

Network Consulting Firm Meets its VMware Data Storage Needs with DroboElite Storage Solution

Company Background

Located in Charlotte, North Carolina, Innovative Storage Solutions is a premier consulting firm offering a comprehensive portfolio of storage, virtualization, and disaster recovery solutions to small/medium businesses, enterprise, healthcare, and government organizations.

Challenge: Reliable and Cost Effective Storage

Like many of its customers, Innovative Storage Solutions is a small business with a need for reliable, easily managed, cost-effective data storage. The company had been relying on a freeware application called Openfiler for their storage requirements. *"It didn't provide the redundancy I was looking for,"* says Eric Shannon, President and CEO of Innovative Storage Solutions. *"I had two drives fail and I lost all my data."*

Shannon knew he needed to do something. But as a storage expert, he also knew that storage array solutions from EMC, EqualLogic, and NetApp were well beyond his budget, costing upwards of \$50,000. Such systems could also be complicated and time-consuming to manage.

Solution: VMware Storage with DroboElite

Shannon researched the market and discovered the DroboElite™ from Data Robotics™. *"The product reviews for the DroboElite were impressive,"* recalls Shannon. *"It was an iSCSI solution with a price point and performance level that fit our needs perfectly. After evaluating it in our demo lab we found it performed as well as an EqualLogic or NetApp iSCSI solution."*

With iSCSI support, DroboElite is ideal for consolidating data across multiple servers using a standard Gigabit Ethernet network. It can hold up to eight disks for as much as 16 terabytes of storage using the 2 terabyte drives that are available today. Adding capacity is as simple as inserting a new hard drive—on the fly—into an empty bay, or swapping out a smaller drive for a larger one. DroboElite also can protect data from up to two simultaneous drive failures with the dual-drive redundancy feature; a key feature for Innovative Storage Solutions based on their experience with a previous single drive redundancy solution that resulted in data loss.

Innovative Storage Solutions' deployment of their DroboElite was extremely straightforward. *"It only took me 5 or 10 minutes to get it set up,"* says Shannon. Innovative's entire virtualization environment runs off the DroboElite. *"We have three VMWare ESX servers with about 10 active virtual machines per host. Performance has been just great."*



Quick Facts

Challenge

- Small Business with Limited IT Resources
- Lost Data Due to Dual Drive Failure on Previous System
- New Storage Must be Reliable, Easy to Manage, and Cost Effective
- Storage Solutions from Traditional Vendors Exceed Modest Budgets

Solution

- Data Robotics DroboElite™ Storage Solution

Benefits

- Performance to support demanding VMware environment
- Costs a fraction of alternative iSCSI solutions
- Unprecedented "on-the-fly" expandability
- Self managing and self healing
- Dual drive failure protection

"It was an iSCSI solution with a price point and performance level that fit our needs perfectly. After evaluating it in our demo lab we found it performed as well as an EqualLogic or NetApp iSCSI solution."

Benefits

Innovative has found a storage solution that meets its needs at a fraction of the cost of other storage vendors. DroboElite supports any 3.5" SATA drives from any supplier, which can cost a fraction of vendor supplied drives and also allows for a "pay-as-you-grow" model where you purchase only the amount of storage you need when you need it.

DroboElite's self-managing, self-healing architecture eliminates nearly all-routine management tasks. *"So far there is no maintenance to it,"* remarks Shannon.

DroboElite is also environmentally friendly, drawing very little power. *"It's an efficient unit compared to EqualLogic or others,"* says Shannon.

Most importantly for Shannon, DroboElite has been reliable. *"It hasn't hiccupped yet. It just works."*

Shannon's experience with the DroboElite convinced him that the solution would work just as well for his customers, leading him to become a Data Robotics partner. *"For small-medium businesses, DroboElite is the ideal solution."*



"For small-medium businesses, DroboElite is the ideal solution."