

Greenpeace UK

Prepared for future-proof storage

In its drive to ensure the most environmentally and economically efficient use of the world's resources, Greenpeace UK bases its organisation's strategy and operations on the most effective use of up-to-date scientific, economic and political information. Information is vital to the lifeblood and thinking of the organisation, enabling intelligent interpretation and decisions to be made on the best available facts, and ensuring that its international environmental campaigns and projects have the best possible impact on the political thinking of the country, its government and the world.

The Project

Spring 2004 – Replace an ageing storage system

For these reasons, Greenpeace UK regards its information as critical to its day-to-day and strategic operations. And with the ever increasing growth in both the volume and usage of this information comes the requirement for highly effective storage and back-up capabilities.

It was an area that Greenpeace UK believed it was not addressing in a satisfactory way. The existing approach was lacking and unable to support spiralling storage demands as information usage became greater and ever more sophisticated, and as the number of servers it used continued to grow.

An existing Novell-based infrastructure in place for the organisation had insufficient capacity and scalability – in short, it meant that storage could not be increased. For Greenpeace UK to move forward, it was clear to the organisation that a more industrial strength and future-proof solution was required.

The Requirement

What was needed was a future-proof and robust approach to storage, with new storage capability for four servers: two Linux-based and two Windows 2000 Server-based.

- The original requirement was to provide a 1500Gb storage solution. However, ArdentA were able to go much further in advising on and providing the solution: this meant offering a highly cost-effective infrastructure allowing Greenpeace UK to purchase 2 Terabyte for future expandability.
- It was essential the solution could be easily managed and that additional storage could be added without interruption to service.
- Greenpeace UK wanted to be able to add more chunks of storage of a similar size in future, for instance, adding another 2Tb, and then a further 2Tb, and so on. ArdentA's solution enables this, simply and cost-effectively.
- A new backup solution is to be proposed in order to allow for the new storage to be quickly and reliably backed up. Ideally the solution could integrate into the existing backup manager software.

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Steven Thompson,
Finance and IT Director,
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The Solution

Based on Greenpeace UK's requirements and the budget that was available, ArdentA chose the IBM DS4300 Storage Server as the most appropriate storage solution.

In terms of cost-effectiveness, practicality and future-proofing, the reasons were compelling, among them:

- It provides an instant solution to the requirement based on only one physical product; the DS4300 Storage Server supports up to 2Tb in 3U of rack space.
- The solution ensures Greenpeace UK is prepared for future storage requirements. Without additional licensing, it is possible to add up to a total of 8.2Tb of fibre channel based storage with the installation of EXP700 expansion cabinets. Installing the 'Turbo' option means a total of 16.4Tb can be added.
- Alternatively, up to 28Tb of SATA-based storage can be allocated using the EXP100 expansion units also with the 'Turbo' option.
- Greenpeace UK can also easily manage the storage server using graphical-based tools, as all the management tools are Java-based.
- So that the storage can be backed up over the SAN without disruption to the live service, the solution specifies an IBM Ultrium Tape library with two fibre channel drives. Cost-effectiveness and practicality in the approach for Greenpeace UK were achieved by ensuring that the solution was completely compatible with the existing backup software.

The Results

Installation and configuration of the storage solution was completed smoothly. On top of that, the onsite training and handover to Greenpeace UK's technical staff were both delivered successfully.

Greenpeace UK have since been able to allocate the desired storage to their servers and have completed the migration from their Novell-based storage to the new SAN.

Additional host 'Storage Partitions' have also been added with no interruption to service, simply by adding a licence key using IBM's 'On-demand' functionality. This clearly demonstrates the flexible nature of the solution chosen by ArdentA.

“Ardenta's extensive knowledge of Linux and storage networking made them an ideal partner to help us address our storage issues. The SAN they recommend shows that they understood our needs well. The solution ArdentA has implemented gives us the reliability and scalability as our storage needs grow too.”

Steven Thompson, Finance and IT Director,
Greenpeace UK.