

AFS TECHNOLOGIES EXCEEDS RELIABILITY & PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS AT 1/3 THE COST

A fast growing, on-demand software provider, AFS Technologies was pushing its storage infrastructure to the limit, but the replacement cost for a new storage system seemed out of reach. Then AFS Technologies found Nexsan, which not only offered more storage capacity for less cost, but also enabled AFS Technologies to implement a robust data protection strategy and high-performance primary storage environment for the company's heavy-volume, transactional SQL Server application. By choosing Nexsan, AFS Technologies gained greater performance, reliability and capacity for a fraction of the cost of expanding its previous storage solution.

AUTOMAID® ENERGY SAVINGS

Nexsan's revolutionary AutoMAID (Automatic Massive Array of Idle Disks) energy saving technology transparently places disk drives into an idle state to vastly reduce power and cooling costs. AutoMAID delivers the cost-effective benefits of MAID 2.0 without the limitations of slow access times and special host software.

- AutoMAID reduces power and cooling costs
- Nexsan's AutoMAID® delivers the benefits of MAID without the performance limitations
- Available on all Nexsan products

AUTOMAID® SAFETY FEATURES

- In maximum power saving mode, drive spin up is sequenced to reduce power surges
- Drives automatically wake up for periodic surface scan to ensure data integrity (user configurable)
- AutoMAID can be used with data-intensive server applications by delivering energy savings without performance compromise

CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

AFS Technologies Inc. is a leading provider of business enterprise and on-demand software solutions. The company serves over 1,200 customers across the Americas with a portfolio of software solutions for food, beverage, and financial enterprises. AFS Food and Beverage solutions are designed to reduce costs, improve efficiency, increase sales and margins, streamline internal processes and assist in regulatory compliance. AFS Financial Solutions address the complex issues related to revenue recognition as part of a comprehensive enterprise resource planning (ERP) system including general ledger, accounts receivable and accounts payable.

All AFS solutions use a service-oriented architecture (SOA) built with Microsoft .NET framework technology. To match the needs of its diverse customer base, products are available on both a license and true software-as-a-service (SaaS) basis.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:

Replace Existing Storage Arrays to Increase Capacity and Performance While Reducing Capital Costs

With a sophisticated SaaS infrastructure and a very active customer base, AFS Technologies' data was growing at a rapid rate, stretching the existing disk-to-disk-to-tape backup and recovery environment on their StorageTek SATA arrays. With more than 6 TB of data, there was no room for future growth since they reached their capacity limit. AFS Technologies needed to find a reliable storage solution that could deliver the scalability the company needed to meet both its existing and future storage requirements. Reliability and cost efficiency were also key criteria for this growing on-demand software company.

"Adding more StorageTek arrays wasn't an option," said Michael Mulligan, network operations manager, AFS Technologies. "It would be simply too costly. We needed to find a lower-cost option that delivered the high reliability and performance we needed to protect our customers' critical data while also giving us the scalability to support our continued growth into the future."

SOLUTION:

Nexsan SATABoy and SASBoy Highly Efficient Storage Solutions

Once AFS Technologies identified that adding more StorageTek arrays would be cost prohibitive, the company began to evaluate other options and found Nexsan. The Nexsan SATABoy storage units could deliver expandable storage for AFS Technologies' 6 TB of data at one-third the cost of adding additional StorageTek arrays. SATABoy also fully supported the company's Tivoli File Manager backup environment and delivered higher performance that made it easier to meet recovery time objectives (RTOs).



CASESTUDY 2

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The Nexsan systems
have proven to be
exceptionally reliable.”

MIKE MULLIGAN

NETWORK OPERATIONS MANAGER
AFS TECHNOLOGIE

ENVIRONMENT

- Two Nexsan SATABoy® high-performance SATA storage units with a capacity of up to 28 TB for backup and recovery
- One Nexsan SASBoy® for SQL Server data storage
- Tivoli File Manager backup system
- Tape Libraries for archived data

NEXSAN BENEFITS

- Delivers high performance and reliability at one-third the capital cost of other solutions
- Provides high capacity to support growth and scalability
- Offers both backup and disaster recovery assurance
- Supports high transaction data protection for 24/7 business operations

AFS Technologies installed two Nexsan SATABoy units in a disk-to-disk-to-tape configuration using their existing tape libraries as the final archive. The primary SATABoy is set up at a co-location site where all of the data is backed up. A secondary SATABoy, in an AFS Technologies location, is configured to replicate data from the SATABoy backup target for disaster recovery assurance.

