

Brandbank uses Sanbolic's Melio to Deliver High Availability and Improve Performance for Image File-Serving Service

Country or Region: U.K.

Industry: eCommerce

Customer Profile

Brandbank's 3000+ customers include major brands and the leading multi-channel retailers in the U.K. Their customers rely on Brandbank to ensure that e-commerce sites, catalogues and promotional materials have the latest, most accurate product images and data. Brandbank's service combines an industry-leading product photography service with a state-of-the-art data capture facility. Their service allows brand owners to maintain control over the quality of product images and the accuracy of product information, which retailers then use to inform and educate their consumers. Brandbank's service is the critical bridge between brand owners and their channel, the retailers, and provides both with a service that avoids the logistics headaches and major up-front investment of a brand-management system.

The Business Challenge

Brandbank's image library consisted of over 3 million image files. Images were continually created, added, replaced and removed from the library creating a heavy load on the system. With thousands of clients also simultaneously accessing the image library, performance suffered. Brandbank's customers wanted guaranteed access to the image library. Downtime, even planned downtime, was no longer an option. In addition, Brandbank's existing infrastructure of servers and storage, which included a Dell SAN for the image library, and an SQL server database to catalog the image locations, was significantly underutilized, resulting in unnecessary cost.

The Solution

Brandbank's initial plan was to support simultaneous-access requirements by using multiple servers connected to separate LUNs on the storage, serving images via CIFS and HTTP. However, this would have increased storage costs by requiring multiple copies of the data. They planned to use Windows Failover Clustering to address the service availability requirements. Unfortunately, this approach would have increased the number of underutilized servers, since it required passive, standby servers.

Rather than multiple servers and Windows Failover Clustering, Brandbank instead chose Melio Enterprise, with its active-active capability. Brandbank used clustered Dell NAS heads to connect to a common storage volume, allowing each image to be presented and accessed simultaneously by all cluster nodes. Brandbank continued to use their own .Net based web services to automatically convert the images to the format required by the client.

By avoiding multiple copies of the images, storage utilization reached more than 80%, and with Melio's active-active capability, server utilization reached over 90%. Since any file server can access any image, the performance associated with storing and retrieving images was also greatly improved.

Solution components

Dell SAN and NAS

Windows Server 2008 R2

Proprietary .NET –based image management software

SQL Server

Sanbolic Melio

About Sanbolic Melio

Sanbolic's host-based data management software delivers enhanced application availability and scale to critical enterprise workloads including virtualization, VDI and mission-critical Windows applications. Our solutions are purpose-built to alleviate the data management and performance challenges encountered in increasingly distributed physical and virtual application environments. The Melio software integrates complex storage concepts, including clustered file system, clustered volume management, rapid resource provisioning, distributed data protection and QoS, into a workload, and storage agnostic offering. This approach augments a customer's existing IT infrastructure to enable a more application-aware shared storage architecture. Customers benefit from increased levels of infrastructure flexibility and responsiveness, while minimizing storage related cost and complexity.



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