

SCALE COMPUTING FIELD REPORT

DECEMBER 2014



Virtualization is mature and widely adopted in the enterprise market, and convergence/hyperconvergence with virtualization is taking the market by storm. But what about mid-sized and SMB? Are they falling behind?

Many of them are. Generalist IT, low virtualization budgets, and small staff sizes all militate against complex virtualization projects and high costs. What this means is that when mid-sized and SMB want to virtualize, they either get sticker shock from high prices and high complexity, or dissatisfaction with cheap, poorly scalable and unreliable solutions. What they want and need is hyperconvergence for ease in management, lower CapEx and OpEx; and a simplified but highly scalable and available virtualization platform.

This is a tall order but not an impossible one: Scale Computing claims to meet these requirements for this large market segment, and [Taneja Group's HC3 Validation Report](#) supports those claims. However, although lab results are vital to knowing the real story they are only part of that story. We also wanted to hear directly from IT about Scale in the real world of the mid-sized and SMB data center.

We undertook a Field Report project where we spoke at length with eight Scale customers. This report details our findings around the top common points we found throughout eight different environments: exceptional simplicity, excellent support, clear value, painless scalability, and high availability – all at a low price. These key features make a hyperconverged platform a reality for SMB and mid-market virtualization customers.

Barriers to Adopting Virtualization

Pressure on the data center is not restricted to the enterprise by any means. Growing data requires more storage assets and more compute power, and virtualization is a very attractive option. Yet solid barriers stand in the way.

- **Virtualizing on top of legacy equipment.** Years of bolting on servers, networking, and storage can cause serious issues when introducing virtualization atop legacy infrastructure. Even if IT virtualizes the environment, scaling is difficult given the complexity of resource management.
- **Limited IT budgets.** Virtualization saves money and resources by commoditizing servers, but can be expensive to adopt and raises storage costs and complexity. In many smaller IT shops, an expensive virtualization platform may be a cure that is worse than the disease.
- **Minimal, generalist IT staff.** Smaller IT organizations split their time between a variety of tasks. They do not have the luxury to specialize in virtualization, which needs to stay one job among many. Even if an IT member is already a virtualization expert specializing is a poor use of their time. And as is more often the case, generalist IT would need to invest in expensive, ongoing training for a complex virtualization platform.
- **Access to strong technical support.** Generalist IT needs virtualization that works right and fast out the gate. And when something happens, they need fast access to excellent technical support. Sadly that is not always the case: many vendors make do with poorly trained support technicians,

require support scripts even if the caller knows what the problem is, insist on blaming other vendors, or lack remote options for troubleshooting. And those vendors who do offer excellent technical support usually make customers pay through the nose for it.

Solving the Problem

Solving this problem requires reasonable cost, simplified virtualization, reliable scalability, excellent support, and high availability – a very big ticket for one platform to fulfill.

We strongly suggest HyperConverged systems to start: they overcome integration and complexity issues among computing stacks. Hyperconvergence integrates computing, network and storage stacks into a single platform: typically servers, shared storage, hypervisor, switches, management software and services, P2V migration, and licenses. Implementation and support may be offered by vendors, VARs or on-house depending on the product.

Traditional three tier converged systems can be very expensive but hyperconverged systems for mid-sized and SMB solutions can fit cost parameters. The hypervisor will also make a big difference: VMware and Hyper-V will usually be much more expensive than other hypervisors like open source KVM. However, KVM can be time-consuming to set up and manage on your own, requires appropriate hardware, and can be expensive to get first-line support.

SCALE HC3 TECHNOLOGY APPROACH TO SOLVING BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Scale Computing was an early proponent of HyperConverged appliances and is one of the innovators in this marketplace. Since the release of Scale Computing's first HyperConverged appliance (HC3), many others have come to embrace the elegance of having storage and compute functionality combined on a single server. Taneja Group defines hyperconvergence as the integration of multiple previously separate IT domains into one system in order to serve up an entire IT infrastructure from a single device or system. This means that hyperconverged systems contain all IT infrastructures—networking, compute and storage—while promising to preserve the adaptability of the best traditional IT approaches. Such capability implies an architecture built for seamless and easy scaling over time, in a "grow as needed" fashion.

