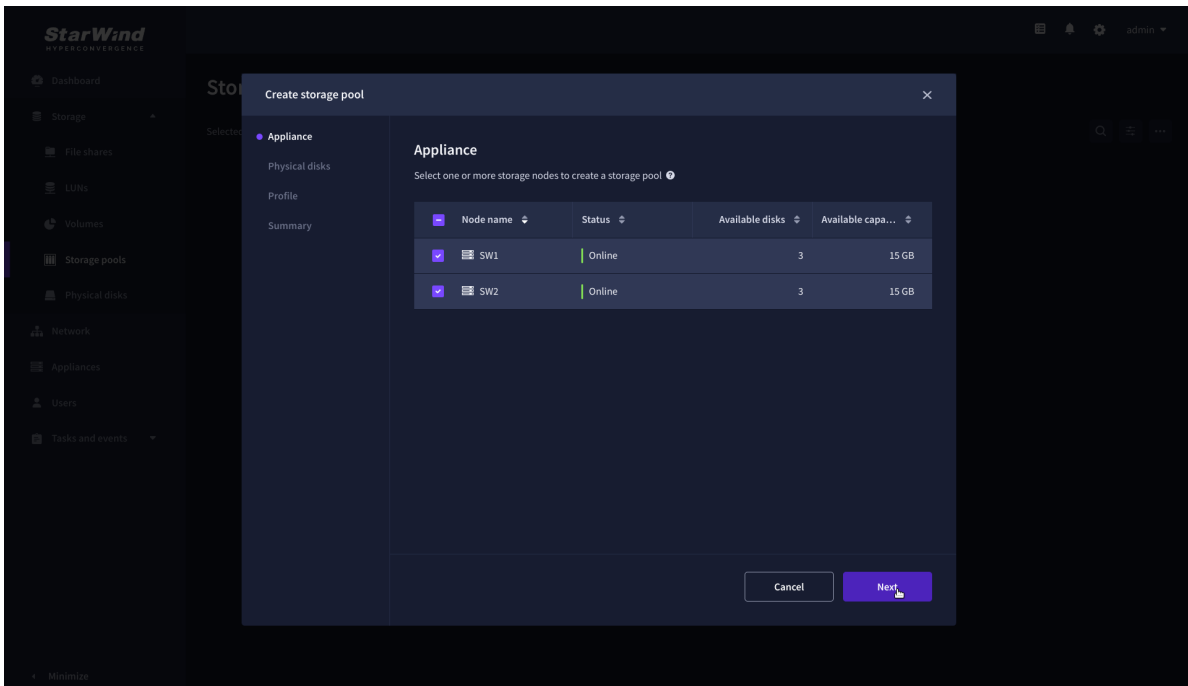
1. Navigate to the Storage pools page and click the + button to open the Create storage pool wizard .



2. On the Appliance step, select partner appliances on which to create new storage pools, then click Next.

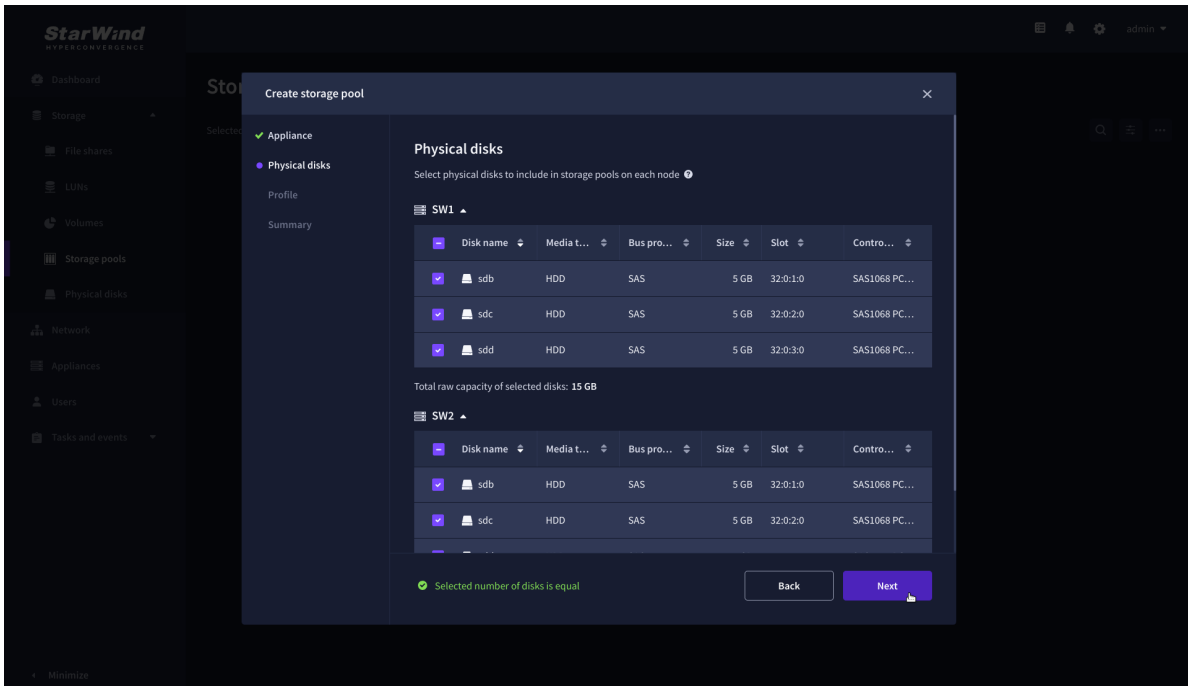
NOTE: Select 2 appliances for configuring storage pools if you are deploying a two-node cluster with two-way replication, or select 3 appliances for configuring a three-node

cluster with a three-way mirror.

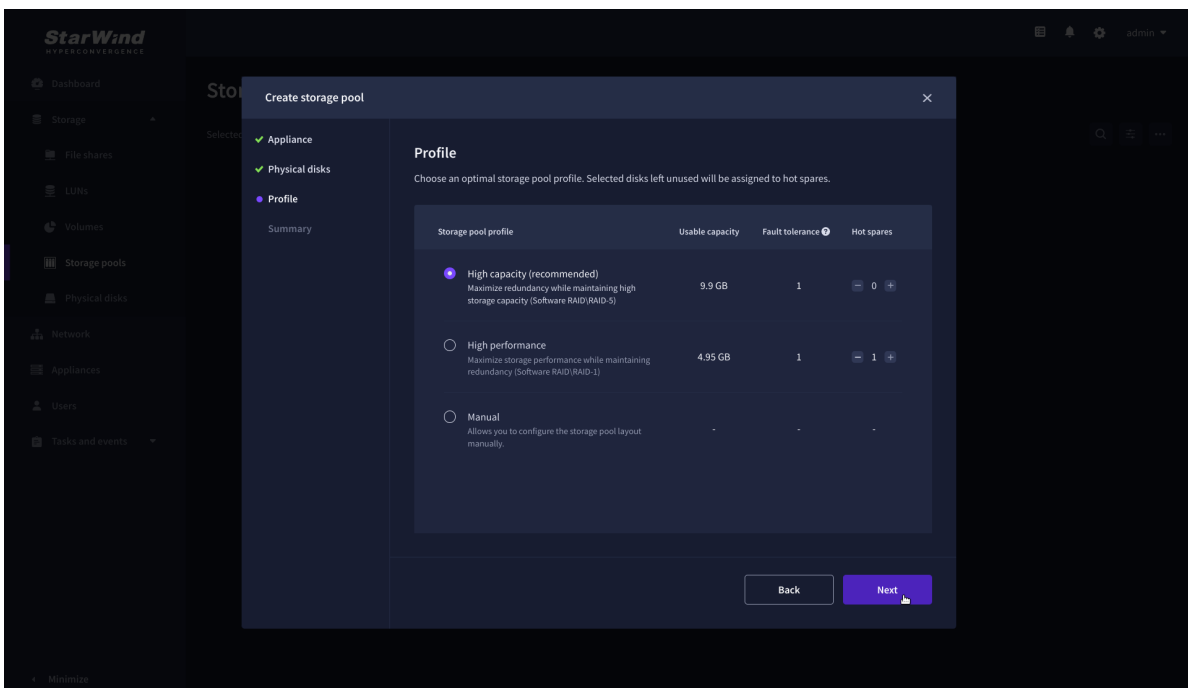


3. On the Physical disks step, select physical disks to be pooled on each node, then click Next.

IMPORTANT: Select an identical type and number of disks on each appliance to create storage pools with a uniform configuration.



4. On the Profile step, select one of the preconfigured storage profiles, or choose Manual to configure the storage pool manually based on your redundancy, capacity, and performance requirements, then click Next.

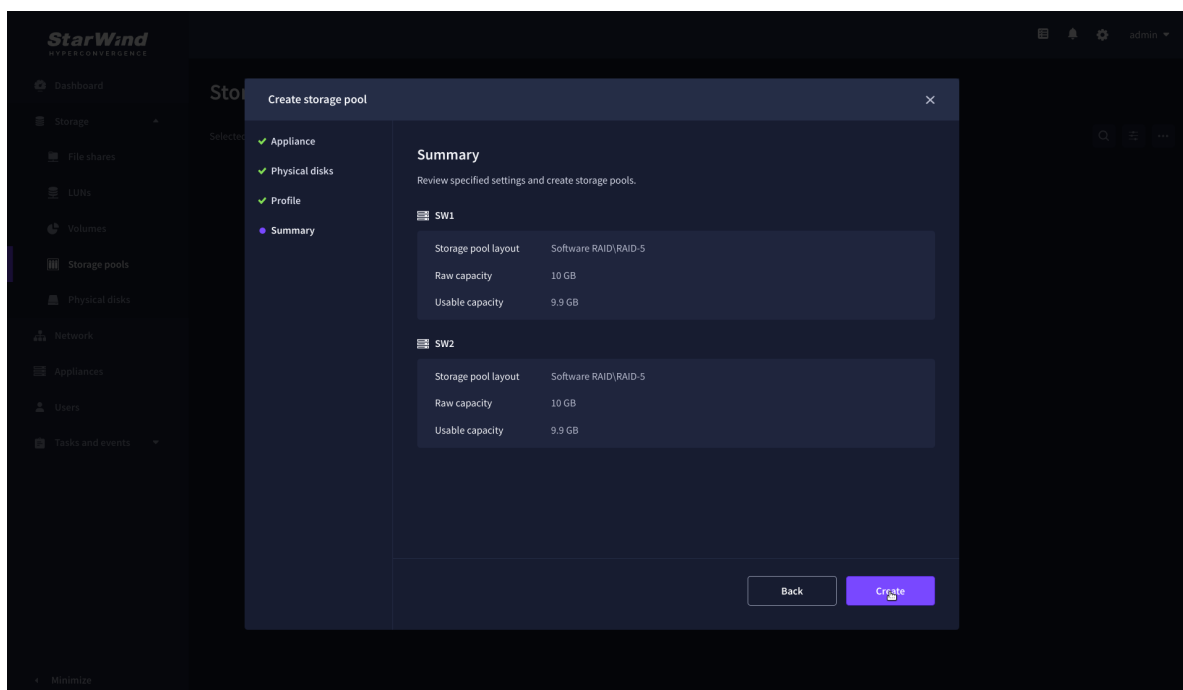


NOTE: Hardware RAID, Linux Software RAID, and ZFS storage pools are supported. To

simplify the configuration of storage pools, preconfigured storage profiles are provided. These profiles recommend a pool type and layout based on the attached storage:

- High capacity - creates Linux Software RAID-5 to maximize storage capacity while maintaining redundancy.
- High performance - creates Linux Software RAID-10 to maximize storage performance while maintaining redundancy.
- Hardware RAID - configures a hardware RAID virtual disk as a storage pool. This option is available only if a hardware RAID controller is passed through to the StarWind Virtual SAN.
- Better redundancy - creates ZFS Striped RAID-Z2 (RAID 60) to maximize redundancy while maintaining high storage capacity.
- Manual - allows users to configure any storage pool type and layout with the attached storage.

