



SUCCESS STORY

Services



CDL | PROBLEM SOLVED

NetApp AFF8000 systems underpins business growth with blisteringly fast and reliable performance for underlying business infrastructure while also providing a foundation for future growth.

NetApp AFF8000 systems provides platform for business expansion with raw performance & stability

CDL, a software provider for insurance retailers, needed to refresh its storage environment to support several significant customer wins, while also accommodating future growth. It turned to the NetApp AFF8080 an all-flash platform that provides raw performance at low cost and is bolstered by a wide range of compelling management features.

Another NetApp solution delivered by:



SETTING TRENDS IN THE RETAIL INSURANCE INDUSTRY

CDL is a software development company focused on the retail insurance sector. The UK's largest insurance retailers rely on CDL's trendsetting software to drive success and the company has a clear market leading position. CDL employs over 600 staff with around 150 developer roles and has a reputation for creating powerful software solutions that deliver competitive and innovative advantages.

The company has a reputation for consistently anticipating market trends that change the face of the insurance retail industry and developing technologies that enable customers to capitalise on these trends. These range from price comparison sites to online self-service, telematics-based insurance products and the connected home.



“We clearly made the right decision by choosing the All Flash platform to support our underlying infrastructure. We’re only using 10 per cent of its resource out of the box which gives us enormous head room for growth while its storage efficiency features such as data compression lead to even faster read and write times. It’s just what we needed and is fundamental to successful business growth.”

Dan Calderbank
Senior IT Engineer, CDL

CHALLENGE

Refreshing storage to support business expansion

CDL had been using NetApp storage technologies for many years thanks to its reliable, robust and flexible platforms. However, following several major customer wins, the company was facing challenges around the capacity of its storage environment. In short, it was experiencing performance issues which were driven by changing demands and increased workloads.

As a result, the company needed to reevaluate its existing storage environment. Dan Calderbank, Senior IT Engineer, CDL, explains: “The new customer wins had a significant footprint in terms of the resources that we needed to underpin the business. We needed reliable performance at the back end to support our Oracle enterprise and business databases.”

The company charged its IT partner, Cetus Solutions, with finding a solution and following a review of the business issues, workload assessments

and CDL’s infrastructure Cetus Solutions recommended the NetApp AFF8080. The NetApp All Flash FAS (AFF) series offers blistering performance at an affordable price for both SAN and NAS workloads.

Bolstered with a raft of compelling features such as huge scale out potential, non-disruptive operations such as maintenance, software, and hardware upgrades, a proven availability and quality of service, the NetApp AFF is a landmark development in storage platforms. The built-in quality of service enables prioritisation for the most important workloads and a wider range of storage efficiency technologies, including deduplication, compression, thin provisioning and cloning. In short, it increases effective capacity so more data can be stored without taking up more physical storage space.

BENEFITS

Fundamental to business growth

CDL’s overarching objective was to refresh its storage environment with a platform to support the growing business while also accommodating future growth. Dan continues:

“Before we made the decision about NetApp All Flash FAS we looked at a range of specifications from storage capacity to performance gains. We have a large infrastructure, around 3,000 virtual machines and an extensive Oracle database set up.

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Paul O’Neill
Server Team Leader, CDL

BENEFITS

Supporting application and infrastructure teams

The original aim for the NetApp All Flash FAS implementation was to support the extensive work of the application team ranging from design work, code builds, integration testing to testing for non-functional requirements such as performance and high availability. However, the performance and capacity benefits of NetApp flash storage were so compelling that the CDL server infrastructure team also turned to the platform.

“Because of its performance it has also been taken up by Oracle infrastructure enabling it to gain real advantages from the underlying Oracle platform with high I/O ranging from data management to compliance and data retention policies,” says Dan.

More efficient helpdesk and application development

A further benefit, which helps drive the business, is the ease with which automatic database clones can be made. Dan explains: “Previously we had to carry out database clones manually which took time. The ability to remotely automate this process helps the developers so that they can easily look at database snapshots in the last 24 hours which gives a big boost to their development work, making it quicker and easier. At the same time it has reduced the time it takes for the helpdesk to investigate issues from about one week to a single day.”

Robust failovers

CDL has two self-built data centres and thanks to NetApp SnapMirror features it can ensure robust failover to galvanise its disaster recovery. Paul O’Neill, Server Team Leader, CDL, explains: “A solid disaster recovery platform is dependent on the amount of data change we have going on at our primary location and our ability to mirror this data to our secondary location. We have a large virtual environment and NetApp’s virtual storage controls and support for VMware alongside SnapMirror technologies enable us to create a robust and reliable failover and disaster recovery environment.”

Support and partnership

CDL has a close relationship with its IT partner Cetus Solutions, a NetApp Gold Partner, which was central to the successful implementation of the NetApp All Flash FAS. “We have a really good relationship with Cetus Solutions, they have a lot of knowledge,” says Dan. “This is bolstered by really good support from NetApp. We have a 3-year support contract and we’re going to automatically renew this because even though we rarely use it, when we do the support is fast, responsiveness and informed.”

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Lightning fast performance
- Foundation for business expansion and huge scale potential
- Enables effective and reliable failover for robust disaster recovery

“It is key to CDL that we have confidence in our core infrastructure to enable us to provide a robust high performant platform to run our client systems. Our NetApp all flash infrastructure provides us with that platform. Its blend of performance, scalability and functionality not only gives us what we require currently but also the reassurance that it will meet our plans for future growth.”

Niall Scott
Infrastructure Manager, CDL

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NETAPP PRODUCTS

All Flash FAS
NetApp AFF8080

PARTNER

Cetus Solutions

www.netapp.com/us/products/storage-systems/all-flash-fas

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