

FIRST HORIZON NATIONAL CORPORATION RECONCILES SPEED, EFFICIENCY AND COST SAVINGS WITH COMPELLENT



First Horizon National Corporation understands the importance of best practices in business accounting. Since 1864, this leading national financial services company has grown to more than 10,000 employees in hundreds of offices across the country serving over a million individual and business customers. Keeping its own house in order is

fundamental to this success, so when it comes to managing corporate data, First Horizon needs a fast, scalable, and highly flexible storage IT infrastructure.

The corporate controller's office at First Horizon is responsible for consolidating the bank's financial data, preparing internal and external reports, managing internal controls, and performing other accounting tasks. As the company grows, so does the volume of numbers to be crunched. The department's aging storage was increasingly unable to keep up with increased demand, so accounting officer Bobby Robinson turned to the Compellent® Storage Center™ storage area network (SAN) for performance and scalability.

"We were running out of space and continually having to clean off the drives to make room," Robinson explains. "Our backup windows were getting longer and applications were slowing down. Since there wasn't really a good way to add storage, it was difficult to respond to our end user requirements quickly."

EASE OF MANAGEMENT FREES RESOURCES FOR BUSINESS EFFICIENCY

The Compellent SAN has reduced management time from hours to only minutes a day. Now, the two-person IT team in First Horizon's Corporate Controller Division has more time to focus on new business efficiencies, controls, and savings without having to hire additional resources. Robinson and his colleague are currently creating task-specific intranet sites so users can access data without downloading it to their PCs—measures that improve customer service and are essential to satisfying Sarbanes-Oxley Act requirements.

"Basically, it's now a lights-off system for us," Robinson explains. "It used to take hours each week to deal with capacity allocation, and now it takes five minutes a day at the most. Fortunately, we have more time to do the fun stuff—training, software development, and hardware maintenance—and stay current in many different areas. That represents an important time savings for an IT staff of two."



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BOBBY ROBINSON
Accounting Officer
First Horizon National Corporation

RESULTS REPORTED BY FIRST HORIZON

- » Replays replace full daily tape backups to shorten the backup windows from hours to minutes, better supporting compliance measures and improving performance and availability during the week.
- » Seamless end-to-end virtualization of storage and servers improves performance and scalability, shortening a Microsoft SQL Server process from 45 minutes to only 3 minutes.
- » Innovative software tools simplify management from hours per day to only five minutes per week, freeing up time to focus on business efficiency.

OPERATING SYSTEMS

- » Microsoft Windows

APPLICATIONS

- » VMware ESX 2.2
- » Microsoft SQL Server
- » Bancware Insight
- » Bancware Convergence
- » Checkfree Recon Plus 7.1
- » Oracle Essbase 7.1

EASY TO MANAGE SAN

For Compellent customers, easy to use means being able to manage more storage in less time and accomplish even advanced storage tasks in under 10 minutes.

For First Horizon National Corporation, ease of use meant the financial services company could centralize corporate accounting storage while speeding performance and freeing up valuable IT resources to focus on business efficiency processes.

“Employee satisfaction is a core value at First Horizon. Adopting the Compellent SAN in the corporate accounting office has not only meant more efficient management for the IT staff, but our end users—other staff members—are benefiting from improved system performance and quick access to critical information.”

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VIRTUALIZATION AND SAN OFFER SPEED AND SIMPLICITY TO OUTPERFORM COMPETITORS

After viewing a Compellent demonstration, Robinson knew the search was over. “The rich features and speed and ease of adding storage to the Compellent SAN completely outperformed all other vendors,” he says. “And once the system arrived, we had it up and running very quickly. The transition was remarkably smooth.”

First Horizon started with a single enclosure and 4 TB on Fibre Channel and SATA drives. Within six months, the company seamlessly added another enclosure with an additional 4 TB, along with virtual servers using VMware® technology. Four servers now connect to the SAN, including one server running four additional virtual servers through the VMware software.

This virtualized environment has enabled First Horizon to scale quickly and affordably. “When we needed to add servers, we simply bought one big server and created four virtual machines within it,” Robinson says. “And since we’re booting the virtualized server from the SAN, we don’t have to buy internal disks. The cost savings have been enormous.”

Running applications in a virtualized environment has also increased performance. “We used to have a Microsoft SQL Server database process that took 45 minutes to run,” Robinson explains. “Once the application was virtualized and connected to the Compellent SAN, it took only three minutes to run. This reduction in time allows us to focus on other ways to improve efficiency and productivity.”

DATA INSTANT REPLAY BOOSTS COMPLIANCE EFFORTS

Compellent’s Data Instant Replay™ software has further improved IT efficiency and regulatory compliance. First Horizon uses frequent snapshots, called Replays, to help protect critical data and speed recovery if necessary. “During critical processing times, data availability is a must,” Robinson says. “Any downtime is painful, but if it’s near an SEC filing deadline or other regulatory mandate, we could be facing large fines. Restoring from tape used to take several excruciating hours, but now it takes minutes with Replays—that speed means we’re better positioned to meet compliance mandates.”

First Horizon has also reduced the daily backup window by using the Replay functionality instead of backing up to tape every night. Replacing full daily backups with Replays allows First Horizon to reserve full tape backups for the weekend. The full backups are then stored at a national security and trust facility, since the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requires First Horizon to keep all data for a minimum of seven years. This streamlined backup process has greatly improved system performance and increased system availability during the week.