5. On the Summary step, review the storage pool settings and click Create to configure new storage pools on the selected appliances.



NOTE: The storage pool configuration may take some time, depending on the type of pooled storage and the total storage capacity. Once the pools are created, a notification will appear in the upper right corner of the Web UI.

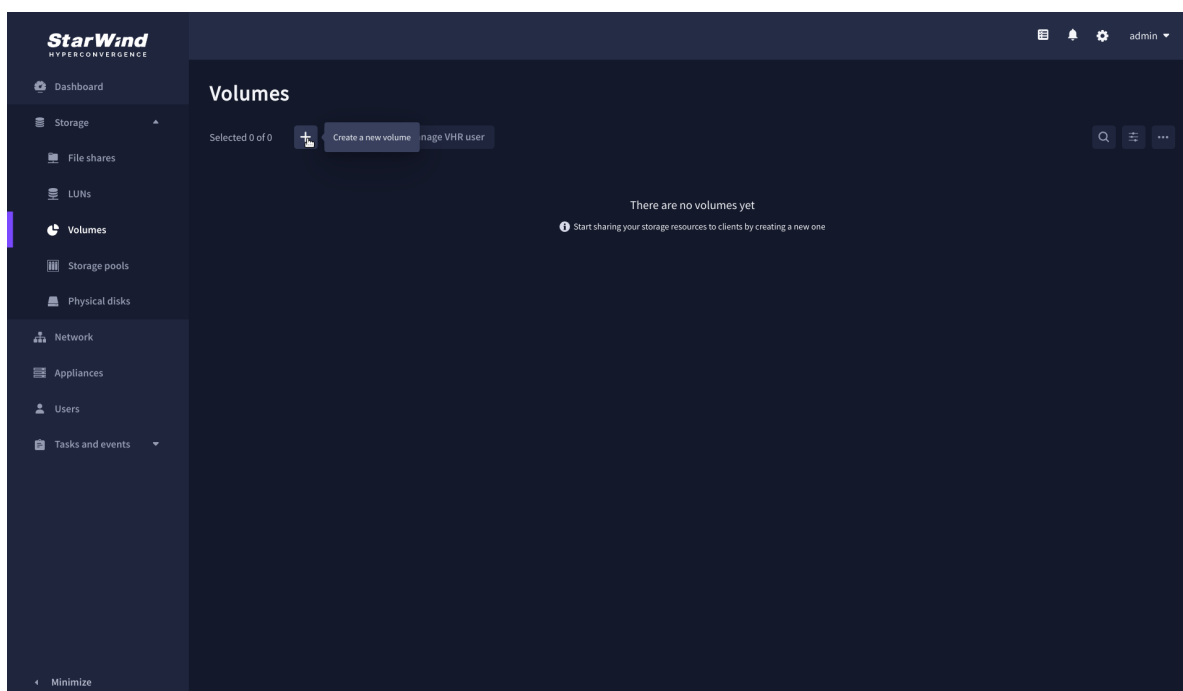
IMPORTANT: In some cases, additional tweaks are required to optimize the storage performance of the disks added to the Controller Virtual Machine. Please follow the steps in this KB to change the scheduler type depending on the disks type:

<https://knowledgebase.starwindsoftware.com/guidance/starwind-vsane-for-vsphere-changi>

[ng-linux-i-o-scheduler-to-optimize-storage-performance/](#)

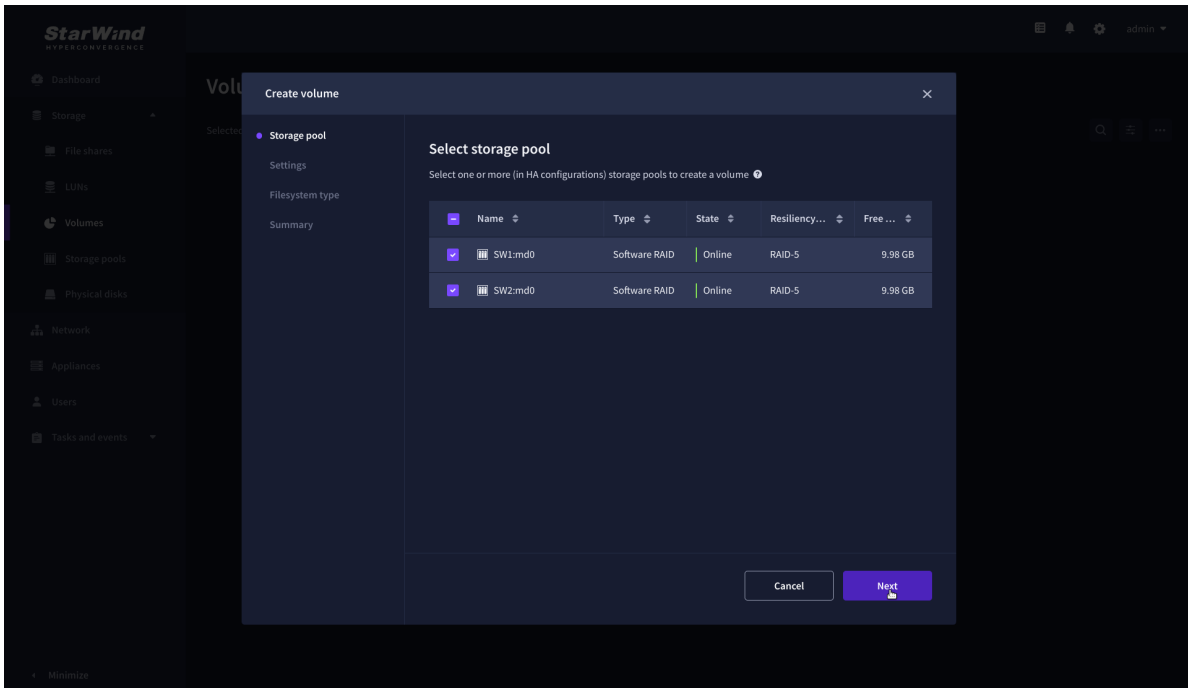
Create Volume

1. Navigate to the Volumes page and click the + button to open the Create volume wizard.

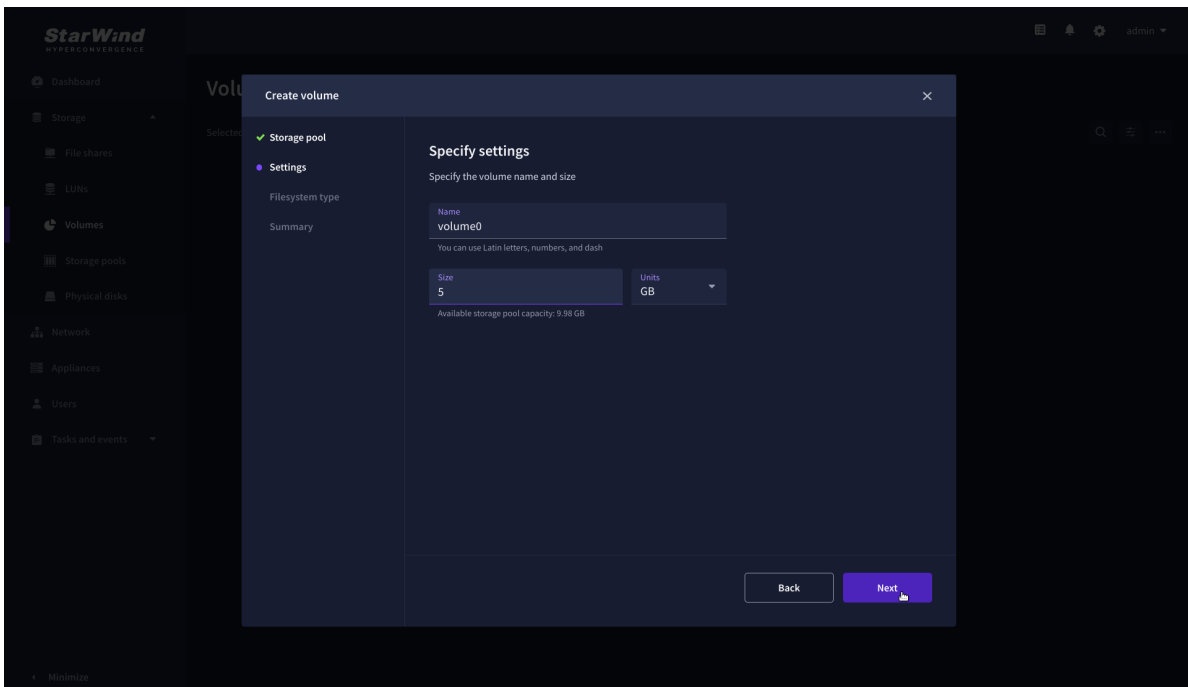


2. On the Storage pool step, select partner appliances on which to create new volumes, then click Next.

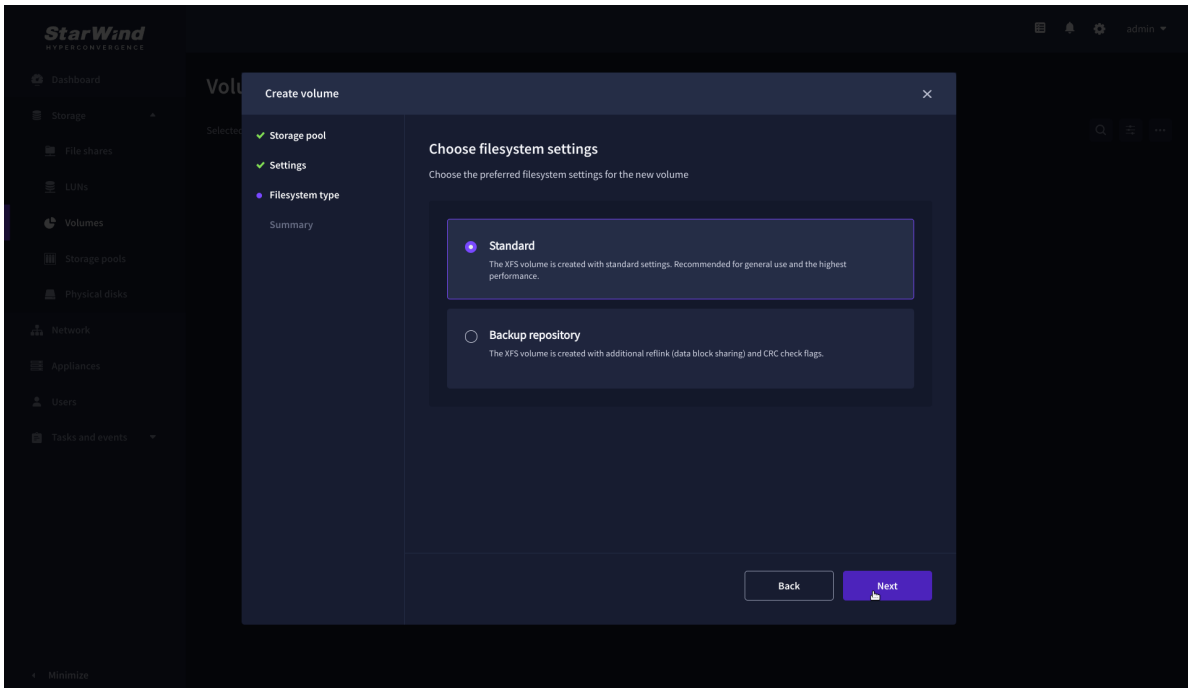
NOTE: Select 2 appliances for configuring volumes if you are deploying a two-node cluster with two-way replication, or select 3 appliances for configuring a three-node cluster with a three-way mirror.