The approach HC3 uses to solve small to mid-size business challenges can be summarized in the following manner:

Simplicity

The HC3 approach to simplicity is to create a platform that totally encompasses the virtualization framework. Unlike other HyperConverged products, in which the hypervisor component is added on (like VMware ESX, Microsoft Hyper-V, or Red Hat KVM), HC3 comes with the hypervisor integral to the product through software called Ultra-Easy HyperCore Software. This all inclusive software package allows Scale to de-clutter the product from features that are not needed and radically simplify the virtualization environment. The other products typically require a level of expertise in virtualization that is not needed with the HC3 environment. This makes this technology the ideal choice for small businesses that may be coming off of standalone servers each with a dedicated application running. In addition, other companies that are using a feature rich complex virtualized environment could benefit from a reduction in administration complexity by moving to HC3.

Value

The value associated with HC3 comes from two main architectural decisions. The first is to build the product using industry standard based x86 server hardware with direct attach storage that is shared via built in scale-out storage software. This is a similar architecture to what is found in web-scale companies like Google, Facebook, and others. The second architectural decision was to completely own the hypervisor software such that all features can be built in from the ground up. The business truly gets infrastructure in a box with no need to purchase additional software or hire specialized staff to manage the system. This is extremely important for businesses that are coming off of dedicated server environments. Applications they are currently running often times can be seamlessly migrated to HC3's shared and highly available infrastructure. This consolidation approach will typically result in significant cost savings all while maintaining a small IT staff.

Support

Support is job one for Scale Computing. Built into HC3 is self-healing, state machine technology that continuously monitors over 1500 conditions on each node in the system to make intelligent decisions to bring the cluster back to a healthy state. These conditions include everything in the stack from hardware on up to the virtual machines running on the hypervisor. In the event of a drive failure, HyperCore will automatically restripe and remirror the data from that drive to the available space in the cluster. If an entire node were to fail, HyperCore automatically restarts the virtual machines on the other nodes in the cluster without intervention from the administrator. HC3 HyperCore also supports rolling firmware upgrades which allow a business to keep the software on the latest version with zero downtime.

When a condition exists that requires manual intervention to bring back to a healthy state, Scale support teams (ScaleCare) are manned 24X7 with converged infrastructure experts that reside internal to the company. The customer does not get multiple layers of support expertise, they can have direct pipeline to experts that understand converged infrastructure from the virtualization environment to the scale out hardware.

Scalability and Availability

Scale Computing got its start with dedicated scale-out storage appliances and has since evolved this technology into the HyperConverged HC3 series of products. Scale-out storage technology is at the heart of HC3's ability to not only scale in right size increments but also to enable high availability through node failover. HC3 nodes come in several models that are tuned to specific compute, memory, and storage configurations aimed at various business workloads. Nodes can be mixed and matched and added in incremental right sized chunks. This allows any size business to purchase only what is needed up front, knowing that growth can be achieved at any time without the need to abandon what was previous purchased. Inherently built into the product is high reliability and failover. There is a minimum of two copies of data within the cluster and VM's automatically fail transparently to a new node in event of a failure. Individual VMs can be protected using built in snapshot technology and snapshots can be replicated to remote HC3's or exported as a file offsite for disaster recovery.

BUSINESS BENEFITS VALIDATED FROM THE FIELD

When we spoke to the customers we heard the needs they were dealing with, complicated by the above factors of small staff, limited budgets and IT generalization.