Because the Nexsan systems performed so reliably, AFS Technologies also installed a Nexsan SASBoy at its co-location site to handle the backend storage processes for its SQL Server database. The SQL Server data is continuously online and accessed by AFS Technologies’ end-user customers for ordering and other customer operations. As such, performance and reliability were critical requirements. The SASBoy met all their requirements with 15K SAS drive performance and high reliability.

“The Nexsan systems have proven to be exceptionally reliable,” said Mulligan. “The SASBoy, in particular, is well suited for our high-transaction database, which needs to remain up and running at all times. Nexsan delivered it all by giving us the performance, scalability and reliability our environment required within the parameters of our strict IT budget.”

RESULTS:

Nexsan Solutions Deliver Higher Performance and Reliability for One-Third the Cost

The Nexsan SATABoy and SASBoy systems have given AFS Technologies higher performance storage and reliability at one-third the cost of a replacement StorageTek system while delivering scalability to meet the company’s future storage needs. The Nexsan systems also assure that critical business data is secure in the event of a disaster or server outage.

SATABOY BENEFITS FOR AFS

- **High performance.** SATABoy and SASBoy incorporate advanced features such as dual RAID engines, a high performance cache mirroring ASIC, and active/active failover to deliver uncompromising availability and reliability, feature rich functionality and high performance;
- **High reliability.** SATABoy and SASBoy offer redundant and individually hot-swappable active components (RAID controllers, fans, power supplies and disks). Further, SATABoy and SASBoy offer industry leading system reliability with an innovative design in vibration reduction and cooling;
- **“Single pane of glass” management.** SATABoy and SASBoy support management in one, central location through a simplified management console without the need for special agents or capacity keys;
- **Highly efficient storage.** SATABoy and SASBoy feature 14 drives in 3U. They are designed with very energy efficient components thereby reducing power and cooling requirements. SATABoy and SASBoy comes standard with AutoMAID® energy saving technology, which reduces power consumption up to 60% without penalizing storage performance;

Benefits AFS Technologies receives from Nexsan’s highly efficient storage solutions include:

- **High Performance.** The SATABoy and SASBoy systems are high-performance RAID solutions built around the latest high-capacity SATA and SAS disk drives, respectively. AFS Technologies now stores more than 23 TB on these systems.
- **High Capacity.** Each SATABoy and SASBoy storage system provides 14 drives in only three units of rack space.
- **High Reliability.** The Nexsan storage systems offer fully redundant and individually hot-swappable active components (RAID controllers, fans, power supplies and disks) along with innovative design for vibration reduction and cooling.
- **High Power Efficiency.** All Nexsan storage comes standard with AutoMAID® energy-saving technology that reduces power consumption up to 60% without penalizing storage performance.

“Nexsan impressed us with their reliability, performance and value,” noted Mulligan. “Their systems delivered everything we needed and more for a fraction of the price.”

ABOUT NEXSAN

Nexsan® is a leading independent provider of disk-based storage systems purpose-built and priced for the mid-market, offering industry-leading reliability, space and power efficiency. Nexsan storage systems provide scalability, integrity and security for growing volumes of unstructured data and are ideal for virtual storage, data protection, secure online archiving, bulk and cloud storage applications. Overcoming the challenges of traditional storage, Nexsan delivers a different kind of storage experience with easy-to-use, efficient and enterprise-class solutions that reduce the complexity and cost of storage. Nexsan delivers its storage systems through a select global partner ecosystem of solution providers, OEMs and system integrators. Nexsan is based in Thousand Oaks, Calif. For more information, visit the company’s website at www.nexsan.com.

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