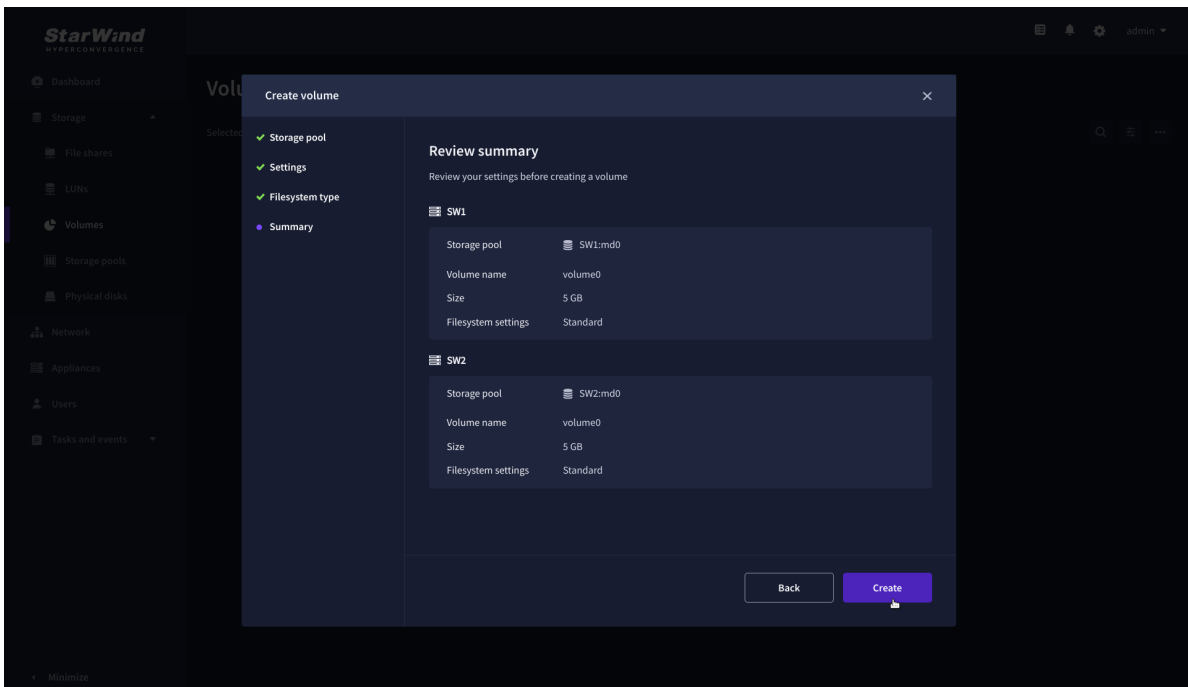
3. On the Settings step, specify the volume name and size, then click Next.



4. On the Filesystem type step, select Standard, then click Next.

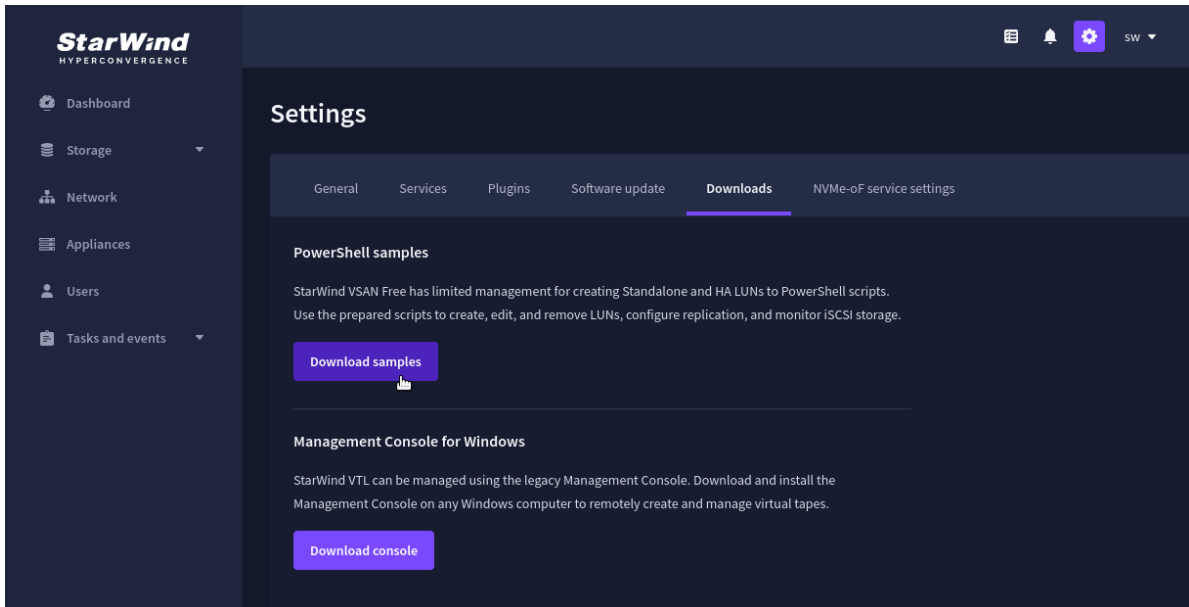


5. Review Summary and click the Create button to create the pool.



Install Powershell Samples

1. Using WebUI, open Settings and go to the Downloads tab.
2. Click Download samples to download the installer to any Windows machine.



3. Run the downloaded installation file on Windows machine that will be used for scripts execution.
4. Choose "Install StarWindX" to install the StarWindX PowerShell IDE and sample scripts.

Creating Starwind Ha Luns Using Powershell

1. Open PowerShell ISE as Administrator.
2. Open StarWindX sample CreateHA_2.ps1 using PowerShell ISE. It can be found here: C:\Program Files\StarWind Software\StarWind\StarWindX\Samples\

NOTE: The script below creates a 1TB size 2-node HA device with a heartbeat failover strategy on StarWind nodes with management IP addresses 192.168.0.1 and 192.168.0.2 correspondingly.

The IP addresses 172.16.10.1 and 172.16.10.2 are used as heartbeat interfaces along with 192.168.0.1 and 192.168.0.2 for redundancy.

The IP addresses 172.16.20.1 and 172.16.20.2 on each node correspondingly as well as 172.16.21.1 and 172.16.21.2 are used for the devices synchronization between the nodes.

The script does not create a directory. Make sure you create the directory listed as \$imagePath value before running the script.

Make sure to open 3261 and 3260 ports.

The same approach applies to CreateHA_3.ps1 which allow to create a 3-way replica HA device.

3. Configure script parameters according to the following example:

```
param($addr="192.168.0.1", $port=3261, $user="root",
$password="starwind",
    $addr2="192.168.0.2", $port2=$port, $user2=$user,
$password2=$password,
#common
    $initMethod="NotSynchronize",
    $size=1048576,
    $sectorSize=512,
    $failover=0,
    $bmpType=1,
    $bmpStrategy=0,
#primary node
    $imagePath="/mnt/sdb1/volume1",
    $imageName="device1",
    $createImage=$true,
    $storageName="",
    $targetAlias="target1",
    $poolName="pool1",
    $syncSessionCount=1,
    $luaOptimized=$true,
    $cacheMode="none",
    $cacheSize=0,
    $syncInterface="#p2=172.16.20.2:3260,172.16.21.2:3260",
    $hbInterface="#p2=172.16.10.2:3260,192.168.0.2:3260",
    $createTarget=$true,
    $bmpFolderPath="",
#secondary node
    $imagePath2="/mnt/sdb1/volume1",
    $imageName2="device1",
    $createImage2=$true,
```

```

    $storageName2="",
    $targetAlias2="target1",
    $poolName2="pool1",
    $syncSessionCount2=1,
    $aluaOptimized2=$false,
    $cacheMode2=$cacheMode,
    $cacheSize2=$cacheSize,
    $syncInterface2="#p1=172.16.20.1:3260,172.16.21.1:3260",
    $hbInterface2="#p1=172.16.10.1:3260,192.168.0.1:3260",
    $createTarget2=$true,
    $bmpFolderPath=""
)
Import-Module StarWindX

try
{
    Enable-SWXLog -level SW_LOG_LEVEL_DEBUG

    $server = New-SWServer -host $addr -port $port -user
$user -password $password

    $server.Connect()

    $firstNode = new-Object Node

    $firstNode.HostName = $addr
    $firstNode.HostPort = $port
    $firstNode.Login = $user
    $firstNode.Password = $password
    $firstNode.ImagePath = $imagePath
    $firstNode.ImageName = $imageName
    $firstNode.Size = $size
    $firstNode.CreateImage = $createImage
    $firstNode.StorageName = $storageName
    $firstNode.TargetAlias = $targetAlias
    $firstNode.AutoSynch = $autoSynch
    $firstNode.SyncInterface = $syncInterface
    $firstNode.HBInterface = $hbInterface
    $firstNode.PoolName = $poolName
    $firstNode.SyncSessionCount = $syncSessionCount
    $firstNode.ALUAOptimized = $aluaOptimized
    $firstNode.CacheMode = $cacheMode
    $firstNode.CacheSize = $cacheSize
    $firstNode.FailoverStrategy = $failover

```

```

$firstNode.CreateTarget = $createTarget
$firstNode.BitmapStoreType = $bmpType
$firstNode.BitmapStrategy = $bmpStrategy
$firstNode.BitmapFolderPath = $bmpFolderPath
#
# device sector size. Possible values: 512 or 4096(May
be incompatible with some clients!) bytes.
#
$firstNode.SectorSize = $sectorSize
$secondNode = new-Object Node

$secondNode.HostName = $addr2
$secondNode.HostPort = $port2
$secondNode.Login = $user2
$secondNode.Password = $password2
$secondNode.ImagePath = $imagePath2
$secondNode.ImageName = $imageName2
$secondNode.CreateImage = $createImage2
$secondNode.StorageName = $storageName2
$secondNode.TargetAlias = $targetAlias2
$secondNode.AutoSynch = $autoSynch2
$secondNode.SyncInterface = $syncInterface2
$secondNode.HBInterface = $hbInterface2
$secondNode.SyncSessionCount = $syncSessionCount2
$secondNode.ALUAOptimized = $aluaOptimized2
$secondNode.CacheMode = $cacheMode2
$secondNode.CacheSize = $cacheSize2
$secondNode.FailoverStrategy = $failover
$secondNode.CreateTarget = $createTarget2
$secondNode.BitmapFolderPath = $bmpFolderPath2
$device = Add-HADevice -server $server -firstNode
$firstNode -secondNode $secondNode -initMethod $initMethod
while ($device.SyncStatus -ne
[SwHaSyncStatus]::SW_HA_SYNC_STATUS_SYNC)
{
    $syncPercent =
$device.GetPropertyValue("ha_synch_percent")
    Write-Host "Synchronizing: $($syncPercent)%" -
foreground yellow

    Start-Sleep -m 2000

    $device.Refresh()
}

```

```

}
catch
{
    Write-Host $_ -foreground red
}
finally
{
    $server.Disconnect()
}

```

Detailed explanation of script parameters:

-addr, -addr2 — partner nodes IP address.

Format: string. Default value: 192.168.0.1, 192.168.0.2

allowed values: localhost, IP-address

-port, -port2 — local and partner node port.

Format: string. Default value: 3261

-user, -user2 — local and partner node user name.

Format: string. Default value: root

-password, -password2 — local and partner node user password.

Format: string. Default value: starwind

#common

-initMethod - set the initial synchronization option.

Format: string.

Values:

Clear - default

NotSynchronize - skips synchronization (works ONLY IF THERE IS NO DATA TO SKIP THE ORIGINAL SYNCHRONIZATION).

SyncFromFirst or SyncFromSecond or SyncFromThird - runs full synchronization from the specific node. Use it for recreating replicas.

