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Global Leader in Software-Defined Storage.

escape GmbH
Case Study

escape Scales Up to Host Leading German Companies – with SDS from Nexenta

Berlin, Germany
www.escape-germany.de
Media, Entertainment, and Telecommunications

Summary

Challenge: Rapidly growing business needed greater speed, better performance, and scalability to meet customer demands
Solution: NexentaStor
Platform: Supermicro
Use Case: Hosting Services

Benefits:
- Achieved better performance and reliability with RAID 7 triple parity
- Saved money by consolidating physical servers from ten to three
- Leveraged previous solutions, incorporating them into the Nexenta infrastructure

Business Overview

With offices in Berlin, Frankfurt, and Vienna, escape GmbH offers design, development, and hosting services to customers in the online, telecom, and media industries. Customers include BMW, Nintendo, Vodafone, and Leica.

One of Germany's main mobile content providers is an escape customer, and was running approximately 100 virtual machines and ten physical servers at its data centers. Other infrastructure for that customer included a SQL database, managing more than one billion records.

escape had to deliver customers such as this one all the functionality of an enterprise storage solution while keeping costs in check.

> *Nexenta provides a single consolidated interface that offers the right performance, with better functionality, at a fraction of the price of other industry leading NAS solutions.*

Thomas Wenzel
Partner
escape GmbH

Challenges

escape was using a 16TB block-only storage system (iStor iSCSI-Storage System) that was getting old and didn't offer the unified approach escape required. Plus, as a product designed for small and medium businesses, it had never been intended to gear up to the level of growth escape was experiencing.

As a result, escape was encountering problems with storage speed, capacity, performance, and management. With an environment that included Citrix XenServer, MySQL, Apache, Linux, and Windows, the company decided it needed to find a unified system that could handle file and block storage and offer snapshot and deduplication capabilities. In short, escape was looking for an enterprise storage solution.

Solution and Benefits

Solution

escape liked the features the Sun solution offered but was deterred by the price, which was well beyond its budget. On a visit to the CeBIT trade fair in Hanover, escape representatives visited the Nexenta stall and discovered ZFS. Until that point, the company had not considered open-source technology, believing it would not be able to compete with the capabilities offered by the likes of NetApp.

When it discovered that Nexenta was ZFS-based and offered the same features as the Sun solution at a hugely reduced cost, escape decided to get a 24TB Nexenta NAS for the same price as a 5TB system from rival vendors – and swiftly abandoned any negative preconceptions it had held about open-source technology.

The Nexenta Solution
By opting for a 24TB Nexenta NAS, escape reduced costs by cutting the number of physical servers at the company from ten to three, which connect via iSCSI and NFS to the Nexenta NAS and incorporate an older 16TB iStor system into the new infrastructure, rather than having to throw it out.

The 24TB Nexenta NAS and 16TB iStor system back up to a 48TB Openfiler (an operating system that provides file-based NAS and a block-based SAN) located three kilometers away over a 1GB fiber link. To maximize performance, the read/write caches use separate memory, while solid-state disks (SSDs) are used for the writes to optimize performance.

Benefits

In addition to providing escape with better pricing, functionality, and support, the Nexenta solution has given the company greater flexibility and a better feature set. Resiliency is strong but if anything fails, it's much easier for the company to get a replacement part and reboot because it is not tied to using expensive, proprietary parts.

escape now is able to run RAID 7 triple parity and the drives perform well. The robustness of the Nexenta solution, allied with much easier management, means the company spends less time dealing with storage issues and more time on its core business.

Using Nexenta, escape lowered overall storage costs by consolidating the number of physical servers from ten to three. In addition, the company could leverage inexpensive commodity hardware for replacement parts and retain its previous solutions and incorporate them into the Nexenta infrastructure.

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