Benefit	Scale	Customer Quote
Simplicity	Virtualization was new to these companies and new to the majority of their IT directors. Scale's out-of-the-box simplicity meant a short learning curve and minimal administrative time.	<i>"The simplicity aspect is a big driver for us. With Scale, virtualized storage is built-in. We need to know what's under the covers but it's simple to administer even for generalists." (Senior IT engineer, Financial services firm)</i>
Value	Scale Computing is extremely economical for both CapEx and OpEx compared to VMware, Hyper-V, and most DIY solutions.	<i>"We were looking at Dell EqualLogic systems when we found Scale at half the price. I was nervous because the price was so much lower until we found out that this less expensive system did everything we needed it to do." (Mike O'Neil, Hydradyne)</i>
Support	Several customers had experienced mediocre support from large vendors. Scale provides premium support to their customers and welcomes their ideas and feedback.	<i>"We had a very good experience working with them. Our opinion matters even though we are a tiny customer. That is very important." (Senior IT engineer, Financial services firm)</i>
Scalability	These customers may be smaller but their data center environments are growing fast. Powerful, simple and cost-effective scalability is crucial.	<i>"We needed something highly scalable because we were growing so fast. With Scale, we could just pop in another blade and grow it. And the price made a huge amount of sense against the other vendor offerings." (Eric Normandin, CMG)</i>
Availability	Several of these customers had regulatory compliance requirements, and all of them had high priority applications and data that had to stay running. They could not risk poor reliability.	<i>"Scale is a dream comes true for high availability. I would highly recommend Scale to anybody who needs high availability and needs it now." (Lee Moreau, Bengal Transportation)</i>

Let's take a closer look at each key benefit using real-world customer reports.

Simplicity

Key Takeaway: Scale offers exceptional simplicity for virtualized environments. Even VMware is too complex for some of these customers: most are moving to virtualization for the first time and cannot afford the time or expense of intensive training. Most of these companies have 1-3 IT staff, so complexity is out of the question.

We could have done the installation ourselves but turned it over to our VAR to save on our resources. Their technician found it quite easy to setup and I walked through it with him. It was pretty much a no-brainer. (Bill Andersen, Midwest Dental)

It was about two weeks for the whole order-to-door process, much faster than I expected. Installation took one day. We installed into the rack, configured the networking switch, called Scale to help bring us up quickly, and were up. (Eric Normandin, CMG)

Our VAR engineer was on site with the Scale engineer on the phone. It took about six minutes to get up and running -- it took longer to get the rack up and powered than the system. The setup of the Scale host was extremely easy. (Joshua C. Bailey, Project Resources Group)

We log into Win instances frequently, but log into Scale's user interface at most once a month per IT staffer. The beauty of the VM and good hardware is this concept: you get it up and running and you don't have to mess with it. (Bill Andersen, Midwest Dental)

Installation and migration went really well. We set up the new cluster, optimized it, added full functionality including replication, and tested it. When we were ready we migrated data. End users were not impacted. That was a real success story. (Ivan Imana, Adelman Travel Group)

Creating and booting up a new VM is very simple and I don't need to be an expert. The first time I set up a UNIX instance I popped in, mounted a drive, and formatted it with the UNIX OS. It took four to five minutes max. Then I cloned a copy of a failing physical machine running a database to that UNIX instance. It turned out to be so simple. None of the database users ever noticed the change. (Bill Andersen, Midwest Dental)

Just one administrator is responsible for Scale. Less than 1% of his time is spent on Scale, unless he's deploying a new VM. That doesn't take long and doesn't happen very often. (Eric Normandin, CMG)

I worked with server virtualization before but had never virtualized a whole production environment. I deliberately took the time to install Scale and migrate so I could learn slowly, easy, and right... There couldn't be any downtime, Scale had to be stable. And all data came over intact. It worked out fine. (Tom Bethke, Kenlee Precision)

We installed it ourselves with Scale on the phone. You just snap the pieces together. We got the VMs up and running the same day. Compared to the VM environment I came from, Scale is probably five times easier to use. (Lee Moreau, Bengal Transportation)

Support

Key Takeaway: End-to-end support is always available to Scale customers. Remote options let support engineers see directly into the problem. Support turns out to be a major reason why customers are loyal to Scale over the long haul.