-size - set size for HA-device (in MB)

Format: integer. Default value: 12

-sectorSize - set sector size for HA-device

Format: integer. Default value: 512

allowed values: 512, 4096

-failover - set type failover strategy

Format: integer. Default value: 0 (Heartbeat)

allowed values: 0, 1 (Node Majority)

-bmpType - set bitmap type, is set for both partners at once

Format: integer. Default value: 1 (RAM)
allowed values: 1, 2 (DISK)

-bmpStrategy – set journal strategy, is set for both partners at once
Format: integer. Default value: 0
allowed values: 0, 1 – Best Performance (Failure), 2 – Fast Recovery (Continuous)

-storageName is used only if you plan to add the partner to the existing device. For CreateHA_2.ps1 use, leave it as is.

#primary node

-imagePath – set path to store the device file
Format: string. Default value: My computer\C\starwind”. For Linux the following format should be used: “VSA Storage\mnt\mount_point”

-imageName – set name device
Format: string. Default value: masterImg21

-createImage – set create image file
Format: boolean. Default value: true

-targetAlias – set alias for target
Format: string. Default value: targetha21

-poolName – set storage pool. Do not change it and keep default value.
Format: string. Default value: pool1

-aluaOptimized – set Alua Optimized
Format: boolean. Default value: true

-cacheMode – set type L1 cache (optional parameter)
Format: string. Default value: wb
allowed values: none, wb, wt

-cacheSize – set size for L1 cache in MB (optional parameter)
Format: integer. Default value: 128
allowed values: 1 and more

-syncInterface – set sync channel IP-address from partner node
Format: string. Default value: “#p2={0}:3260”

-hbInterface – set heartbeat channel IP-address from partner node
Format: string. Default value: “”

-createTarget – set creating target
Format: string. Default value: true
Even if you do not specify the parameter -createTarget, the target will be created automatically.

If the parameter is set as -createTarget \$false, then an attempt will be made to create the device with existing targets, the names of which are specified in the -targetAlias (targets must already be created)

-bmpFolderPath – set path to save bitmap file
Format: string.

```
#secondary node
-imagePath2 - set path to store the device file
Format: string. Default value: "My computer\C\starwind". For Linux the following format
should be used: "VSA Storage\mnt\mount_point"
-imageName2 - set name device
Format: string. Default value: masterImg21
-creatImage2 - set create image file
Format: boolean. Default value: true
-targetAlias2 - set alias for targetFormat: string.
Default value: targetha22
-poolName2 - set storage pool. Do not change it and keep default value.
Format: string. Default value: pool1
-aluaOptimized2 - set Alua Optimized
Format: boolean. Default value: true
-cacheMode2 - set type L1 cache (optional parameter)
Format: string. Default value: wb
allowed values: wb, wt
-cacheSize2 - set size for L1 cache in MB (optional parameter)
Format: integer. Default value: 128
allowed values: 1 and more
-syncInterface2 - set sync channel IP-address from partner node
Format: string. Default value: "#p1={0}:3260"
-hbInterface2 - set heartbeat channel IP-address from partner node
Format: string. Default value: ""
-createTarget2 - set creating target
Format: string. Default value: true
Even if you do not specify the parameter -createTarget, the target will be created
automatically.If the parameter is set as -createTarget $false, then an attempt will be
made to create the device with existing targets, the names of which are specified in the -
targetAlias (targets must already be created)
-bmpFolderPath2 - set path to save bitmap file
Format: string.
```

IMPORTANT: If the script should be executed again with the same parameters, (for example, the first time execution has failed) make sure to do the following for one node at a time before the next attempt to execute the script:

1. Stop StarWind Service:

```
sudo systemctl stop starwind-virtual-san
```

2. Go to /opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-san/drive_c/starwind/headers and delete the headers you do not need.
3. Go to the underlying storage specified as \$imagePath and delete the header and imagefile there.

4. Go to the folder with StarWind.cfg (/opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-san/drive_c/starwind/StarWind.cfg) and copy it.
5. Edit StarWind.cfg:

```
sudo nano /opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-  
san/drive_c/starwind/StarWind.cfg
```

6. Navigate under <targets>, remove target you do not need.
7. Navigate under <devices>, and remove the device entry you do not need.
8. Start the service:

```
sudo systemctl start starwind-virtual-san
```

9. Wait for the devices synchronization.
10. Repeat for the remaining StarWind VSAN instance.

Selecting The Failover Strategy

StarWind provides 2 options for configuring a failover strategy:

Heartbeat

The Heartbeat failover strategy allows avoiding the “split-brain” scenario when the HA cluster nodes are unable to synchronize but continue to accept write commands from the initiators independently. It can occur when all synchronization and heartbeat channels disconnect simultaneously, and the partner nodes do not respond to the node’s requests. As a result, StarWind service assumes the partner nodes to be offline and continues operations on a single-node mode using data written to it.

If at least one heartbeat link is online, StarWind services can communicate with each other via this link. The device with the lowest priority will be marked as not synchronized and get subsequently blocked for the further read and write operations until the synchronization channel resumption. At the same time, the partner device on the synchronized node flushes data from the cache to the disk to preserve data integrity in case the node goes down unexpectedly. It is recommended to assign more independent heartbeat channels during the replica creation to improve system stability and avoid the “split-brain” issue.

With the heartbeat failover strategy, the storage cluster will continue working with only one StarWind node available.

Node Majority

The Node Majority failover strategy ensures the synchronization connection without any additional heartbeat links. The failure-handling process occurs when the node has detected the absence of the connection with the partner.

The main requirement for keeping the node operational is an active connection with more than half of the HA device's nodes. Calculation of the available partners is based on their "votes".

In case of a two-node HA storage, all nodes will be disconnected if there is a problem on the node itself, or in communication between them. Therefore, the Node Majority failover strategy requires the addition of the third Witness node or file share (SMB) which participates in the nodes count for the majority, but neither contains data on it nor is involved in processing clients' requests. In case an HA device is replicated between 3 nodes, no Witness node is required.

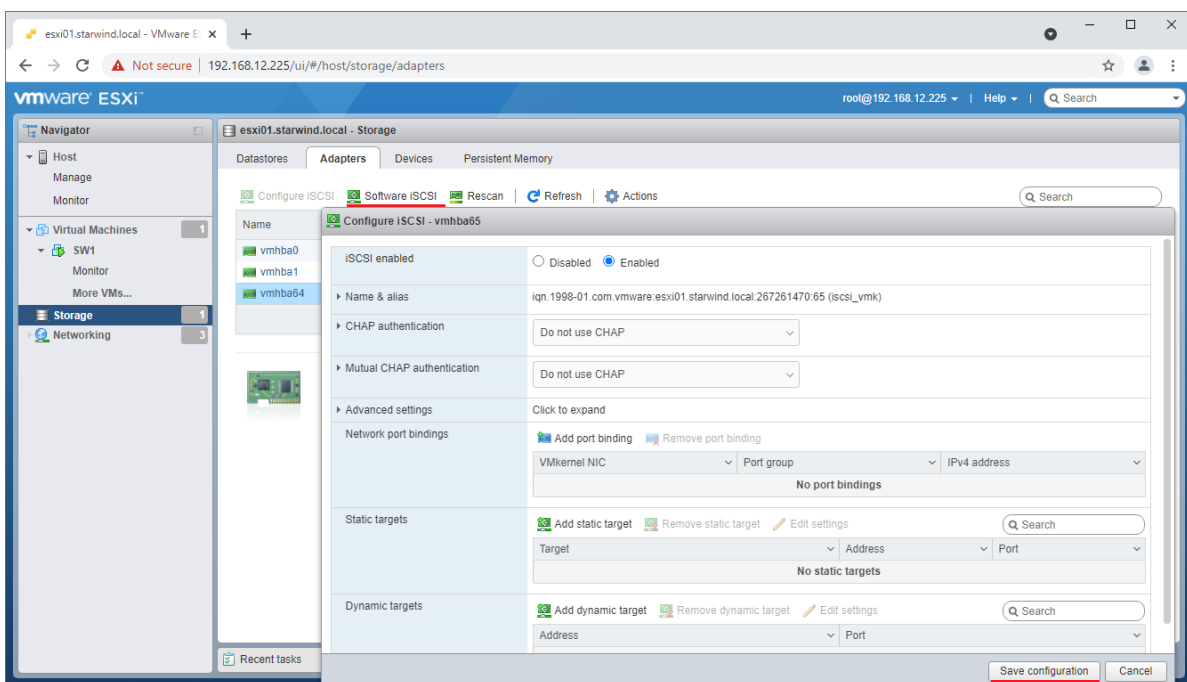
With Node Majority failover strategy, failure of only one node can be tolerated. If two nodes fail, the third node will also become unavailable to clients' requests.

Please select the required option:

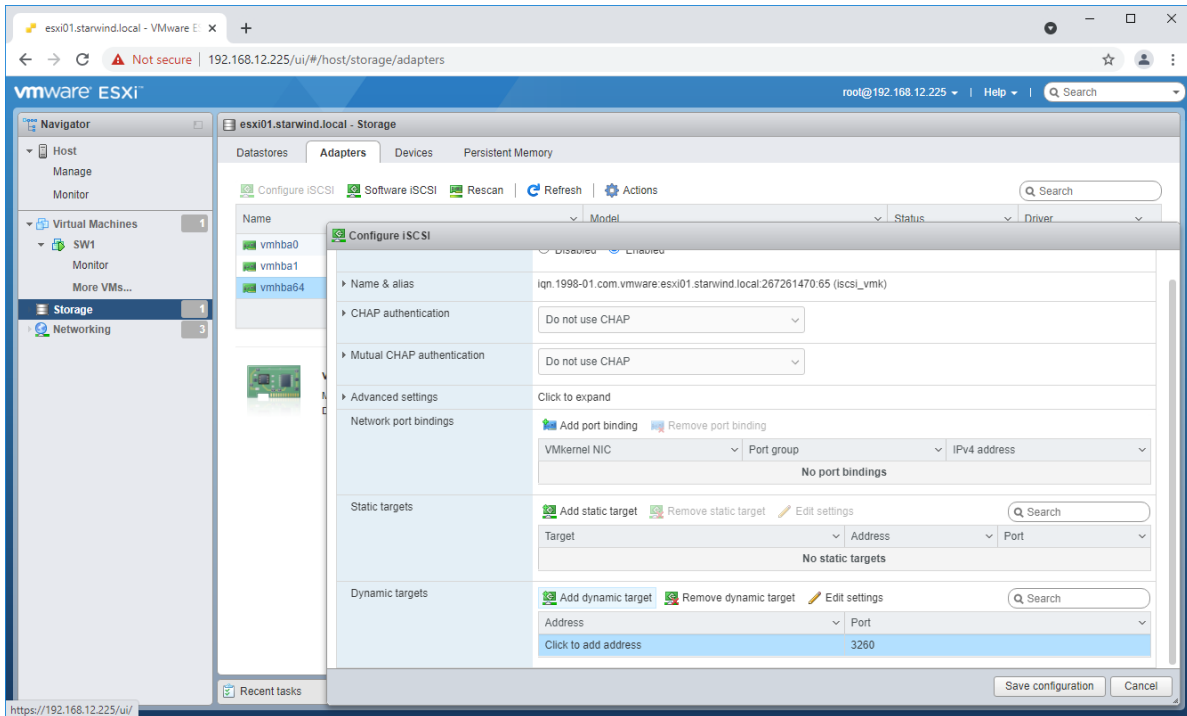
Preparing Datastores

Adding Discover Portals

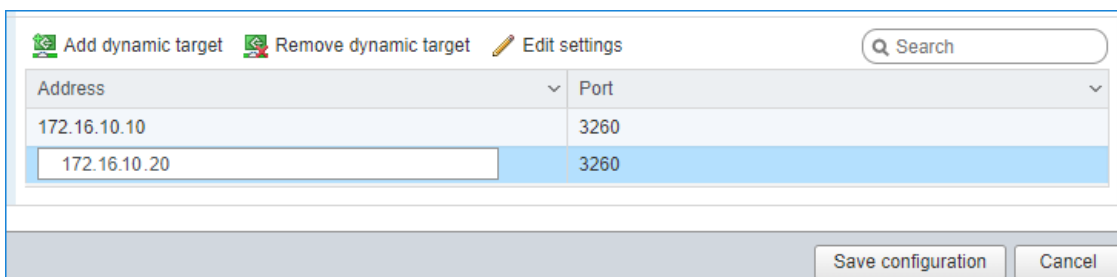
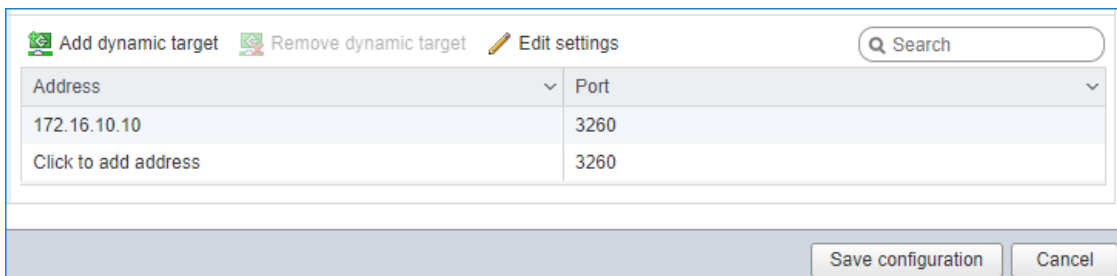
1. To connect the previously created devices to the ESXi host, click on the Storage -> Adapters -> Software iSCSI and in the appeared window choose the Enabled option to enable Software iSCSI storage adapter. Push the Save configuration button.



