

Sigmax gains performance and development boost with Tintri



Dutch IT specialist speeds development, maximizes performance and improves testing with Tintri

www.sigmax.nl

Industry

- IT and software

Geography

- The Netherlands

Virtualisation environment

- VMware

Key challenges

- Existing storage was unable to provide the performance required for development and testing

Tintri solution

- Tintri storage solution

Primary use case

- Storage for development and testing

Business benefits

- Better visibility of storage performance
- Faster builds for development and testing
- Simple installation
- Improved utilization of resources

IT Challenges

Founded in 1998, Sigmax began as a system management partner for medium-sized organizations. It has since expanded to five business units covering the design and management of IT infrastructure, software for law enforcement, field service organizations, custom mobile solutions and software for security companies. It employs 200 people, including more than 50 IT specialists and 80 software developers, and services 350 customers worldwide.

A large part of Sigmax's business involves developing software for customers in the public and government sectors. This requires a significant number of daily builds in the production environment and testing, running on up to 200 virtual machines (VMs). Some of those VMs are hosted for customers that require high performance.

The company's existing storage was struggling to provide the speed and power to match Sigmax's production and testing requirements. It was suffering from performance issues because the storage could not keep up with the pace of the I/O demands.

Solution

Sigmax began looking for an alternative storage solution that was better suited to the demands of a virtualized environment. It was faced with a choice between a hyper-converged infrastructure (HCI) solution and Tintri. The company rejected the HCI option because scaling out was problematic as it involved purchasing extra compute and memory power that it did not need as well as storage. Instead, it decided to install Tintri.

There was no proof of concept (PoC). As Maarten Kalkema, ICT specialist at Sigmax ICT Specialisten, puts it: "We bought the system and that was our PoC. We were convinced it would work."

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The Tintri solution was up and running in less than 20 minutes and the results have been very impressive. Sigmax now has visibility of storage at the VM-level and the ability to see I/Os and latency on a per-VM basis. This enables it to address performance at a VM level. In addition, the time between builds has halved, allowing Sigmax to test more frequently and produce more reliable software.

Kalkema says Tintri also integrates very well with vCenter. With the all benefits Tintri has delivered to Sigmax, he would happily recommend it to other people.

Results

Performance

Visibility of storage performance at the VM level has enabled Sigmax to assign and cap I/Os to development builds. If one development team is using too much I/Os and affecting the overall performance, Sigmax can identify the culprit with Tintri and take the necessary steps to redress the balance of I/O performance. “If they are running I/Os of 15,000 to 20,000, we can cap them at 5,000 to 10,000 and set the Quality of Service (QoS) and it works perfectly for us. And it’s still fast.”

Faster builds

Improvements in performance have accelerated the time it takes between software builds. Under the previous system, it could take up to 20 minutes for a software build. Because it is optimized for VMs, Tintri has halved the time required for software builds. This means Sigmax can run more tests in a day, speeding up the development process and improving the reliability of its software.

Better resource utilization

Tintri’s storage not only provides better visibility of storage resources at the VM-level, it also enables better utilization of those resources and scale out capabilities without having to add more compute and memory to the equation.

Simple installation and maintenance

Tintri can be up and running in minutes making it reliable and easy to run. Despite implementing the Tintri solution without running a PoC, Sigmax has had no issues with the system in the 12 months since it was installed. In all that time, it has had no cause to contact Tintri’s support team.