We've been a Scale customer for about four years now. Our clients have high service expectations of us and we deliver, but you don't always find that with technology vendors. Scale meets that expectation. (Ivan Imana, Adelman Travel Group)

We proactively use our remote Scale support. We'll add a cluster and then call Scale to remotely check and make sure everything is correct and optimized. They've been more than willing to work with my guys. (Mike O'Neil, Hydradyne)

On a Sunday I needed another DoubleTake license but DoubleTake's sales team wasn't available on Sunday. I called Scale directly and although it wasn't really their responsibility, they contacted DoubleTake and got the license for me. This was very helpful. (Joshua C. Bailey, Project Resources Group)

I was upgrading software when I decided to upgrade the Scale firmware at the same time. When a node did not complete the firmware update, the time was 8:00 pm Central Time. I called up Scale support anyway, and within a couple of minutes I was on the phone with the engineer. He's on the East Coast, it's 9:00 at night for him. He opened up a support channel and said, "Oh I see what happened. Let me restart it." He did, and then volunteered to monitor the firmware process so I could monitor the other software upgrade. An hour later he called me back and said that the firmware upgrade finished perfectly. I can't tell you how impressed I was that Scale didn't leave me hanging, even though it was 10:00 pm their time once he finished. (Bill Andersen, Midwest Dental)

Value: Capex and OpEx

Key Takeaway: Scale's capital and operating costs are almost always less expensive than any other virtualization option, including DIY. Even if it comes in with a higher price tag, its simplicity and support offerings still create higher value for the customer.

HC3 was Scale's first convergence system. We saw the benefit of a lower power, smaller footprint HC3 after the purchase. As the technology progressed, we were able to get more out of a cluster. It's a benefit because in our AT&T co-location, you have to pay for power. With Scale we just needed one cabinet, which gave us good power savings. (Ivan Imana, Adelman Travel Group)

We looked at Red Hat's version of KVM. But it's very complex to set up and test and takes being a large customer to get fast answers and support. It still would have cost more than Scale even though licensing costs were less, because we would have had to buy virtualization licenses, Red Hat Enterprise, and still supply our own hardware. We chose Scale instead. (Senior IT engineer, Financial services firm)

In addition to VMware, we also looked at using the KVM hypervisor with Dell hardware. We didn't do an extensive cost analysis because it was fairly clear that we could just buy a bunch of hardware, download open source software, and get it up and running. This would be cheaper than Scale. But Scale won because we were in the middle of starting an ERP implementation, and we didn't want to take the time for DIY. Scale became an extension of our IT department and did a lot for us. (Bill Andersen, Midwest Dental)

Our first cluster cost about \$63K for the 3-node cluster plus all server licenses, one year of gratis support and an additional two years. A competitive Dell HA solution would have cost \$58.7. So Scale was actually more expensive but complexity was the decision maker, not price. We went with Scale for its simplicity. (Lee Moreau, Bengal Transportation)

When we first got into virtualization, we probably spent close to \$200K-300K. Scale had more functionality and drive space at a cheaper cost. We went from 4TB to 10TB with Scale, at roughly half the cost. (Ivan Imana, Adelman Travel Group)

We went from 4TB to 10TB with Scale, at roughly half the cost. When we did the research for our latest technology refresh, VMware or Hyper-V would have cost more than 2.5 to 3 times what Scale did. Now, VMware was more competitive on the initial outlay. But they are too cagey on support costs for Year 2 and above. We just couldn't trust them. Their sales persons would not commit to hard costs, and Scale's did. (Ivan Imana, Adelman Travel Group)

Scalability and Availability

Key Takeaway: Scale offers smooth scalability with high availability. Business-critical applications need true high availability (HA) and cannot afford downtime for disruptive upgrades or unreliable systems.