2. In the Configure iSCSI window, under Dynamic Targets, click on the Add dynamic target button to specify iSCSI interfaces.

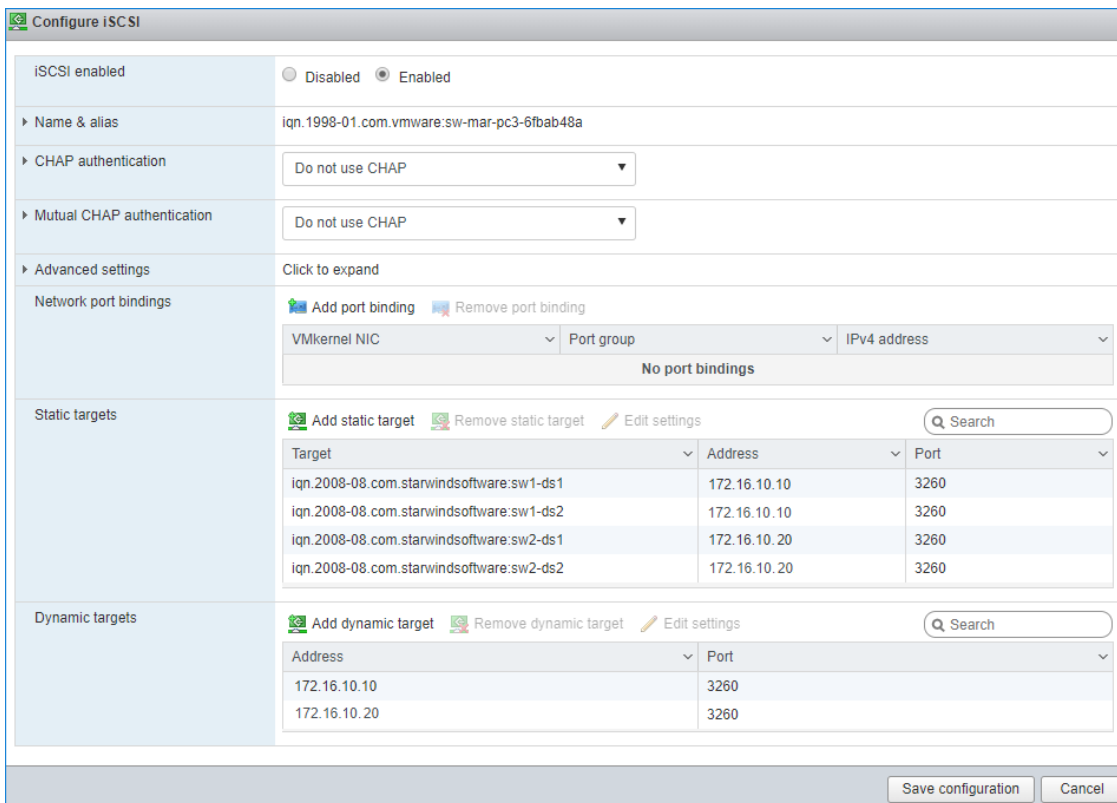


3. Enter the iSCSI IP addresses of all StarWind nodes for the iSCSI traffic.

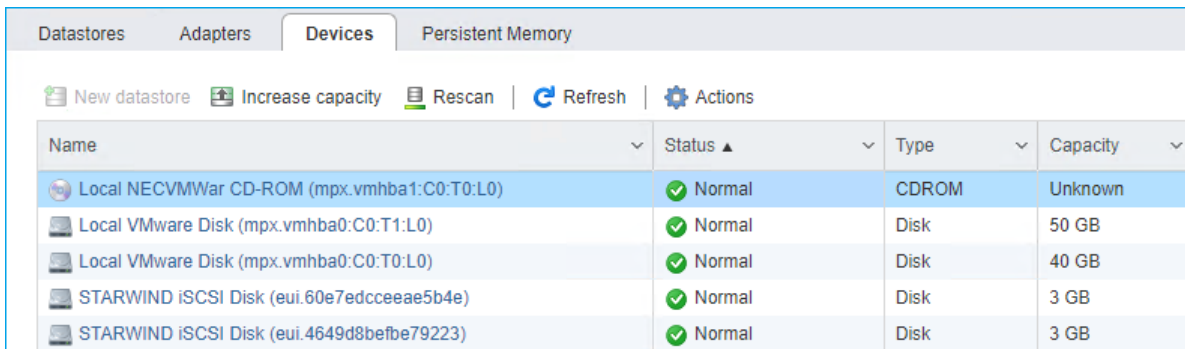


Confirm the actions by pressing Save configuration.

4. The result should look like in the image below.



5. Click on the Rescan button to rescan storage.

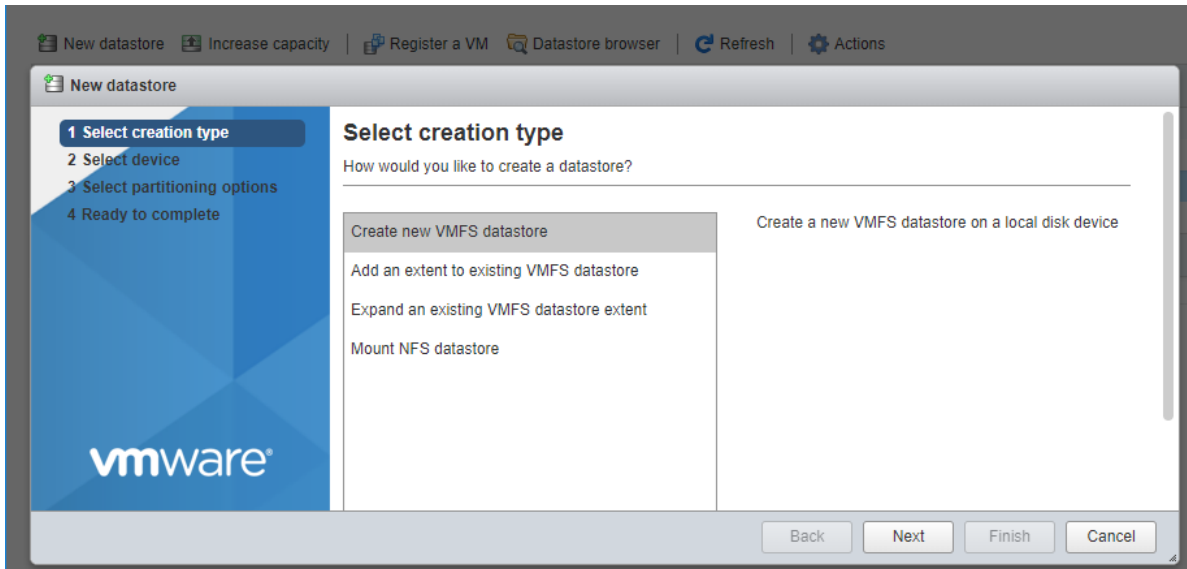


6. Now, the previously created StarWind devices are visible to the system.

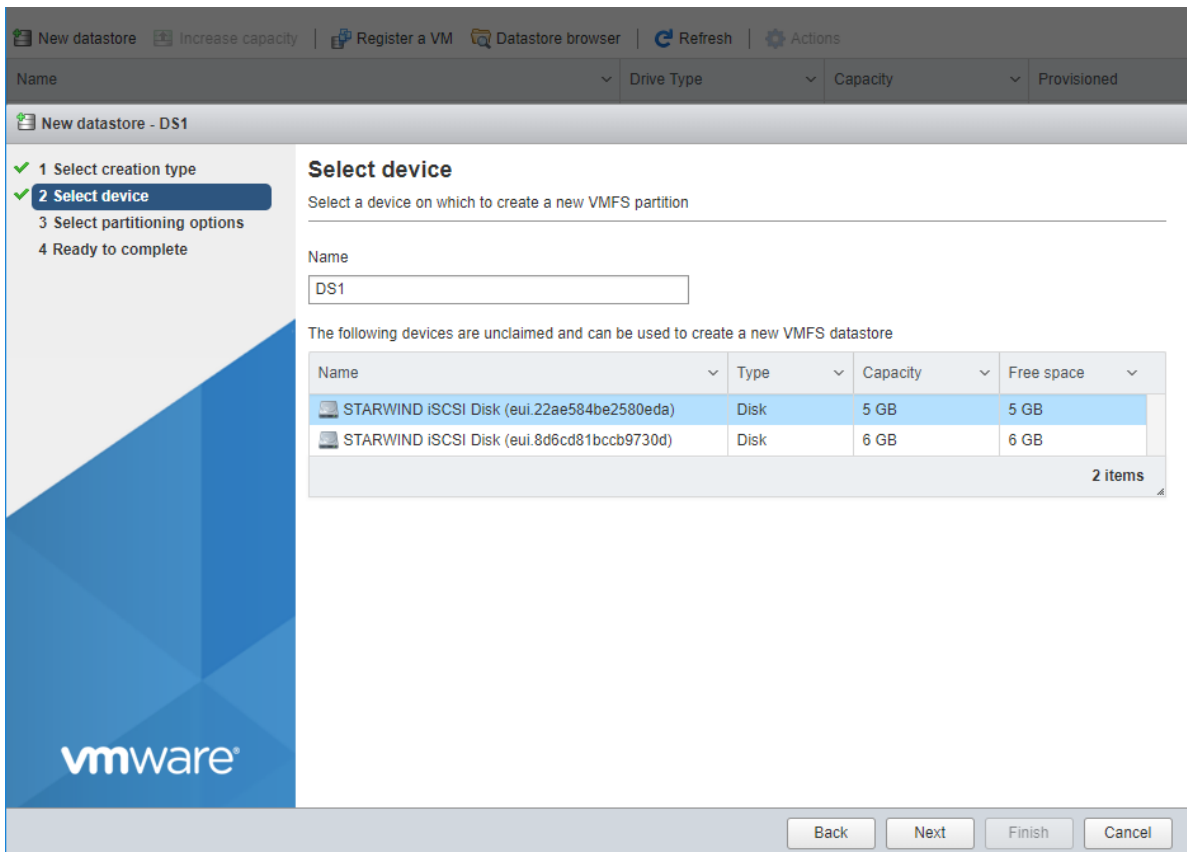
7. Repeat all the steps from this section on the other ESXi host, specifying corresponding IP addresses for the iSCSI subnet.

