



Manufacturing Success Story: Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber

MIDWEST ACOUST-A-FIBER SUCCESS THROUGH PERFORMANCE

Organization Profile:

Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber

Location: Delaware, OH

Organization Type: Manufacturing

Organization Size: 165 Employees

IT Staff: 2

Number of Servers Virtualized: < 30

FAST FACTS

Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber is a leading manufacturer of fiber-engineered composites, including sound and heat shields for the automotive industry. As a tier one supplier to General Motors and DaimlerChrysler and a tier two supplier to the Ford Motor Company, maintaining uptime and reliability in the IT infrastructure with limited resources is vital to the success of the company.

“With HC³, the complexity of virtualization is hidden. The solution lessens the skill requirements necessary to find an administrator and lessens the dependency on an outside firm for virtualization expertise around implementation and management.”

- Daniel Penrod, Manager Systems Administrator

- Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber

Introduction

Faced with aging servers that had a propensity for failure, Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber was on the search for a turnkey virtualization solution that would improve the uptime and reliability in their IT infrastructure. At the same time, limited IT resources required that the solution be both easy to use and affordable.

“Saving money was a primary driver for us,” said Daniel Penrod, Manager Systems Administrator.

Challenge

Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber received several competing quotes, including HP and Dell, for piecemeal solutions that would require significant effort to setup and manage. In addition to servers, Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber would need to purchase a Storage Area Network (SAN) or Network Attached Storage (NAS) for shared storage, as well as license VMware to act as the hypervisor.

“The problem with all of the solutions was the price when you coupled it with VMware,” said Penrod. “The initial purchase combined with the ongoing management costs were prohibitive given our limited IT budget and resources.”



Solution

Penrod eventually found an alternative solution in Scale Computing's HC³. HC³ was built with the availability of a virtualized server and SAN, the scalability of a clustered infrastructure and the simplicity of a single server. By deploying HC³, Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber was able to realize the benefits of a fully virtualized environment without the added complexity of a typical virtualization deployment – all at a fraction of the costs of other alternatives.

"The other solutions were as much as double the cost," said Penrod.

HC³ does not require storage protocols, networking or provisioning. On the storage side, there are no RAID sets, iSCSI targets or LUNs, multi-pathing, storage security, zoning or fabric for Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber to setup or manage. On the server side, they will never have to deal with the complexity of iSCSI initiators, host and VM file systems, server clusters and policies.

"In a small shop, you have to keep it simple. The more complexity that can be hidden from the administrator, the better," said Penrod.

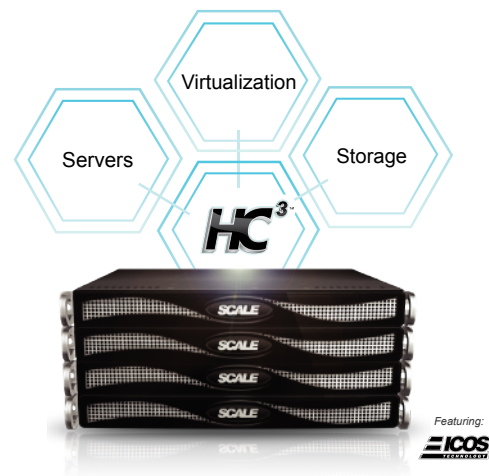
To create a new virtual machine, Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber simply assigns the resources necessary for the VM and loads the operating system. Using HC³, Penrod was

able to save hours of unnecessary overhead in the deployment of new VMs.

"Going the other route, it would have likely taken triple that amount of time and a lot more in terms of configuration," said Penrod.

The time savings seen from deploying HC³ has enabled the IT department at Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber to take on other much needed projects including the upgrade of Windows 2000 Servers to a newer version.

"I can now rebuild them in a side-by-side [virtualized] environment with little risk to the business," said Penrod.



Integrated servers, storage and virtualization.
No sweat.