Our core set of twelve application servers are in. These are the ones we knew we would put on Scale and were the reason why we decided on hyperconvergence. We'll have to spin up a few more VMs because of growth. Scale is a great investment over the next five years since our company grows consistently, mostly through acquisitions. (Mike O'Neil, Hydradyne)

Our VMs are fairly stable and we just let them run. Most of them will run for months without messing with them. Our DR site is an unmanned data center about thirty miles away from the primary data center. We use third-party DoubleTake for Windows and Storix for Linux cloning, which both work very well with Scale. We also use them to migrate data between clusters or move VMs around. We also use Symantec NetBackup, snapshots within Scale, file level and image level backup, and replication... if the building burns down we can't lose data. When you're in Finance, you can't lose data. (Senior IT engineer, Financial services firm) 1`

I came from a payroll company. High availability was critical for us, people have to get paid. We'd built a dual host connected to storage, protected by Veeam, and connected to the cloud. But when I came to Bengal Transportation, I knew they needed high availability but I hated the complexity of doing it. So when a network team member told me about Scale I thought, wow, they have HA all converged into one managed system. (Lee Moreau, Bengal Transportation)

We are expecting to be \$100 million in the next three to five years, which means we'll be supporting twice as many desktops. And the company is always looking for new technology. When it's time to expand, we just buy one more node - no need to re-engineer the whole farm. (Lee Moreau, Bengal Transportation)

INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMER PROFILES

Kenlee Precision (Manufacturing Industry)

- Customer: Tom Bethke, IT Manager
- Facts: Founded in 1969. 125 employees and headquartered in Baltimore, MD. Precision tooling for high tech industries including medical, semi-conductor, electronic, and military.
- In-house IT staff: 1
- Solution: Already owned Scale's NAS system. When HC3 came out, he bought a 4-node cluster to virtualize the data center and a 3-node cluster for a remote site.
- Applications: Manufacturing order system, Vantage ERP, database server, Exchange, file server, terminal server, payroll services, and a few more.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **Virtualization.** "We had hardware issues with older servers. When a server went out I decided to virtualize. Virtualization was totally new in our environment."
 - **Reliability and support.** "I had already been a Scale customer for years. Just one drive went bad all this time and I just popped in the new drive, no downtime. I knew that their support was great, and if I had a problem with the new clusters it would be solved quickly and with minimal downtime."
 - **Simplicity.** "It was going to be a lot more expensive for me to buy VMware and supporting equipment than buying Scale with everything included. Scale was out of the box and ready to go."

Bengal Transportation (Transportation Industry)

- Customer: Lee Moreau, IT Director
- Facts: Founded in 1995, serves the continental U.S. and Canada. Four businesses exist within the company: heavy trucking, trucking insurance, crane and rigging, and load brokerage. Each provides turnkey solutions for all modes of the transportation industry. Headquartered in Louisiana, Bengal is growing very quickly and has made the Inc. 5000.
- In-house IT staff: 3
- Solution: 2 HC3 clusters with 3 nodes each. The clusters are located in different offices. 12 VMs. 14TB on the existing cluster. The new one has 12TB.
- Applications: The key application is their Industry-specific software that communicates with their truck fleet. Also 2 Data Domain controllers, anti-virus server, remote desktop server, file and print, web server, SharePoint, Spiceworks, messaging, and an IT capacity management tool.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **High availability.** "Scale is a dream come true for high availability. I would highly recommend Scale to anybody who needs high availability and needs it now."
 - **Support.** "From the beginning they always respected us even though we are a small company. We felt like an important customer, and knew that if we had a problem they'd be there."

- **Ease of use.** “Once you get going, it’s fairly simple to run. Just click and it will do what you need to do.”

