



Microsoft Cloud Specialist Retires its Traditional SAN and Transitions to a Microsoft Hyper-Converged Infrastructure

The Challenge



Pointivity's goals in updating their IT infrastructure included:

- Purchasing an affordable HCI solution that enabled it to offer the most competitive storage price/performance to its customers
- Ensuring compatibility with Microsoft Hyper-V and Azure
- Protecting its customers' data with a highly available and highly resilient software-defined solution
- Reducing heating costs, consolidating hardware, and cabling in its COLO

Company Overview

Pointivity is a proven innovator in the field of hybrid IT and cloud-based business solutions. Founded in 2001, Pointivity, a cloud service provider (CSP), provides Azure services and private public and hybrid cloud solutions. Pointivity helps its customers with successful business-wide outcomes, improving the delivery of IT services and fueling the growth of high-performance enterprises.

Based in San Diego, CA, Pointivity is the world's first certified CSP to provide an all-Microsoft solution stack for integrated on-premise, private and Azure clouds. It is also one of only twenty-eight Microsoft elite cloud OS network partners. Servicing one hundred direct customers and approximately two hundred partners, Pointivity has become a name customers trust.

IT Challenge: Replace Cisco UCS server and HP SAN with a cost-effective, resilient, easily managed end-to-end Microsoft-based solution

Pointivity is dedicated to providing its customers more affordable and competitive private hybrid, public and Azure cloud solutions. Paul Scuba, CTO, Pointivity, said, "Hyper-converged infrastructure delivers an all-in-one, consolidated storage solution that is easier to manage and much cheaper than traditional SANs." Pointivity and its IT team planned to retire its Cisco and HPE storage area network (SAN) and transition to a Microsoft-based hyper-converged infrastructure (HCI).

"Hyper-converged infrastructure is quickly becoming the most scalable and cost-efficient way to deploy a software-defined data center."

Paul Scuba, CTO, Pointivity

The Solution



- Cost-effective Microsoft SDS solution that is scalable and flexible
- Windows Server 2016 Storage Spaces Direct HCI optimized for performance and cost, with hybrid storage
- NVMe SSD cache tier for the highest performance
- Windows Admin Center & DataON MUST for streamlined intelligent management of your Windows Server environment

Pointivity looked into offerings from Dell and HPE. Scuba said, "Other vendors' offerings couldn't provide the performance at the price point we wanted for storage. We needed to make sure we maintain our high level of performance and usability without impacting the price to our customers."

Pointivity's goals in updating its IT infrastructure included:

- Purchasing an affordable HCI solution that could enable it to offer the most competitive storage price/performance to its hybrid cloud customers
- Ensuring compatibility with Microsoft Hyper-V and Azure
- Protecting its customers' data with a highly available and highly resilient software-defined solution
- Reducing heating costs, consolidating hardware and cabling in its colocation data center (COLO)

The Solution: DataON S2D Family of hyper-converged infrastructure with Windows Server 2016 Storage Spaces Direct

Scuba chose Storage Spaces Direct for several reasons.

As a Microsoft product, Storage Spaces Direct is compatible with its existing applications, including Hyper-V and Azure. All three applications could be managed in one place with Microsoft's Windows Admin Center (WAC) management tool.

Affordability was another aspect. Pointivity already needed to purchase Windows Server 2016 Datacenter licenses for its Microsoft Hyper-V deployments. Other vendors charge monthly licensing fees, but Storage Spaces Direct is included with the Windows Server 2016 Datacenter license in a one-time fee.

The Result



- Replaced SAN infrastructure with affordable Storage Spaces Direct HCI solution
- Deployed a complete Microsoft solution, which included Hyper-V, Azure and Storage Spaces Direct
- Deployed highly resilient, three-way mirroring solution, preventing data loss and disruption of service
- Reduced heating costs and consolidated hardware and cabling in its COLO
- Increased read/write performance



"We have seen a substantial increase in read/write performance, which customers notice."

Paul Scuba
CTO
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Finally, reliability, simplicity and resiliency were also deciding factors. Storage Spaces Direct's hyper-converged modular system and three-way mirroring ensured that if any node went down, there would be no disruption of service or data loss. If needed, Pointivity could add more nodes for additional storage, which is substantially cheaper than having to buy an additional SAN.

Once Pointivity made the choice to deploy Storage Spaces Direct, it didn't have to go far to find a hardware vendor. Several years ago, it had purchased a Cluster-in-a-Box (CiB) solution from DataON. The CiB performed well, exceeding expectations. Impressed with DataON's dedication to Microsoft solutions, it felt comfortable choosing DataON again.

After working with DataON's sales team, Scuba opted to go with a hybrid cloud three-tier DataON hyper-converged solution using Microsoft Azure for backup and disaster recovery.

The Results

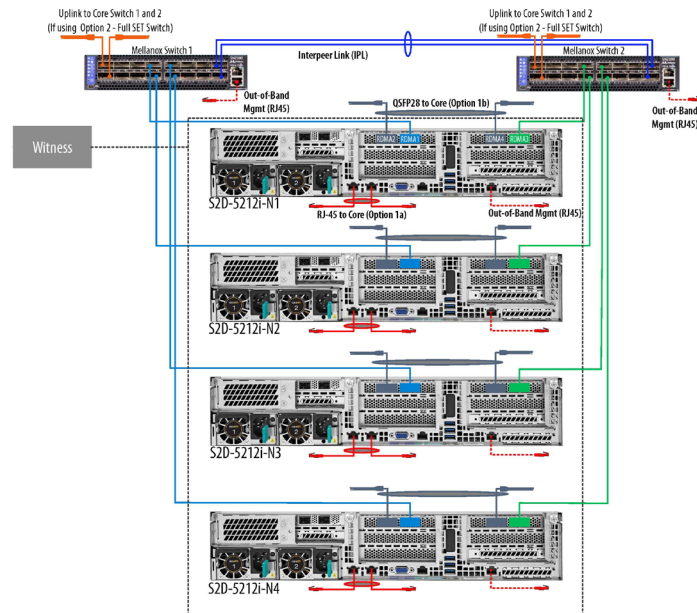
During the migration, Pointivity was able to make the transition without any service disruption.

After deploying the DataON and Microsoft hyper-converged solution, Pointivity was able to retire its SAN, direct attached storage (DAS) and RAID deployments. Now, all of Pointivity's data resides on virtual machines (VMs).

Paul Scuba noted, "We have seen a substantial increase in read/write performance, which customers notice." He continued, "The resiliency and three-way mirroring is a big plus, too. Coupled with Azure, we won't have to worry about data loss or disruption of service."

With the new hyper-converged infrastructure, Pointivity was also able to simplify its infrastructure, getting rid of excess switches and cabling. In addition, it generates less heat and requires less power than the legacy SAN, reducing its data center eco-footprint.

Scuba and his IT team were very satisfied with the DataON solution and outcome, and they plan to turn to DataON for additional nodes as their needs grow.



About DataON

DataON™ is the leader in Microsoft® Windows Server software-defined solutions. Our company is focused on customers who have made the "Microsoft choice" to deploy Microsoft applications, virtualization, data protection, and hybrid cloud services. Our enterprise-level solutions are designed to provide the highest level of performance, manageability, and security offered, delivered as a complete, turnkey experience. DataON is a division of Area Electronics Systems, Inc.