

CAMPUS USA Credit Union

A Successful Transition from DAS to Pillar Networked Storage



CAMPUS USA Credit Union serves over 60,000 members worldwide. Based in Gainesville, Florida, it offers a complete portfolio of financial services for personal and business customers, including basic banking, loans, liquid investments, and retirement planning advice. It has successfully combined personal service, community involvement, and technology tools to serve its members since 1935.



Challenge

Over the years, the many departments and locations at CAMPUS accumulated data on local PCs and servers. The central data center operated a Veritas backup-to-tape system that began to suffer from long backup windows: backups running all night would still be going in the morning. The data center stored SQL-based member photo identification, business forms, and receipts on a slower optical platter system. It also houses proprietary financial-transaction applications and databases in a separate mainframe computer with dedicated high-performance storage.

With just nine people on its IT staff, CAMPUS needed to simplify its IT processes to manage costs and create efficiencies. The IT team at CAMPUS decided to introduce networked storage into their environment. To accomplish its goals, it needed both SAN and NAS storage with cost-effective scalability.

It wanted to do the following:

- Consolidate from its many locations and expand its storage limits
- Convert to a backup-to-disk system to shorten backup windows
- Move data from its optical platter system to disk storage for faster access and greater data flexibility

Solution

The Pillar Axiom™ storage system meets all these requirements in a single system. CAMPUS initially installed one NAS Slammer, one SAN Slammer, and three Bricks. The IT team found the AxiomONE™ Storage Services Manager software in the Pilot easy to learn, and enjoy the flexibility of managing both SAN and NAS data from one console in one storage array. They also appreciate the intuitive, rapid provisioning capabilities, which keep them available to address other IT issues and projects.

The NAS side houses archival and backed-up files from the many servers and PCs distributed throughout the organization. Veritas backup-to-disk software is certified by Pillar for the Axiom. With shorter primary backup windows, CAMPUS can perform a local secondary backup to tape at its convenience, with no impact on network utilization during business hours. Backup windows now take about one-third the time it used to take, down to four hours from 12 hours.

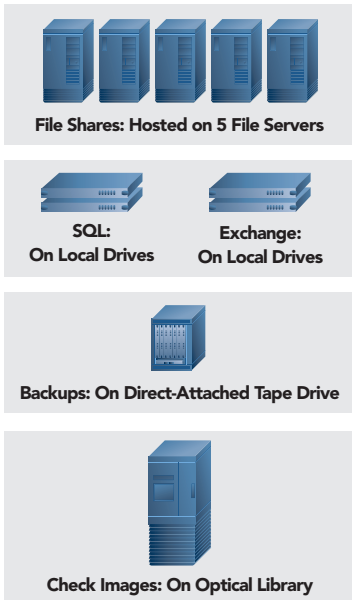
During the first phase of data consolidation, CAMPUS moved its Human Resources and helpdesk SQL databases onto the SAN side of the Axiom system. The project was so successful that CAMPUS purchased a fourth Brick to house its SQL data previously stored on optical platters. This conversion should dramatically improve performance and employee productivity over the platter system, because employees access this data regularly to perform their duties. CAMPUS plans to convert its platter system into a long-term data archive.



“I really grilled the Pillar sales team, because the company was so new. The sales team demonstrated a commitment above and beyond the competition, and Pillar’s product and personality fit our business needs. Although I was hesitant at first, now I feel great about our investment in the Axiom and our relationship with Pillar.”

Jim Thackrey, Chief Technology Officer, CAMPUS USA Credit Union

Before: Scattered DAS Environment



After: Consolidated with Pillar



Before transitioning to Pillar networked storage, CAMPUS USA experienced slow backups and had to manage and maintain multiple systems and servers for its everyday data needs. After transitioning to Pillar, its backup window was reduced by one third, and one easy-to-manage Pillar Axiom hosts applications formerly served by seven systems.

Why Pillar?

- Ideal Consolidation Platform—With integrated SAN/ NAS and tiered performance enabling coexistence of many data types into one system, the Axiom delivered management flexibility without sacrificing performance of any data set
- Price Performance—enterprise-class features without the enterprise cost includes scalability by adding Bricks without paying another licensing fee
- Service and Support—A major consideration for a small IT group responsible for a 24x7 organization, CAMPUS found Pillar service and support to be ex-ceptional, particularly the Pillar team’s ability and willingness to help CAMPUS with its SAN design and implementation

Results

As a non-profit organization, CAMPUS closely manages its capital expenditures, with careful review and ROI analysis before making any technology investment. After transitioning from direct-attached to Pillar networked storage, CAMPUS USA reduced its back-up window by one third, lowered administration costs, and increased performance of two critical applications. While CAMPUS needed enterprise-class features more than low price, it got both with the Pillar Axiom, especially as it scales the system through the addition of Bricks.

The IT team was rightly skeptical about the risks associated with investing in a startup solution. It needed to be sure that Pillar had a solid business plan to support its products and customers over the long term. Pillar addressed its concerns with a committed sales team that oversaw solution design and installation, outstanding customer support, and a “try and buy” program. Pillar partnerships with and certifications by key industry players such as Veritas and CommVault assured CAMPUS that the Axiom system interoperates with established storage application and system vendors.

For More Information:

Visit www.pillardata.com or call 1.877.252.3706.

