



RAID Inc. and The CHPC at the University of Utah Work Together to Convert 120TB of Server-Based Storage to a Centralized SAN HPC Center

Organization Name: The Center for High Performance Computing (CHPC) at the University of Utah

Industry: Academic Research

Location: Salt Lake City, Utah

Challenge

The CHPC had accumulated over 60 Linux servers that hosted all storage internally. Over time, this storage configuration grew increasingly cumbersome as disparate drive sizes, operating systems and versions, software, and RAID card drivers became issues. The infrastructure put in place to save money and time as a "turnkey solution" began to cost the Center so much in time, effort and employee hours that a major change was in order. Additionally, storage requirements were increasing faster than CPU needs, therefore, finding a cost-effective solution that could scale over time was becoming a necessity.

Solution

The Center evaluated the process of building an "in house" customized solution using a Linux clustered suite but decided against it due to the man hours involved. After contacting RAID Inc. for a customized solution, RAID Inc. proposed a SAN configuration using SATA-2 disk that could scale to meet their needs, provided centralized storage services with the ease of management, configuration and recovery that was appealing to the administrators.

Results

The CHPC is funded by the university. All infrastructure costs are covered, but disk is not included, so competitive pricing was vital, or research teams might take their projects elsewhere. RAID Inc. delivered a customized solution to meet the Center's needs in price, performance and scalability.

Researchers at the University are seeing vast improvements with the new storage configuration. One professor was particularly concerned about a large data set that could have taken weeks or even months to migrate using the previous storage infrastructure. He was surprised when he was able to complete the entire migration in about a day.

"We buy from RAID Inc. so that we have a resource to lean on when problems creep up. We needed a solutions provider that would provide us with customized solutions versus just seeing us as some trivial customer that no real time could be spent to explore their issues and needs."

-Brian Haymore,
Lead Computation Cluster Administrator