Midwest Dental (Medical Industry)

- Customer: Bill Andersen, IT Manager
- Facts: Founded in 1988. Headquartered in Wichita Falls, TX with offices throughout Texas and in Oklahoma City. About 100 employees.
- IT staff size: 3
- Solution: 4 nodes HC3x. 10 VMs. We purchased 128GB of RAM. Nodes were 32GB each. 4.8TB total. “For right now it’s enough to meet our needs; we have between 1.5 and 2TB on now.”
- Applications: Implementing new ERP software. Virtualizing Windows Servers. And VMs. Exchange, SQL Server, remote desktop servers. Commercial applications. Database server runs on a VM. Most mission-critical application? The ERP.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **Hyperconvergence.** They had looked at VMware for virtualizing the data center but the hardware recommendations seemed excessive. “We would need a pretty significant SAN, and storage would be in one realm and computing in another. We would have a lot of horsepower sitting on the SAN that was doing very little. Scale offered cost savings and good use of our investment.”
 - **ERP efficiency.** They decided on a Windows SQL Server-based ERP, and then chose between cloud hosting and Scale. They went with Scale because of their high customization requirements. “And as it turns out, we were glad we had HC3 in-house.”

Adelman Travel Group (Travel Services Industry)

- Customer: Ivan Imana, Chief Information Officer
- Facts: Founded in 1985 with 350 employees. Headquartered in the Midwest with major call centers in the Midwest and on the East Coast. Diversified travel and meeting management services covering corporate, government and consumer clients.
- In-house IT staff: Company-wide 35, infrastructure team 4.
- Solution: Two Scale clusters. Production cluster has 5 nodes with 24TB and supports 50+ VMs and 35 VDIs. DR cluster has 8 nodes and 10TB; configured to be in compliance with PCI regulations.
- Applications: All mission-critical applications run on the production Scale cluster including ERP, business intelligence, SQL, and in-house applications providing risk management and real-time customer service for travelers.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **Scaling:** “Scale equipment and services will grow with us as we grow year over year.”

- **Support:** “We are a large small company but we’re not IBM. We get good service from Scale that we wouldn’t necessarily get from a much bigger company that considers us a smaller account.”
- **Best of breed.** “We are conscious of costs but choose best of breed. If the best product is the cheapest, great. But we’ll get the best one that’s right for us, and that is Scale.”

Anonymous (Financial services firm)

- Customer: Senior IT engineer
- Facts: Founded in 1988 with an aggregate committed capital of over \$2.5 billion. The firm and its UK affiliate have 38 employees based in two major cities in the US and UK.
- IT staff size: 3
- Solution: 3 HC3 clusters of 4 nodes each supporting 24 active VMs. The firm is a beta tester for Scale but they own all their clusters. New clusters run production servers and as they age are replaced and assigned to test/dev.
- Applications: 90% of workloads are on Scale and the percentage is growing. Applications include an Oracle database, Linux-based email server, DNS, Enterprise Dynamics, Solomon, corporate accounting, and Geneva.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **Support.** “We had a very good experience working with them. Our opinion matters even though we are a tiny customer. That is very important.”
 - **Simplicity.** “This aspect is a big driver for us. With Scale, virtualized storage is built-in. We need to know what’s under the covers, but it’s simple to administer even for generalists.”
 - **Reliability.** “Servers rarely go down. When they do we can quickly get them back up again.”

Hydradyne (Manufacturing Automation Industry)

- Customer: Mike O’Neil, IT Director.
- Facts: Hydradyne was founded in 1968 and is headquartered in Fort Worth, TX. Over 500 employees in 30 locations across the South and growing quickly.
- In-house IT staff: 2.5
- Solution: 8-node HC3 system in production environment with 2 additional 3-node systems on order. DoubleTake and HyperCore.
- Applications: Core set of application servers includes 8 ERP servers, web servers, and SQL database.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **CapEx.** They were looking at Dell EqualLogic systems when they found Scale at half the price. “I was nervous because the price was so much lower until we found out that this less expensive system did everything we needed it to do.”

- **OpEx.** “We were spending \$40K a year with a co-lo, which is why we brought everything in-house. We needed a hyperconverged environment to fit the data center.”
- **Built-in redundancy.** They are replacing their snapshot solution with HyperCore’s VM-level snapshots.
- **Minimal administrator time.** “We spend a very small amount of time in monthly administration. Scale is self-sufficient, and when we do need support it’s probably the best I have ever experienced.”