Creating Datastores

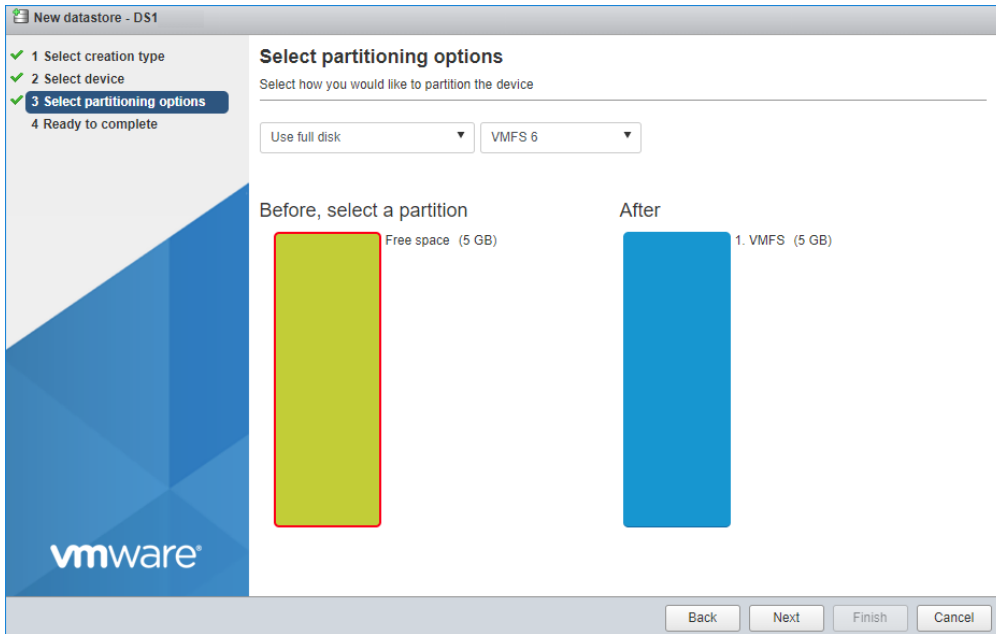
1. Open the Storage tab on one of your hosts and click on New Datastore.



2. Specify the Datastore name, select the previously discovered StarWind device, and click Next.



3. Enter datastore size and click Next.



4. Verify the settings and click Finish.

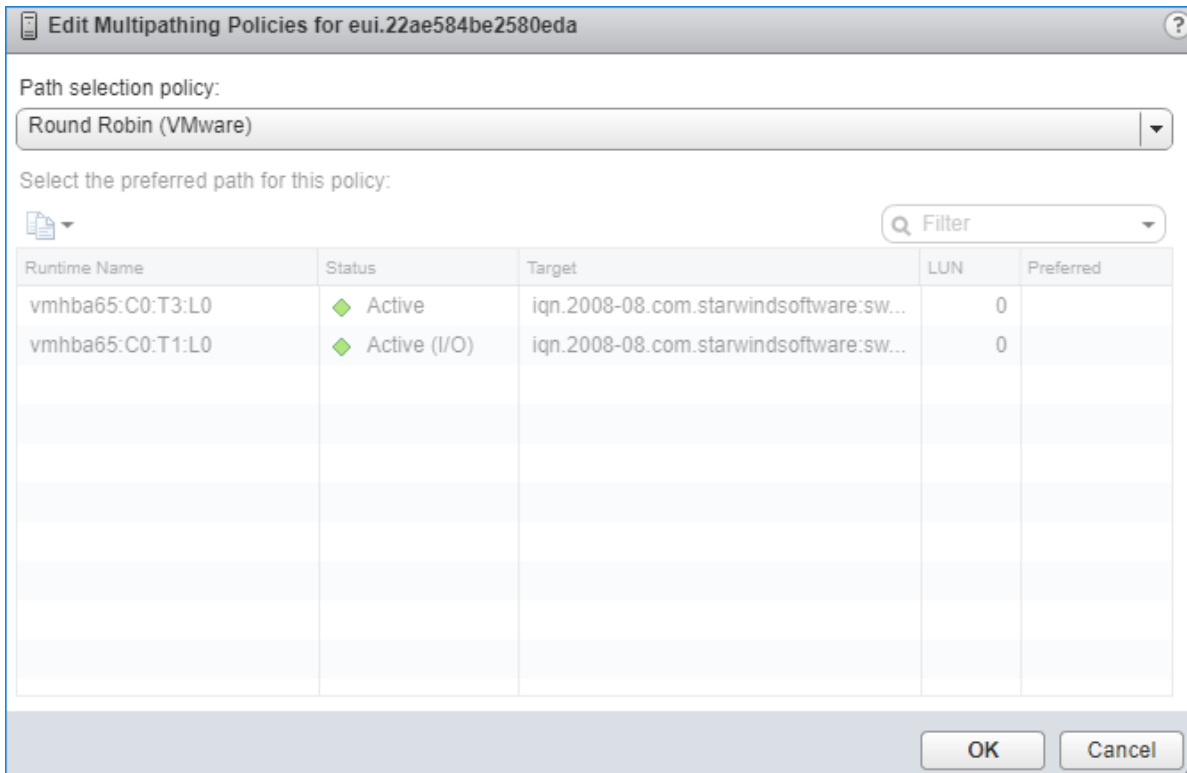
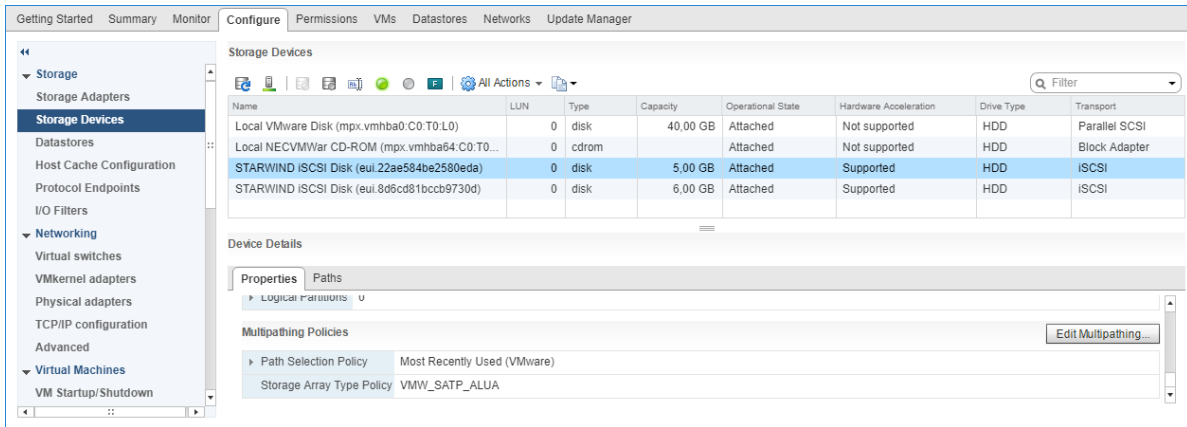
5. Add another Datastore (DS2) in the same way but select the second device for the second datastore.

6. Verify that your storages (DS1, DS2) are connected to both hosts. Otherwise, rescan the storage adapter.

Name	Drive Type	Capacity	Provisioned	Free
datastore1 (1)	Non-SSD	32.5 GB	972 MB	31.55 GB
DS1	Non-SSD	4.75 GB	1.41 GB	3.34 GB
DS2	Non-SSD	5.75 GB	1.41 GB	4.34 GB

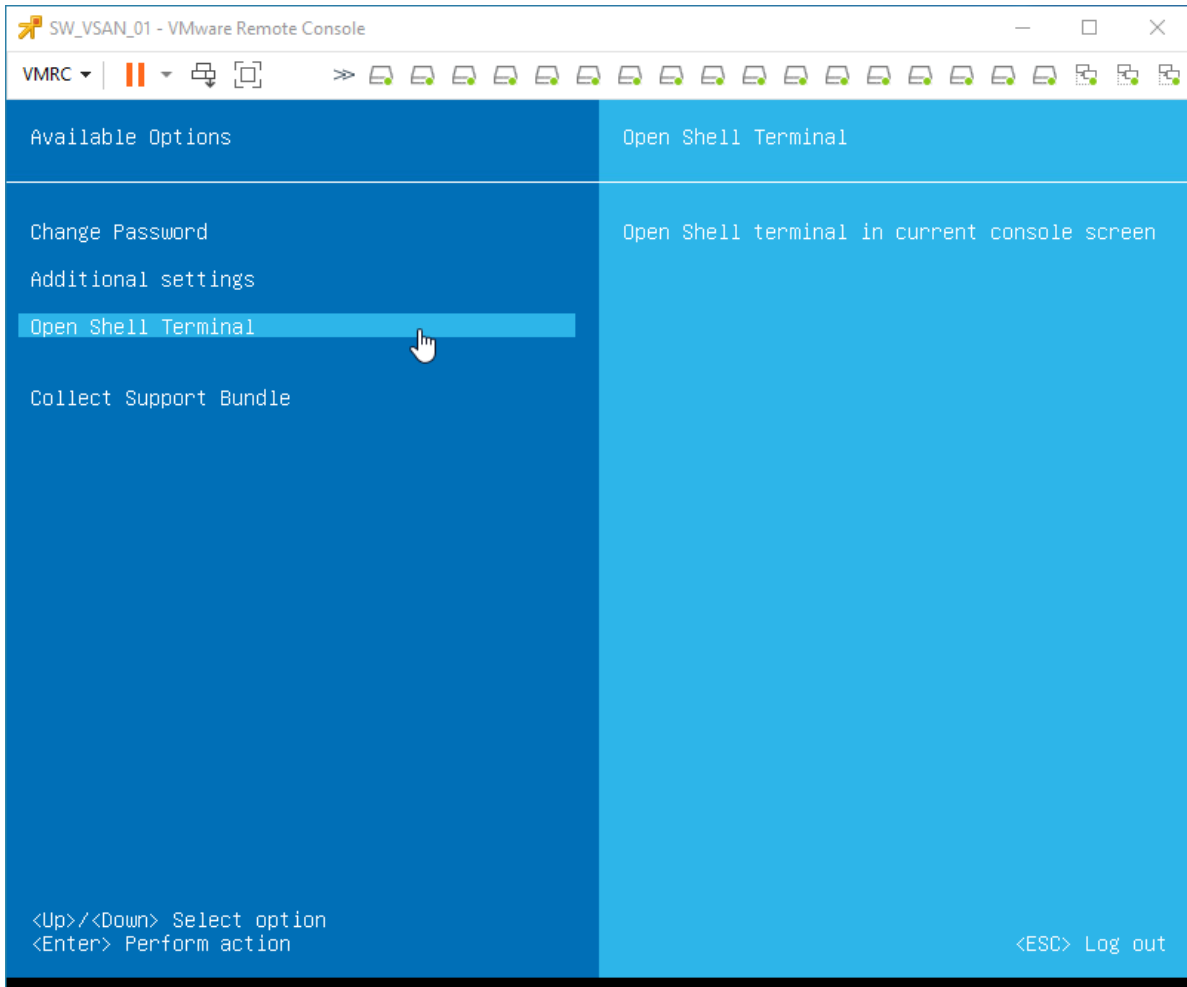
NOTE: Path Selection Policy changing for Datastores from Most Recently Used (VMware) to Round Robin (VMware) is added into the Rescan Script, and this action is performed automatically. For checking and changing this parameter manually, the hosts should be connected to vCenter.

Multipathing configuration can be checked only from vCenter. To check it, click the Configure button, choose the Storage Devices tab, select the device, and click the Edit Multipathing button.

