



SUCCESS STORY

Service Provider

CONTEGIX
DESIGN • HOST • MANAGE

CONTEGIX | PROBLEM SOLVED

To provide a multitenant storage solution that scales easily, delivers on-demand control along with performance consistency and predictability, Contegix uses NetApp® SolidFire® technology.

Contegix Accelerates Private Cloud Deployment While Cutting Service Costs in Half

Contegix is a leading cloud, managed application, and IT solutions provider that is based in St. Louis, Missouri. The recipient of numerous industry awards, Contegix serves global customers that range from innovative technology start-ups to Fortune 500 companies. The company is distinguished by its Go Beyond commitment to customers. This commitment includes 100% infrastructure and power uptime guarantees, among others; a 30-minute replacement wait time for critical business infrastructure; and 24/7 direct access to tier 3 engineers for application management and managed services. To better serve its customers, Contegix relies on SolidFire technology.

Deployment time for new environments cut from

1 week
▶ **3 days**

Improved server performance/reliability up to

100%

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“A true managed service provider should be able to answer a simple question: Am I giving more time and energy back to my clients so they can focus on their business rather than their IT?” said Craig McElroy, CTO and cofounder of Contegix. “We’re changing the world of hosting through continual improvement, and SolidFire is a key enabler of that.”

AVOIDING COSTLY OVERPROVISIONING OF TRADITIONAL STORAGE ARCHITECTURES

Many Contegix customers leverage the company’s data centers to deploy private cloud environments on VMware or OpenStack platforms. Inherent in Contegix’s performance guarantees is a pledge to avoid “noisy neighbor” interference from infrastructure cotenants. With many of the existing iSCSI-based storage architectures, this effort requires massive and costly overprovisioning of capacity to cover cotenant demand bursts, McElroy noted. In addition, storage upgrades require significant capital and labor expenses, as well as scheduled downtime.

Contegix needed a multitenant storage solution that could easily scale to deliver on-demand control over both performance and capacity, to guarantee predictable and consistent performance to multitenant environments, and to avoid

costly overprovisioning. That solution is NetApp SolidFire.

WHAT IT MEANS TO CONTEGIX CUSTOMERS

Contegix runs state-of-the-art, N+1 data centers in St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; in Reading and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; in Dallas, Texas; and in Amsterdam. The data centers offer IPv6 and HIPAA- and PCI-compliant solutions, along with connectivity through multiple 10Gbps providers.

“With unprecedented data growth caused by industry trends like the Internet of Things, our customers’ demand for cloud storage continues to rise. Storage technology based on spinning disk as well as many flash-based arrays are simply inadequate for the workloads and scalability requirements of the future,” said Don West, manager of business development at Contegix. “With NetApp SolidFire as the cornerstone of Contegix’s scalable SSD offering, we can provide our customers with an infrastructure ready to address future demands, while enabling us to monetize storage for our own business advantage.”

With NetApp SolidFire scale-out all-flash storage and volume-level quality-of-service (QoS) controls, Contegix can guarantee performance to thousands of workloads from a single infrastructure and can adjust resources dynamically.

“The true beauty of NetApp SolidFire is that, for the first time, we can keep adding nodes without having to buy a massive array.”

Craig McElroy
CTO and Cofounder, Contegix

What's more, Contegix can linearly scale storage without up-front capital expenditures in anticipation of future customer needs. SolidFire scale-out storage expands storage clusters through the addition of nodes—without the need for controller upgrades, data migration, or downtime.

“The true beauty of NetApp SolidFire is that, for the first time, we can keep adding nodes without having to buy a massive array,” McElroy said. “I can scale my clients as much as they need while also guaranteeing IOPS to eliminate noisy neighbors.”

CUSTOMER USE CASE: RIGHT-SIZING RX OUTREACH

Rx Outreach, a nonprofit mail-order pharmacy that provides

medications at a lower cost to income-eligible patients across the United States, uses Contegix's private cloud infrastructure to meet the performance needs of its business-critical applications. These applications include an order-processing system that is supported by a back-end database that requires fast and reliable performance. Rx Outreach lacked the budget to deploy a standalone SAN appliance—which would have been Contegix's traditional approach—and its chief need was for performance, not bulk capacity.

