



Odek Technologies Upgrades IT Infrastructure to improve performance for their customers

Tintri VMstore Systems Boost Application Performance, Simplify IT Management, and Reduce Storage Footprint for Large South African Life Insurance Company

“Not only can our client, a Large South African Life Insurance Company, respond to customer requests for quotes much faster and with more accurate information, the move to Tintri has greatly increased the productivity of their life insurance agents. It’s a big win for us, our clients, as well as for their customers.”

— Karien Greeff, IT Processing Executive, Odek Technologies

SHORT VERSION

Solution bullets

- Tintri VMstore systems
- VMware vSphere

Previous pain

- Legacy EMC systems were providing insufficient performance for mission-critical applications
- Running out of storage capacity

Decision: Purchased two Tintri VMstore 850 systems

A-Ha moment

“After watching the product demonstration videos, we saw how simple it was to manage the Tintri platform. We were also impressed with Tintri’s advertised compression ratios. That’s when we decided to switch from our legacy EMC environment to the Tintri VMstore systems.”



Two Tintri VMstore systems

3 big wins

Faster performance

ODEK’s client’s life insurance application is quite complex, involving hundreds of rules and steps that must be followed to create each customer quote. By moving from EMC to Tintri, they can now complete new customer quotes four times faster, increasing the productivity of life insurance agents and enhancing the customer experience.

Simplified management and troubleshooting

Application latency on the EMC systems was difficult to track. “Troubleshooting is much easier with Global Center—Tintri’s application-aware management interface. By looking at Tintri’s dashboard and graphs, we can immediately see host latency, storage latency, usable capacity, and everything else we need to manage the environment in one intuitive pane of glass.”

Reduced storage footprint and lower costs

“Tintri’s compression ratio is quite amazing. We started at 80% utilization on our EMC systems, and we’re now sitting at 60% utilized storage across both Tintri devices. It also seems like the more data we add to the Tintri systems, it compresses even more because the utilization percentage stays the same.”

Second page graphic ideas for short version:

- ↑4x application performance
- 4 hour ↓ 1 hour backup jobs
- ↓ 3x smaller footprint

LONGER VERSION

Solution Bullets for long version:

Industry

- Life Insurance

Geography

- Johannesburg, South Africa

Virtualization environment

- VMware vSphere
- Traditional storage: EMC

Key challenges

- storage capacity storage capacity
- In adequate performance
- Management complexity

Tintri solution

- Two Tintri VMstore 850 systems

Primary use case

- Private cloud services for Large Insurance Companies

Business benefits

- Increased database and backup performance by 4x
- Simplified storage management and troubleshooting
- Reduced datacenter footprint from 12u to 4u
- Increased storage capacity

IT Challenges

Odek Technologies is an Information and Communication Technology (ICT) company based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Odek provides private cloud and infrastructure management services to many successful enterprises, including a Large Life Insurance company. Odek was originally part of the Life Insurance Company. In July of last year, Odek became a separate company that manages various client’s datacenter storage and servers, laptops, virtual machines, printers, and telecommunications systems, as well as their IT strategy.

Odek had been supporting their VMware environment on four EMC storage systems. When they started running low on storage capacity, Odek started looking for a better solution for their critical applications.

“Our EMC environment was exhibiting troublesome performance issues,” explained Karien Greeff, director at Odek. “We were storing multiple terabytes of data on the storage systems. Copying data from one system to another caused a lot of downtime, and it was a nightmare to manage that environment. As a result, our IT team was spending far too much time in meetings and running storage reports to figure how to manage the environment effectively. We wanted to find a simpler solution that would enable anyone on our team to manage the storage and troubleshoot problems.”

Solution

Odek evaluated several different storage solutions for the upgrade. “We started by looking at some of the newer EMC solutions, since that's what we were currently using,” Greeff shared. “We also looked at Dell EqualLogic and briefly at the Nimble Storage systems. When we found out that a large number of companies in South Africa are now using Tintri, we added them to our list of solutions to evaluate.”

Tintri was the only provider that met every one of Odek’s evaluation criteria. “We calculated how much storage we would need and read all of the product literature,” noted Greeff. “After watching the Tintri YouTube videos, we saw how simple it was to manage the VMstore systems. We were also impressed with Tintri’s advertised compression ratios. These are the things that attracted us to Tintri.”

Odek purchased two Tintri 850 systems for their virtual environment in May of 2016. The systems were installed at two geographically separate datacenters in an active-active configuration, and all data is mirrored between the two systems on a nightly basis.

Results

Fast Deployment

The Tintri deployment was quick and easy, according to Greeff. “Our local Tintri support person came out to our site and explained everything to us. I had a lot of questions, but he was able to answer all of them in less than an hour. It used to take days to deploy the EMC infrastructure, but the entire Tintri deployment took less than five hours.”

4x Increase in Application Performance

“We manage a lot of database-heavy applications,” Greeff explained. “One of our client’s life insurance quoting is one of the most intensive—there are hundreds of rules that must be followed to create each quote. They are now able to complete new customer quotes four times faster on Tintri compared to the legacy EMC systems. Not only can they respond to client inquiries much faster and with more accurate information, the move to Tintri has greatly increased the productivity of their life insurance agents. It’s a big win for our clients.”

Odek’s application developers are also much more productive since moving to Tintri. “Our developers were running their batch jobs after normal working hours, since they were so time-consuming,” Greeff said. “Everything is running much faster on Tintri. Backups jobs that used to run from 7pm until well after 11pm at night, are now finishing just after 8pm each evening.”

Faster Troubleshooting with Tintri

Troubleshooting performance issues in the legacy environment was very difficult and time-consuming. “If we experienced any latency on the previous storage solution, it took a very long time to determine the source of the problem,” said Greeff. “Troubleshooting is much easier with Global Center, Tintri’s VM-aware management tool. The Tintri management console actually taps into the VMware tools,

providing complete visibility into each VM. By looking at Tintri's dashboard and graphs, we can pinpoint exactly where the problem is. We can see host latency, storage latency, usable capacity, and everything else we need to fix any issues in one intuitive pane of glass."

Tintri Compression Leads to Smaller Footprint and Lower Costs

"Tintri's compression ratio is quite amazing," Greeff said. "If you have a database or virtual machines, the compression ratio is very good. If you have file servers or things that are already compressed, the compression stays the same. We started at 80% utilization on our EMC systems, and we are now sitting at 60% utilized storage across both Tintri devices. It actually seems like the more data we add to the Tintri systems, it compresses even more because the utilization percentage stays the same."

ODEK's previous storage solution filled 12U at their datacenter. With Tintri's compression on the virtual machines and the databases, the same amount of data now fits in just 4U of Tintri. "In addition to cutting our rackspace costs, we saved even more money because we didn't have to buy additional storage capacity as soon as we thought we would due to Tintri's great compression ratios."

Great Tintri Support

"Tintri Support in South Africa is excellent," Greeff acknowledged. "Our Tintri agent will always go out of his way to make sure we have everything we need. But we really don't use support a lot, since the systems are so reliable and easy to manage. Once we got our environment set up and running, we haven't had any problems at all with our Tintri VMstore systems."

Future Plans

"We won't need to purchase any more storage, at least until the beginning of next year, due to the extra capacity we gained from Tintri replication. But when we do, we are plan on buying more Tintri since we've had such a positive experience with the first two systems we deployed. Tintri has exceeded all of our expectations in every measure," concluded Greeff.