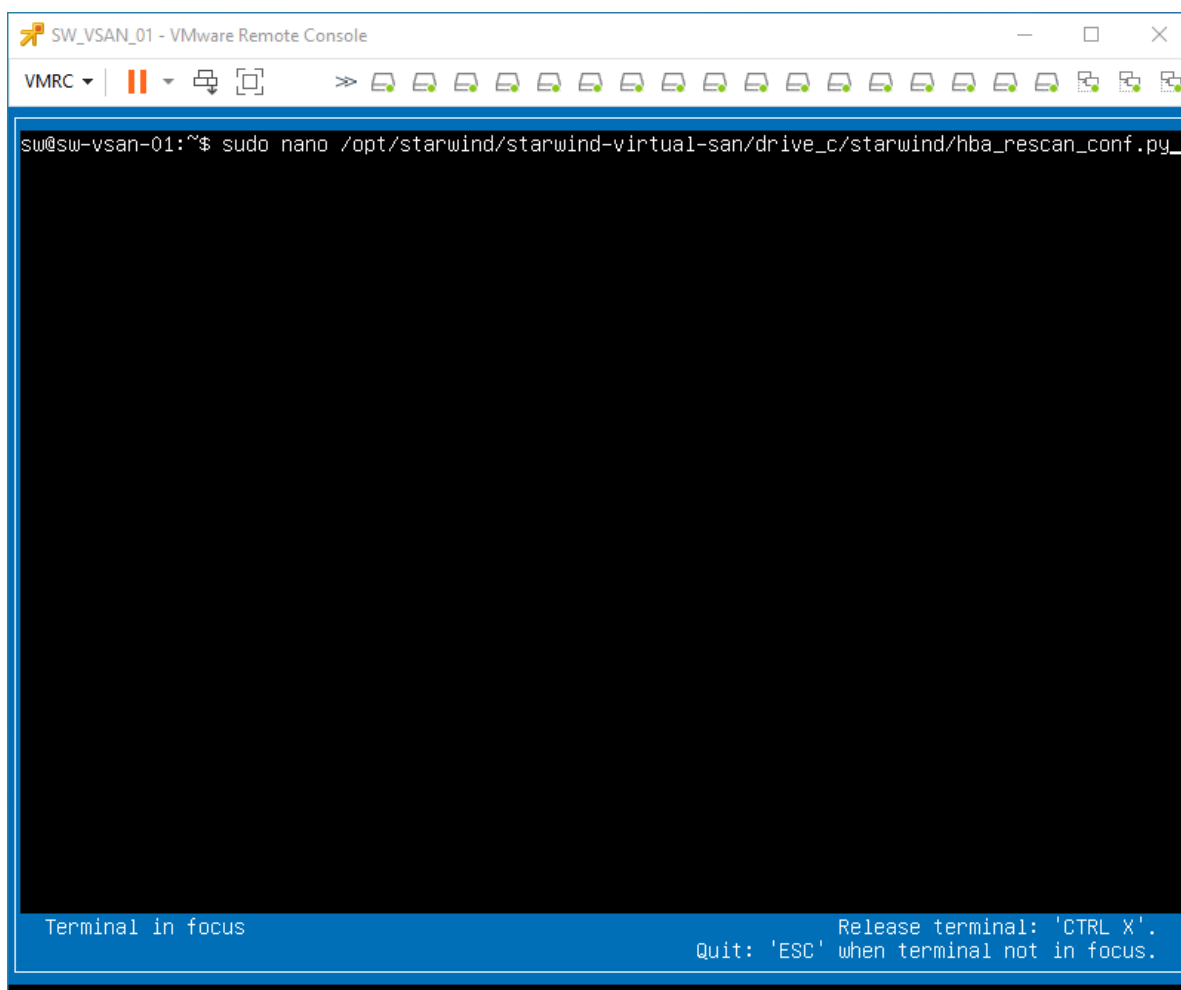


Configuring An Automatic Storage Rescan

1. Connect to the appliance via Shell Terminal in a Text-based User Interface (TUI) or using a remote SSH terminal.



2. Edit file `/opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-san/drive_c/starwind/hba_rescan_conf.py` with the following command: `sudo nano /opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-san/drive_c/starwind/hba_rescan_conf.py`



3. In the appropriate lines, specify the IP address and login credentials of the single or multiple ESXi hosts (see NOTE below) on which the current StarWind VM is stored and will trigger the storage rescan task:

```
$esxi_host_list = ['IP address']
$username = 'Login'
$password = 'Password'
```

The screenshot shows a VMware Remote Console window titled 'SW_VSAN_01 - VMware Remote Console'. The window contains a terminal running GNU nano 4.8, editing a file at '/opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-san/drive_c/starwind/hba_rescan_conf.py'. The script content is as follows:

```

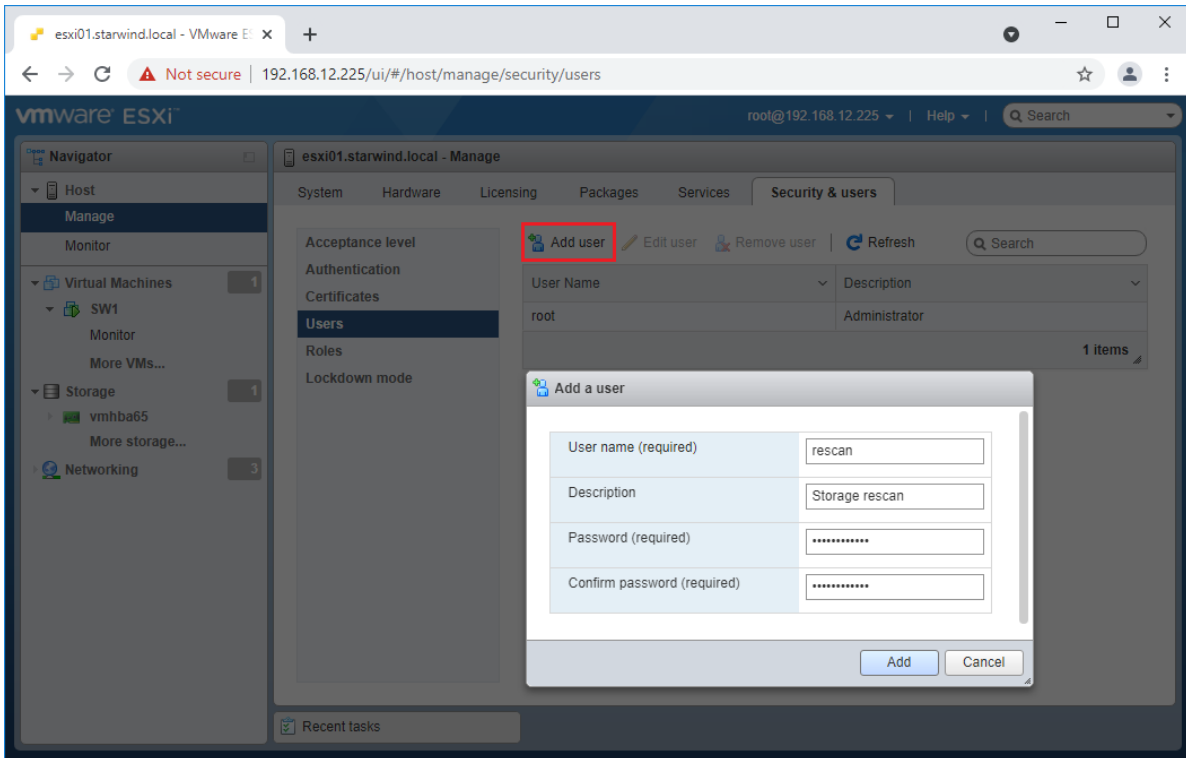
# ESXi/vSphere connection details
# for multiple hosts enter IPs in format esxi_host_list = ['SET_ESXi_HOST_IP_1', 'SET_ESXi_HOST_IP_2']
# the username and password should be the same for multiple ESXi servers specified
# for a single host enter IP in format esxi_host_list = ['SET_ESXi_HOST_IP_1']
esxi_host_list = ['SET_ESXi_HOST_IP_1']
username = 'SET_ESXi_USER'
password = 'SET_ESXi_PASSWORD'

```

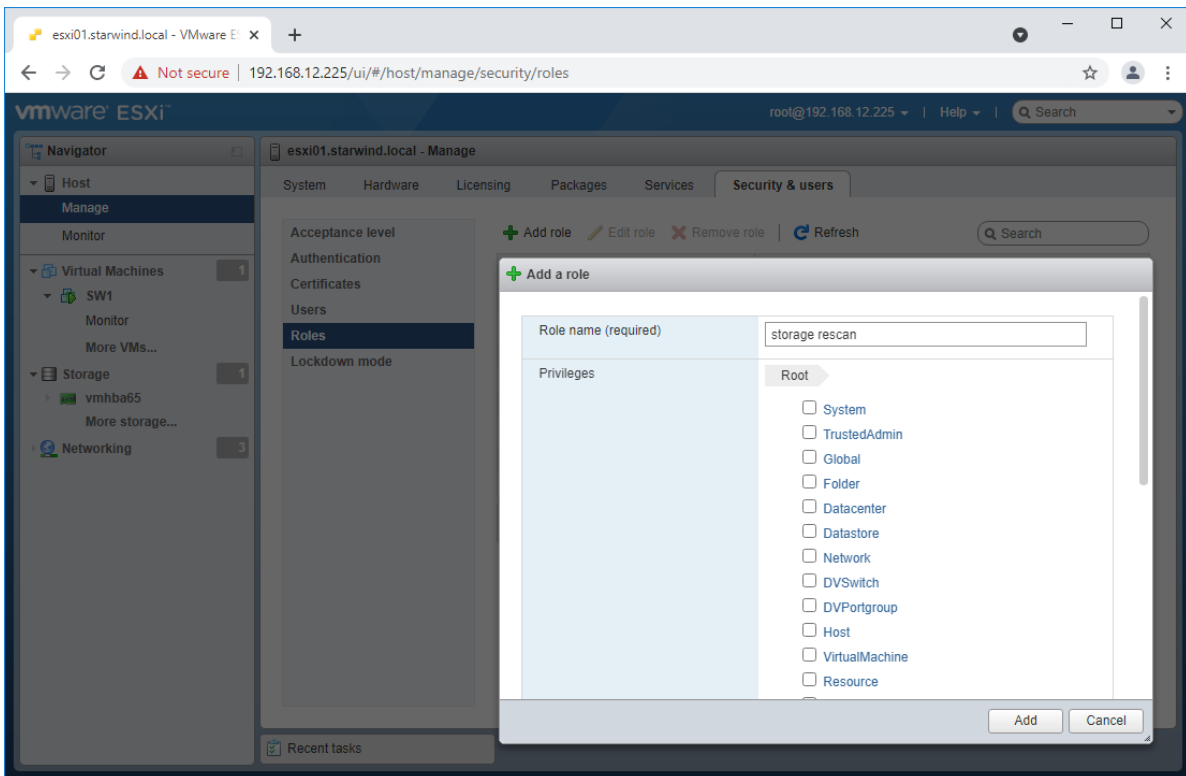
The terminal interface includes a status bar at the bottom with the following text: "[Read 7 lines]", "Terminal in focus", and "Quit: 'ESC' when terminal not in focus." The status bar also lists various keyboard shortcuts such as ^G Get Help, ^O Write Out, ^W Where Is, ^K Cut Text, ^J Justify, ^C Cur Pos, ^X Exit, ^R Read File, ^N Replace, ^U Paste Text, ^T To Spell, and ^_ Go To Line.

NOTE: In some cases, it makes sense to create a separate ESXi user for storage rescans. To create the user, please follow the steps below:

4. Log in to ESXi with the VMware Host Client. Click Manage, and under Security & users tab, in the Users section click Add user button. In the appeared window, enter a user name, and a password.



