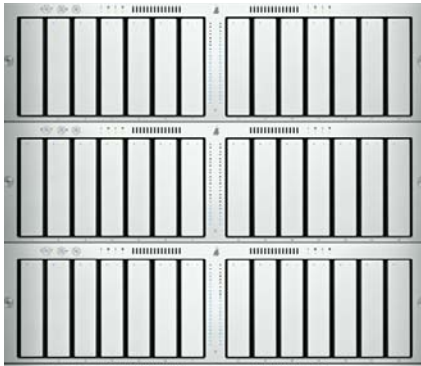




Oracle expands collaboration with Xserve RAID.

Oracle chooses Apple for its Resilient Low-Cost Storage implementation.



At a Glance

Opportunity: To help lower the cost of deploying database solutions, Oracle established the Resilient Low-Cost Storage Initiative. To participate in the program, storage hardware vendors must offer a solution that delivers exceptional performance at a great price. Given that Oracle purchases a significant amount of storage capacity for internal use, the company wanted to implement the initiative within its own organization.

Result: When Oracle's development group needed more data storage, it chose Apple's Xserve RAID, a technology embraced by the initiative, to provide the capacity it needed. Thanks to the solution's affordability, the group already plans to boost user storage quotas. By expanding its use of Resilient Low-Cost Storage, including Xserve RAID, throughout its organization, Oracle expects to save tens of millions of dollars annually.

Oracle Corporation, the database technology giant, recently launched the Resilient Low-Cost Storage Initiative to promote the use of affordable hardware for data storage and recovery. Apple's Xserve RAID is one of the first systems in Oracle's program to be made available for high-availability data storage, at an affordable price. With Xserve RAID, Oracle users can store and back up valuable data for about one-third the cost of traditional systems.

Oracle has a long history of exploring ways to reduce the cost of database deployments, and the Resilient Low-Cost Storage Initiative is an important part of that effort. The advanced availability and manageability features of Oracle Database 10g, coupled with low-cost ATA disk-based arrays, enable the development of low-cost database storage grids with high levels of scalability and availability. The initiative helps Oracle customers build low-cost storage grids by providing recommended storage configurations that have been carefully evaluated and tested.

Given that Oracle purchases between 1 and 2 petabytes (a petabyte is equal to 1024 terabytes) of data storage capacity for internal use annually, the company was as eager to use low-cost storage internally as it was to recommend the technology to its customers. When Oracle's development group needed additional capacity to streamline development-related collaboration, the group chose Xserve RAID for its versatility, performance, and unmatched affordability.

According to Juan Loaiza, Vice President of Oracle's Systems Technology Group, "Lowering storage costs without sacrificing performance helps us as both a provider of database solutions and a purchaser of data storage hardware. Based on our own experience with Apple technology, Xserve RAID is a great match for applications running Oracle. The additional capacity is helping our development team collaborate and be more productive."

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Juan Loaiza, Oracle

More capacity for collaboration

Oracle’s development group uses the Oracle Collaboration Suite to manage its email, voicemail, calendars, shared files, and web conferencing. Oracle wanted to expand the system from 1000 users to 4000 users. After scoping the expansion using its existing storage technology, the development team felt that the cost per gigabyte was too high.

“We wanted to purchase enough storage capacity to add 3000 users and to back up the systems,” explains Paul Tsien, a product manager with Oracle. “Doing that with traditional Fibre Channel–based storage would have been expensive. So we began looking at lower-cost solutions such as Xserve RAID.”

Flawless performance and an industry-leading price

To be included in the Resilient Low-Cost Storage Initiative, storage technologies must incorporate a number of features, such as the ability to be networked in a grid configuration, interoperability certification, readily swappable disks, remote management tools, and automated failure alerts. And the technology must combine these features with a great price. In choosing a specific solution, Oracle’s development group had a key requirement of its own: exceptional performance for volume-intensive data.

“Xserve RAID met all our qualifications for the initiative, as well as internally,” says Loaiza. “In terms of storage, the Oracle Collaboration Suite is very volume-intensive, and Xserve RAID performed as well as our more expensive storage solutions for this application. Beyond performance, Apple’s price per gigabyte is among the lowest in the industry. Xserve RAID more than met our needs.”

Xserve RAID hits the ground running

The implementation of Xserve RAID took less than a day. The development team now uses three Xserve RAID systems for backup with Oracle Flash Recovery Area. Oracle plans to expand the use of Xserve RAID in the near future to store all of the collaboration data that its development team generates.

According to Oracle’s Director of Systems Testing Group, Sally Piao, Xserve RAID has performed flawlessly while offering surprising ease of use. “Our Xserve RAID solution has been in production for over five months, and we haven’t had a single problem with it. Compared to most other storage options, the system administration tools are very easy to use and understand.”

She adds, “Because of its price, performance, and speed, Xserve RAID is especially useful in backing up data. In the next few months, I anticipate that we will deploy between 50 and 100 terabytes of Xserve RAID capacity for backup, testing, and production deployment.”

About Oracle: Founded in 1977, Oracle has become the world's largest enterprise software company, and its technology is used by 98 of the companies in the Fortune 100. Each of Oracle's more than 40,000 employees is dedicated to continuing the company's history of developing innovative business applications.

Saving by the petabyte

As it expands its use of low-cost storage, Oracle plans to increase storage quotas for its development group. "In the past, we had to restrict storage quotas more than we wanted to because capacity was so expensive," explains Tsien. "People were forced to manage their files and delete information proactively. As Xserve RAID allows us to give users larger quotas, they'll be able to collaborate and develop Oracle solutions even more effectively."

Looking ahead, Loaiza says, "Compared to the storage solutions we have traditionally used, Xserve RAID is about one-third the price. That's not a subtle cost savings. In the future, as much as 75 percent of the storage capacity we buy annually will likely fit within our Resilient Low-Cost Storage requirements, resulting in tens of millions of dollars in annual savings for Oracle."

For More Information

For more information about Xserve and other Apple server solutions, visit www.apple.com/server.