By providing SolidFire storage on its multitenant platform, Contegix guarantees IOPS for every application on the system. Contegix was also able to right-size the environment so that the pharmacy didn't have to purchase unnecessary

capacity up front, reducing Rx Outreach's monthly service costs by half. In addition, Rx Outreach moved away from standalone servers to a VMware-based private cloud, enabling Contegix to manage services to provide high availability, to accelerate software deployment, and to ease application upgrades.

“Many companies overpay for capacity they will never use on a traditional SAN, while still not getting the performance they need,” West said. “SolidFire storage was the cornerstone for enabling Rx Outreach to move to a flexible and affordable private cloud environment with predictable performance. And once we did that, it opened up all kinds of ways we could give them more value. For example, by keeping their storage infrastructure

CONTEGIX REALIZES THESE BUSINESS BENEFITS WITH NETAPP


  Linear scalability without up-front costs	  Guaranteed, predictable performance	  100% improvement in server performance and reliability	  Reduced deployment times and costs by 50% or more	  Lower entry price for shared storage for cloud environments	  Cut monthly service fees in half
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Don West
Manager of Business Development, Contegix


budget in check, Rx Outreach was able to reallocate those dollars to leverage more of our managed services. We are now able to provide full OS and application management, as well as our managed backup service. Before SolidFire, it had been a struggle to provide all of these services, from a budgetary perspective.”

FAST PRIVATE CLOUD DEPLOYMENT AT HALF THE COST

By eliminating the need to devote a dedicated SAN appliance to each private cloud, Contegix can accelerate cloud deployment while cutting service costs for the customer by as much as half.  For example, Contegix serves a subset of customers—ranging from small development shops to Fortune 500 companies—that use Atlassian enterprise software for software development.

“Deploying Atlassian instances with SolidFire as the back-end storage enables us to deploy new

environments for customers within three days, compared with the five to seven we experienced with our previous system,” West said.

NetApp itself uses Contegix as an Atlassian managed service provider. Other Contegix customers include several major universities that employ off-the-shelf collaborative applications and a large retailer that runs sophisticated predictive analytics. All these customers use SolidFire as their back-end storage solution. Contegix has seen server performance and reliability improve by as much as 100% since deploying SolidFire all-flash storage.  Rather than having to force customers into inflexible solutions, Contegix leverages SolidFire controls to tune performance to specific requirements dynamically.

“We can use a simple toolbar to make adjustments in real time,” West said. “It doesn’t require us to pull devices offline and redeploy something with a new configuration.”

CONTEGIX LEVERAGES SOLIDFIRE TO SHARPEN ITS COMPETITIVE EDGE

Contegix uses SolidFire in private cloud environments where its customers require predictable high performance with starting capacities of between 250GB and 1TB. By offering dedicated storage at shared storage pricing, Contegix has drastically reduced the cost to the customer, allowing Contegix to gain and keep its competitive edge.

Contegix plans to expand its use of SolidFire as the performance tier in its public cloud environments—and to any infrastructure that needs to scale, including bare metal.

“Our customers understand and appreciate the granularity of both performance and capacity. They can grow their allocation as needs change, while adding IOPS for specific critical database workloads,” said McElroy. To Contegix, this granularity means strong upsell possibilities and customer stickiness. The company’s customer retention rate,

an indicator of customer approval, is an outstanding 98%.

SolidFire also delivers operational advantages, according to West. The solution is easy to provision, with an extremely intuitive and logical UI. Contegix has been able to reduce provisioning time and costs, while lowering the entry price to shared storage for VMware and OpenStack cloud environments.

“We just love SolidFire,” West said.

RESPECT FOR THE CORE MISSION

Contegix CTO McElroy further emphasizes how SolidFire supports the company’s core mission to respect people, time, and data.

“Guaranteeing performance and eliminating noisy neighbors are part of respecting our customers as people. Eliminating delays in infrastructure is respect for time. The ability to control how many gigs or terabytes are procured to a

client is respect for data. We want to get to a unified storage platform, where we can focus on delivering high-value customer business outcomes. Every interaction at that level is a deposit in the trust bank,” McElroy said.

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NETAPP PRODUCTS

NetApp SolidFire all-flash storage

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