Project Resources Group (Management Consulting Industry)

- Customer: Joshua C. Bailey, Manager, Application Development / Systems & Network Administrator
- In-house IT staff:
- Facts: Founded in 2001 and headquartered in Greenwood Village, CO. 150 employees with offices all over the U.S. Serves the cable, telephony, construction and utility industries.
- Solution: HC2000 with 3 nodes. 7.2 TB cluster with 3.6 TB usable. SAS drives. Runs 6-7 VMs and will virtualize more. Next year they plan to buy another 3-node Scale system to provide a full site failover at a remote office.
- Applications: Domain controller and Active Directory server, and 3-4 SQL databases that support their call center application. Additional applications include Windows file system, PBX on Red Hat, test/dev, monitoring and FTP, and others.
- Scale purchase drivers:
 - **Short learning curve.** “Having to learn either VMware or Hyper-V and launching them would take a lot of time. Scale did it all.”
 - **Centralized support.** Other hyperconverged systems required support from several vendors. With Scale, PRG could contact a single engineer to get the help they needed.
 - **Low cost.** Scale’s price was the lowest of all the vendors PRG reviewed.

Condominium Management Group (CMG)

- Customer: Eric Normandin, IT Manager & System Administrator
- Industry: Property Management
- Facts: Founded in 1989 and based in Pinellas Park, FL. Nearly 100-person company offering management and accounting services to condominium and homeowner associations in Ottawa, Canada.
- In-house IT staff: 3
- Solution: 3-node cluster with 3.6TB redundant storage, configured to optimize their large database. Currently supports 17 VMs.
- Applications: Critical applications include 24x7 Condo Manager software, Exchange, and SQL. Several other VMs are virtual client desktops for association director clients.
- Scale purchase drivers:

- **Price-performance ratio.** They considered IBM Blades with VMware, Dell with VMware, Dell with Hyper-V, and HP's converged arrays. "Scale fit right into that medium point. They gave us 90% of what the big guys could give us at a much lower cost."
- **Scalability.** "We needed something highly scalable because we were growing so fast. With Scale, we could just pop in another blade and grow it. And the price just made a huge amount of sense against what the other vendors were offering."

TANEJA GROUP OPINION

Taneja found that all eight of the Scale customers were extremely pleased with the value and simplicity of the HC3 systems they have deployed. The following major themes arose from the majority of the customers:

- They all had limited budgets and could not afford to increase the size of their administrative staff.
- Many were previously using non-virtualized environments on dedicated server technology and the infrastructure was aging and needing a refresh.
- Many times their current environment did not meet the availability and RPO objectives required.
- While they wanted to consolidate their infrastructure using virtualization technology, the alternatives they researched either cost too much to implement, or the complexity meant that they would have to invest into increased administrative staffing and training.

While the above themes drove these customers to Scale Computing's HC3 platform in the first place, what keeps them loyal to Scale is the personalized support they receive. Scale customers feel like they receive a "white gloves" support experience and when they contrast that against their previous experience, typically with the larger technology companies, there is no comparison. All the customers we interviewed were committed to using Scale HC3 technology in the future; growing their infrastructure needs seamlessly, one node at time.

The Scale customers have spoken and rarely do we get such an enthusiastic response as told by the numerous comments sprinkled throughout this field report. The Scale HC3 technology delivers on the promise of simplicity, availability, and value for small to medium businesses all with a great support experience.

ABOUT TANEJA GROUP

Taneja Group's mission is to deliver best-in-class technology analysis and consulting for the storage, server, virtualization and cloud markets to enable our clients to convert technology into business. We are a boutique firm of operational experts with both broad and deep expertise in storage systems and technologies, server and desktop hardware and software, virtualization platforms and appliances, cloud software and services, and physical and virtual infrastructure management solutions.

For more information, please visit www.tanejagroup.com.

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