

Data Aggregator Uses NETGEAR® to Provide Robust Solutions to its Customers



Profile

Founded in 1984, Computer Market Research (CMR) provides comprehensive channel management solutions, including data aggregation and management, to help customers efficiently manage their sales and marketing efforts, and comply with Sarbanes-Oxley regulations. For more than 25 years, CMR has consistently provided proven best-practice data management for its customers, with rapid and measurable success.

CMR aggregates data from its customers' point-of-sale and inventory systems – accepting raw customer data from a wide range of computing platforms and environments – and translates it into quality intelligence customers can use to gain visibility into their channel.

Background

One of the most valuable services Computer Market Research provides is the ability to quickly translate raw figures into quality business intelligence, and deliver that intelligence through real-time, global applications. This requires a computing system that will interface with, and accept data from, a wide range of computing environments. The system must also have the ability to store the data in a stable, reliable environment, to ensure the data is protected and continuously available – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

CMR's primary environment consists of more than 30 Windows-based servers, each with a different configuration, based on the client environments it serves. These servers continuously accept data from customer sites around the world, and process it in real time for availability via a wide range of CMR-hosted applications. The data from the entire system is continuously backed up, to ensure protection against catastrophic failure.

PROBLEM/OBJECTIVE

PROVIDE POWER, PERFORMANCE, AND RELIABILITY, WHILE SEAMLESSLY INTEGRATING WITH DISPARATE COMPUTING ENVIRONMENTS

CMR offers its customers continuous Web-based access to their data for ad-hoc reporting. In addition to a dynamic front-end, this capability requires a storage environment that provides a high degree of power, performance, and reliability. The system must be capable of accepting snapshots several times per day, from each of the more than 30 Windows servers – running a wide range of disaster recovery modes – all without negatively impacting the performance of the primary system.

Throughout the years, CMR has employed an array of storage solutions to protect the business-critical data, but none has offered the right blend of power, performance, and reliability the company requires. Ease-of-use has also been a major detractor. "I've been in the business for 14 years and have worked with a lot of storage appliances", says Mark Bryson, Director of Information Technology for CMR. "Most simply wouldn't integrate well, or didn't make it easy to communicate with file sharing. We needed something that just worked, without burning a lot of cycles setting it up."

CMR has also considered a number of enterprise-class solutions. While these systems offered the performance and reliability they needed, none were at a price point they could justify. An inherent lack of usability was also a significant drawback to many of them.

SOLUTION

NETGEAR® READYNAS® 3200 PROVIDES THE RIGHT BLEND OF ROBUST FEATURES AND EASE-OF-USE AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE

After an exhaustive search, Mark discovered the NETGEAR® ReadyNAS® 3200 rackmount storage system. With 12 bays offering up to 24TB of hot swappable storage capacity, redundant power supply, two gigabit Ethernet ports with load balancing and failover, and dynamic wizards for easy configuration, the ReadyNAS 3200 provided

everything CMR required. "Our entire business is based on the continuous availability of data, so we need to know immediately if there's a problem", says Mark. "The ReadyNAS 3200 includes more robust alerting capabilities than most other systems, including the ability to configure the types of alerts we receive, and have them sent to multiple email addresses." The 3200 also has the ability to backup the company's multiple configuration files, using a built-in utility – making a backup/restore of the company's disparate environment as easy as if it were a single server.

Additionally, with the rapid growth of industry regulations aimed at protecting sensitive data, many of CMR's customers require the capability to send their data in encrypted format. CMR serves this emerging client need, using the built-in ReadyNAS Remote® feature. "We have a growing number of clients who are subject to SAS70, PCI, and other regulatory audits", says Mark. "If we couldn't share data securely, these companies would walk away from us in an instant."

RESULT

POWERFUL AND ROBUST, YET EASY TO USE

Mark has had the ReadyNAS 3200 in the CMR production environment for nearly two months now, and is pleased with the results. "The ReadyNAS 3200 worked right out of the box", says Mark. "A lot of marketers will say that, but then it requires a firmware update and all sorts of re-configuring to make it happen. But the ReadyNAS uses a wizard mode that made it really easy – somebody without a networking background could easily set it up."

CMR also quickly discovered some key features of the ReadyNAS 3200 that have allowed the company to easily receive data from servers running different disaster recovery modes. "We simply created some auto scripts that allow us to dump data onto the ReadyNAS box", says Mark. "It's a completely Windows/SQL backend, so we're sending snapshots through the NETGEAR interface directly to the 3200."



ReadyNAS® 3200



*The 5-Year Hardware Warranty and the Lifetime Hardware Warranty only cover hardware, fans, and internal power supplies, and does not include external power supplies or software. Hardware modifications or customization void the warranty. The warranty is only valid for the original purchaser and cannot be transferred.

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