

Case study

Latisys gains competitive advantage with 3PAR StoreServ 7450



3PAR StoreServ all-flash array leverages hosting investment for big data customers

Industry

Cloud hosting/service provider

Objective

Provide best-practice, high performance storage solution specifically to host growing demand for big data companies

Approach

Implement HP 3PAR StoreServ 7450 state-of-the-art all-flash array to provide guaranteed, multi-tenancy, high performance storage for hosted customers with big data needs, both in traditional managed-hosting and private cloud environments

IT matters

- HP 3PAR Priority Optimization supports guaranteed high performance SLAs
- Unique multi-tenancy support leverages hosting investment
- Provisioning of new customer in hours versus days
- Ease-of-management through unified storage console leverages IT staff

Business matters

- Advanced HP 3PAR StoreServ 7450 flash array technology provides competitive advantage
- Savings in multiple areas reduces overhead, allowing Latisys to offer more competitive rates
- Unique 3PAR StoreServ 7450 leading-edge storage features and exceptional performance gains new customers and helps retain current customers
- Standardized and minimal “click” management interface saves significant labor costs and enables increased customer service



“The 3PAR StoreServ 7450 stood out as the obvious choice to extend our storage services to a next generation platform. Its multi-tenancy support allows us to leverage our investment by adding customers on demand and spin up their storage in hours, putting our savings into competitive pricing. It’s a real win: Latisys is already gaining new business due to the power of the 3PAR StoreServ 7450.”

– Christian Teeft, CTO, Latisys



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In order to provide high performance storage for its big data customers, Latisys, a leading hosting and data center solutions provider, evaluated the primary storage vendors and acquired the stand-out HP 3PAR StoreServ 7450 all-flash array. Due to the 3PAR StoreServ 7450 leading-edge technology, Latisys can stand up a new big data customer in hours, while guaranteeing the requested high performance level in a full multi-tenant environment.

3PAR StoreServ 7450 retains Latisys' loyalty with best-in-class functionality

The job of a successful hosting service provider, according to Christian Teeft, CTO, Latisys, is to “reside” ahead of the technology curve and to provide customers the leading-edge systems and expertise they expect. Latisys, an HP CloudAgile partner, is a leading provider of hybrid cloud hosting and data center solutions to mid-sized businesses, enterprise customers, and government agencies. As a client-centric company, Latisys caters to companies that demand more from their IT infrastructure partner. That’s why Latisys relies on a unified HP 3PAR StoreServ storage architecture, and recently welcomed the 3PAR StoreServ 7450 high performance all-flash array to support its burgeoning big data clientele. Latisys also employs a variety of HP ProLiant DL-series 350/360/560 Gen8 servers and an HP BladeSystem c7000 Enclosure in conjunction with the 3PAR StoreServ 7450.

“One of our recent goals at Latisys was to acquire high performance storage that excels in multi-tenancy support in order to service our growing big data customer performance demand,” explains Teeft. “Even though we are an HP partner, we still ran the 3PAR StoreServ 7450 through the competitive bake off, and found it definitely leads the pack for performance and workload management. For our own business needs as a hosting provider, its multi-tenancy support provides us data isolation for ultimate security, and widens our competitive advantage by offering the highest performance storage available today.”

Guaranteed performance rate boosts customer confidence

In addition to multi-tenancy functionality, Teeft also evaluated for the ability to “guarantee” the performance level each customer required. New customers come to Latisys looking for guaranteed performance, telling tales of promises that didn’t meet expectations. He wanted a multi-tenancy array with which he could offer a promise, and then keep it. The HP 3PAR Priority Optimization software allows Latisys to take full control of performance by specifying minimum and maximum limits in the 3PAR StoreServ multi-tenant environment.

If these goals are not met, the system automatically adjusts the service levels of lower-priority applications and workloads.

“HP 3PAR Priority Optimization protects applications from monopolizing resources by a single tenant, which is golden to us as a hosting provider,” adds Ray Littlefield, storage engineer at Latisys. “This strategic ability is unique to HP storage, as were many of the primary features that sold us on the 3PAR StoreServ 7450 for our big data platform. Our customer base is very savvy and, having been disappointed by performance promises, are demanding guarantees. That’s what we and HP deliver.”

