JIGSAW24

INSANELY GREAT!

Axill Europe

High-availability SAN Storage

Internet media company Axill Europe required high-availability SAN storage for 30 public-facing ziddu.com web servers at its London data centre. Jigsaw24 helped design and implement a solution that gave Axill the ability to scale to more than a petabyte of data. From the outset, these systems were designed for growth.

Highly-scalable backend storage

Axill initially approached Apple for consultation, as the technical team was interested in using Apple's Xserve RAID for back-end storage for their ziddu.com project. However, Apple quickly realised that the scope of the project was too broad for them to meet all requirements solely with Apple products, so they referred Axill to Jigsaw24.

Our consultants worked with Axill to ascertain their requirements. Axill needed highly- scalable backend storage, so we began with support for 30 web servers at their London data centre. Their other needs included the initial provision of between 100 and 300 Terabytes of shared storage, full file-level read-write access from each server to all data volumes (accessible from Windows and Linux), fault tolerance and load balancing, and extra options for data replication and mirroring.

After looking into comparable options from other manufacturers, Axill opted for an alternative to Apple's Xserve RAID. We suggested the Linux OS for the provision of remote data replication. Atempo's TimeNavigator was considered as a comprehensive solution, but the immediate priority for local replication was better suited to the Linux OS.

Axill also considered implementing a Vicom Vmirror for load balancing. Once we had explained our proposal, this proved to be unnecessary as the Ethernet and Fibre Channel fabrics had sufficient load balancing and redundancy of their own.

Jigsaw24's completed proposal was based on a number of rack-mounted Infortrend storage chassis, with redundant metadata servers connected through a high performance Fibre Channel fabric.

High-security installation

Several Jigsaw24 engineers, led by the Senior Systems Engineer Chris Reynolds, were present at Axill's London data centre. The security rules of the site stipulated that all members of the installation team had to be accompanied at all times.

Axill had stringent cable management and labelling requirements. Despite an initial issue with the Fibre Channel fabric switch software licence, which was quickly resolved, everything went to plan.

The rollout took a week to complete, with a couple of subsequent site visits for performance testing, confirmation of functionality and hand-over. There were no hardware difficulties and the project was finished on time and within budget.

Improved performance

From the outset, Axill were very clear about what they wanted to achieve. As such, the proposed solution was carefully designed and specified to meet their needs. Infortrend storage proved very cost-effective and the high density storage of each Infortrend RAID chassis saved on rack space, which is at a premium in a data centre.

Overall, the solution offered increased performance over the initial prototype that had been constructed for the project. A huge advantage of Axill's new setup is the ability to scale up their performance and storage as the requirements of ziddu.com grow.

Working with...

AXILL

In a nutshell...

Who are Axill Europe?

Axill Europe are a unique fast-growing Internet media company that provide online marketing services and performance for tracking for some of the world's major consumer brands. With locations in London, Hong Kong and India, Axill Europe have a presence in data centres around the globe. They host a number of their own websites, including bharatstudent.com – an online community and social networking site for Indian students.

What did they need?

High-availability SAN storage for 30 public-facing ziddu.com web servers at their London data centre.

How did we help?

Our team worked with Axill to develop, prototype, install and roll out a solution that offered scalable backend for all their web servers.

What were the benefits?

- Intelligent load balancing and a high level of redundancy across the system.
- Increased performance over the original prototype.
- Scalable storage and performance as the requirements of ziddu.com grow.

For more information on SAN storage, get in touch with us on the details below.