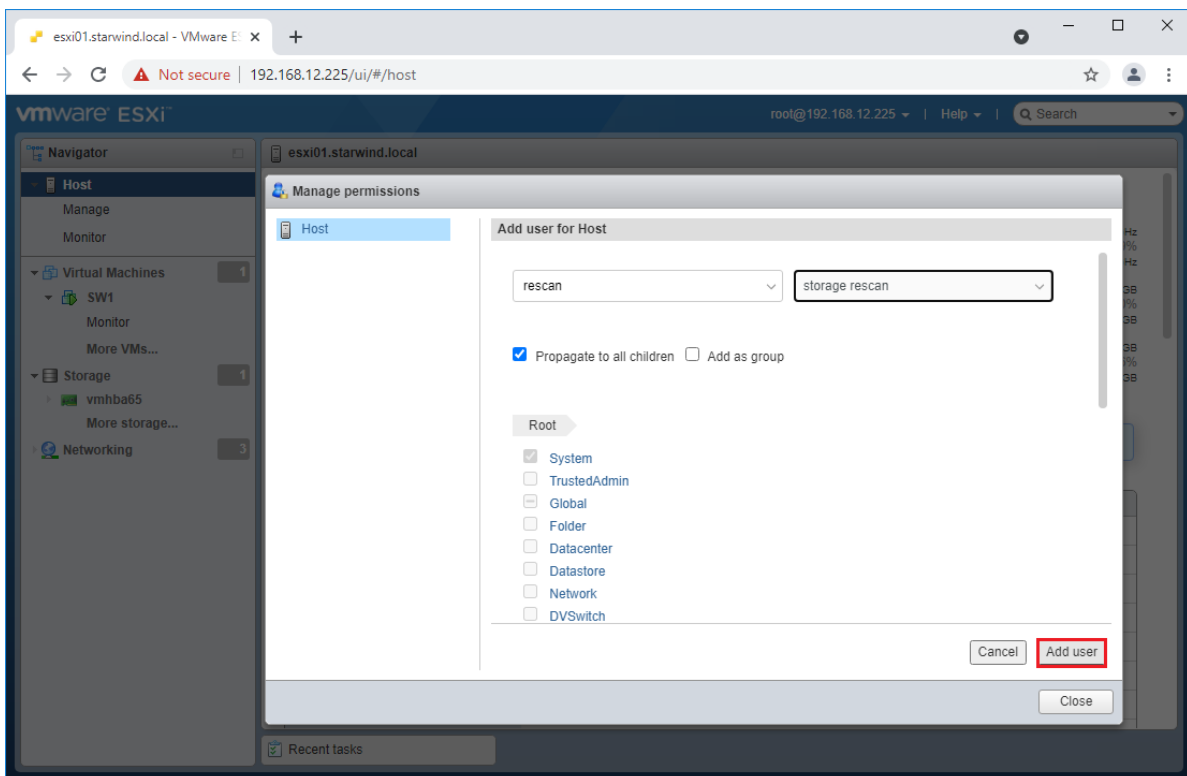
5. Create a new Role, under Roles section, and click New Role button. Type a name for the new role. Select privileges for the role and click OK. The following privileges might be assigned: Host - Inventory, Config, Local Cim, and Global - Settings.



6. Assign permission to the storage rescan user for an ESXi host – right-click Host in the VMware Host Client inventory and click Permissions. In the appeared window click Add user.

7. Click the arrow next to the Select a user text box and select the user that you want to assign a role to. Click the arrow next to the Select a role text box and select a role from the list.

(Optional) Select Propagate to all children or Add as group. Click Add user and click Close.

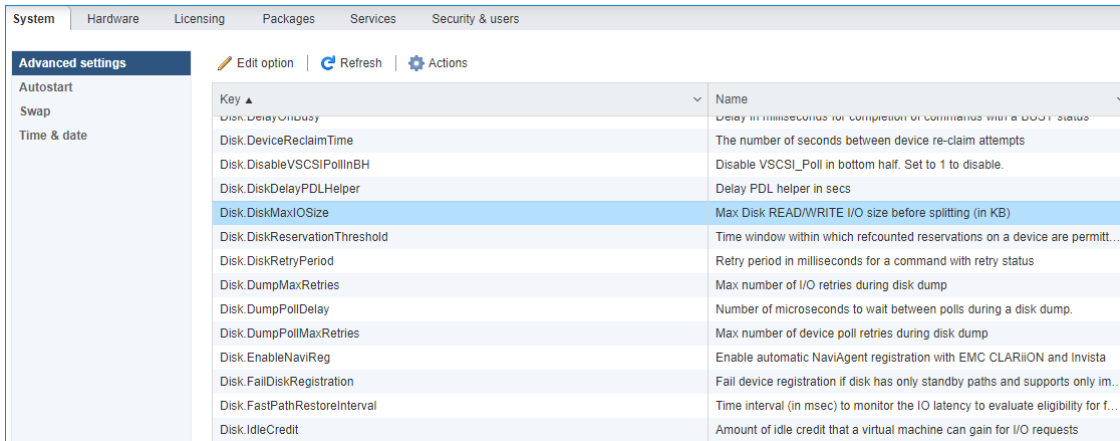


Make sure that rescan script is working and execute it from the VM: `sudo python3 /opt/starwind/starwind-virtual-san/drive_c/starwind/hba_rescan.py`

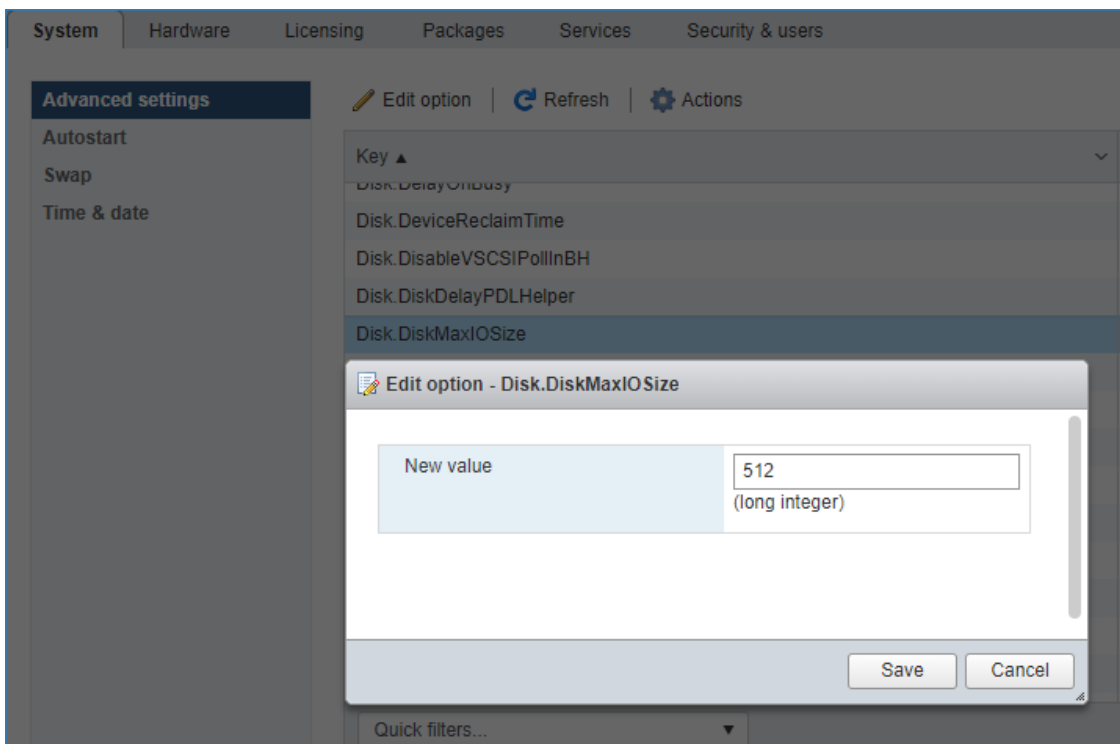
4. Repeat all steps from this section on the other ESXi hosts.

Performance Tweaks

1. Click on the Configuration tab on all of the ESXi hosts and choose Advanced Settings.



2. Select Disk and change the Disk.DiskMaxIOSize parameter to 512.



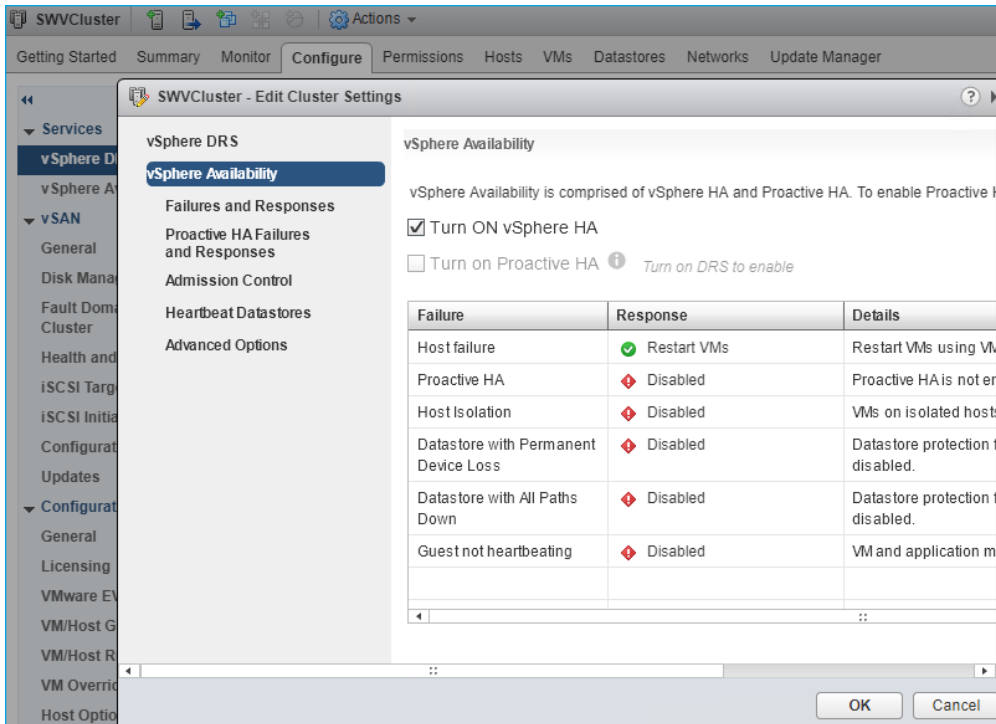
3. To optimize performance change I/O scheduler options according to the article below:
<https://knowledgebase.starwindsoftware.com/guidance/starwind-vsan-for-vsphere-changing-linux-i-o-scheduler-to-optimize-storage-performance/>

NOTE: Changing Disk.DiskMaxIOSize to 512 might cause startup issues with Windows-based VMs, located on the datastore where specific ESX builds are installed. If the issue with VMs start appears, leave this parameter as default or update the ESXi host to the next available build.

NOTE: To provide high availability for clustered VMs, deploy vCenter and add ESXi hosts to the cluster.

Click on Cluster -> Configure -> Edit and check the turn on vSphere HA option if it's








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Conclusion

By following this guide the end-user can get a StarWind Virtual SAN deployed on VMware vSphere, with VSAN set up as a Controller Virtual Machine (CVM). The guide offers key insights and steps to ensure a seamless deployment.

Contacts

US Headquarters	EMEA and APAC
 +1 617 829 44 95	 +44 2037 691 857 (United Kingdom)
 +1 617 507 58 45	 +49 800 100 68 26 (Germany)
 +1 866 790 26 46	 +34 629 03 07 17 (Spain and Portugal)
	 +33 788 60 30 06 (France)

Customer Support Portal: <https://www.starwind.com/support>

Support Forum: <https://www.starwind.com/forums>

Sales: sales@starwind.com

General Information: info@starwind.com



StarWind Software, Inc. 100 Cummings Center Suite 224-C Beverly MA 01915, USA
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