HP feature-rich, all-flash array platform proves ideal for hosting

As Teeft and Littlefield discuss the anatomy of their HP-based 3PAR StoreServ storage strategy, they concur that the litany of native 3PAR StoreServ 7450 features seems custom-made for Latisys’ hosting requirements. HP offers the only platform that guarantees a 50% reduction in capacity requirements with hardware-assisted thin storage, thereby significantly reducing the effective cost of flash media. In fact, in practice, Littlefield says that the capacity savings turns out to be four to one at Latisys.

“Considering labor savings, time savings on cabling, and ease of management, we can now field a new customer who needs big data storage ASAP, and have them running in hours.”

– Ray Littlefield, storage engineer, Latisys

But what does the 3PAR StoreServ 7450 have to offer from an IT engineer’s perspective? 3PAR StoreServ technology means the chance to be more effective and leverage duties among the IT staff. According to Littlefield, the 3PAR StoreServ management tools make it easy to utilize its many features. For example, he cites that, due to the efficiencies realized with the 3PAR StoreServ 7450 multi-tenant capability, he and the staff save about 80 hours spinning up a new customer.

Customer at a glance

Application

3PAR StoreServ 7450 provides multi-tenancy high performance storage-as-a-service for hosted Latisys customers with big data needs, both in traditional managed hosting and private cloud environments.

Hardware

- HP 3PAR StoreServ 7450 Storage
- HP ProLiant DL360 Gen8 Server
- HP ProLiant DL350 Gen8 Server
- HP ProLiant DL560 Gen8 Server
- HP BladeSystem c7000 Enclosure

Software

- HP 3PAR Security Software Suite
- HP 3PAR Priority Optimization
- HP 3PAR Thin Suite
- HP 3PAR Recovery Manager Suite
- HP 3PAR Replication Software Suite
- Windows® 2012
- Red Hat® Linux® V6

HP services

- HP 3PAR StoreServ 7000 Storage Installation and Startup Service
- HP 3Y 6 hour Call to Repair Proactive Care Service

“Considering labor savings, time savings on cabling, and ease of management, we can now field a new customer who needs big data storage ASAP, and have them running in hours,” he emphasizes. “If we had to use non-HP storage, it would take us days to provision the same customer, and a lot more IT staff labor. That’s a benefit to the customer and a benefit to us. Time saved is channeled directly back into customer service.”

Teft expands how 3PAR StoreServ management tools allow Latisys to extend storage visibility to our customer portal for increased customer optics into its solution. Because of the investment HP made in exposing all the commands via API(s), Latisys was able to integrate simple tasks into our workflow and management systems via our DevOps organization ultimately streamlining the provisioning of new solutions.

3PAR StoreServ 7450 provides high performance upgrade path for customers

HP 3PAR StoreServ 7450 multi-tenancy and ease of management satisfies the big data customers—that’s why Latisys purchased it. But the system also provides an extra comfort level to existing customers who might need a high performance upgrade path, or even HFC support for a new acquisition or application. By design, Latisys employs 3PAR StoreServ storage at its lower tiers as well. Since all 3PAR StoreServ systems utilize the same management tools and Converged Infrastructure, it’s a simple and seamless migration, when and if a customer needs to upgrade.

“Software as a Service (SaaS) and big data customers have pushed a segment of our hosted customers, both large and small, into real-time, they need scalable storage capacity on demand, and they need it now,” says Teft. “Often, an Internet customer of ours might have an unknown and wildly fluctuating storage need, due to factors such as marketing campaigns, holiday seasons, and the successful launch of new applications. With

the 7450 we can give them as much storage as they need, as soon as they need it. Fulfilling this need, really gives us a large competitive advantage—and we have the new business to corroborate it.”

Benefits for host and hosted alike

A common theme which repeats throughout the successful saga of Latisys and its new 3PAR StoreServ 7450, is that it’s a win/win—for Latisys, and for its customers.

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All the features add up to efficiency and competitive advantage for Latisys. Littlefield interjects, “Don’t forget the wear-level indicator on the 7450 which gives me a total lifespan report so I know when to refresh with certainty.”

And for the customers, the all-flash array provides high IOPS, flexibility, guaranteed performance, and scalability. Cutting-edge high performance, on demand, in a matter of hours.

“From a service provider perspective, our customers expect us to be ahead of the technology curve,” concludes Teft. “They look to us for best practice solutions that they can grow into—they look to us to be expert in our field. The HP 3PAR StoreServ 7450 helps us gain new business and increased efficiencies of scale, which we then pass on to the customer. You can’t be an expert without expert technology to back you up.”

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