StorMagic

CASE STUDY

MeDirect BANK

LOCATION: MALTA | **INDUSTRY:** BANKING

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Embracing software-defined storage: MeDirect Bank successfully undergoes virtualization with StorMagic SvSAN

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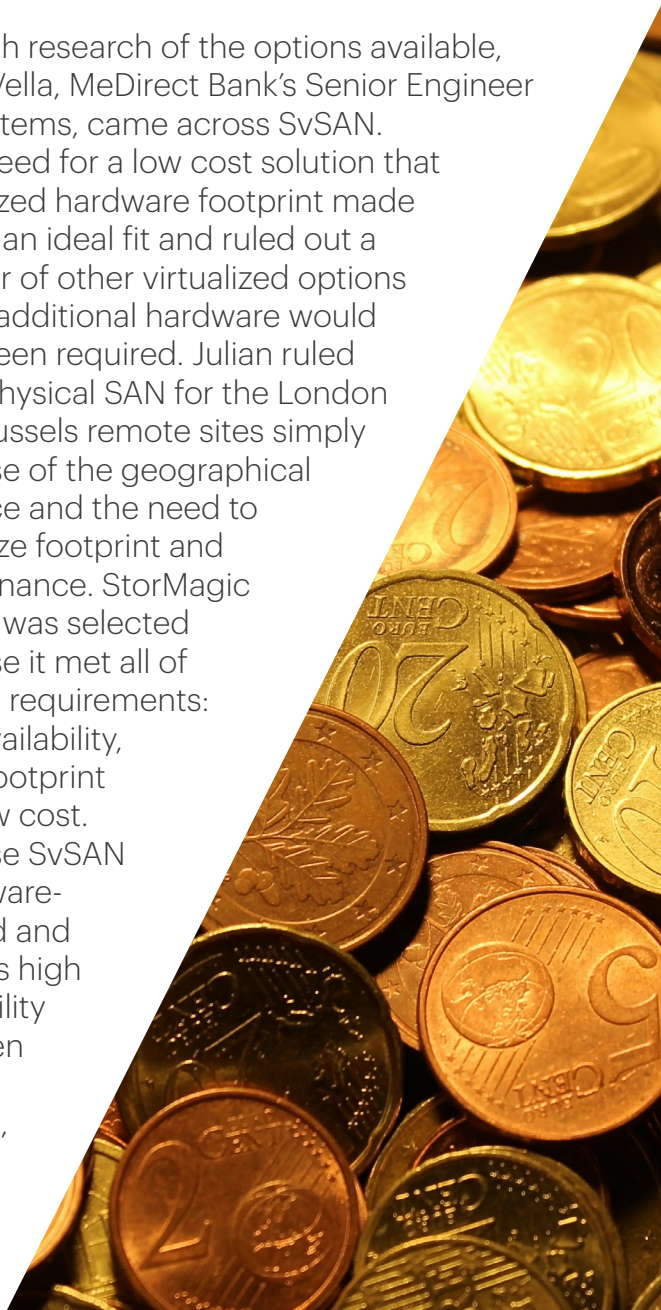
BUSINESS CHALLENGE

MeDirect Bank was founded in 2004 in Malta, and as well as providing banking and financial services to the local population, it offers online savings, investment and wealth management in Belgium. The company employs more than 250 people, with locations across Malta, as well as remote sites in London and Brussels.

The bank already had physical shared storage using six year old servers and these were approaching their end of life. The infrastructure performed a variety of roles depending on the location, including vital security components such as the operation of the main office's front gate and the handling of highly sensitive data such as new customer applications. The London and Belgian sites had critical business virtual machines running on multiple old servers with local storage and wanted to consolidate, while at the same time improving performance and resiliency. In Malta, the Business Intelligence team had a special requirement to implement a new solution, consisting of web, apps, and network storage for the Qlickview operations that had to be available even in disaster recovery scenarios. For all three sites, a modern, lightweight and flexible solution was needed to provide the high availability that was vital to the bank's operations.

SOLUTION

Through research of the options available, Julian Vella, MeDirect Bank's Senior Engineer - IT Systems, came across SvSAN. Their need for a low cost solution that minimized hardware footprint made SvSAN an ideal fit and ruled out a number of other virtualized options where additional hardware would have been required. Julian ruled out a physical SAN for the London and Brussels remote sites simply because of the geographical distance and the need to minimize footprint and maintenance. StorMagic SvSAN was selected because it met all of the key requirements: high availability, small footprint and low cost. Because SvSAN is software-defined and enables high availability between two servers, the



> *StorMagic SvSAN helps our branches achieve the availability required to operate in the extremely secure, fast-paced world of banking. Their virtual SAN software is exactly what we needed to deliver the uptime and simplicity of management - while keeping to a very tight budget.*

Julian Vella
Senior Engineer - IT Systems, MeDirect Bank

uptime requirement was met, and operational costs were lowered significantly as well. In Malta, the bank has implemented a stretch cluster using SvSAN, allowing synchronous mirroring between two physical sites, providing additional resiliency and protection from local site outages. With this solution, all virtual machines in the cluster are always synchronized, and MeDirect Bank has the ability to move the VMs between sites without any disruption.

The deployment of SvSAN occurred at the same time that MeDirect Bank refreshed its hardware. This is a common model that allows the end user to not only realize the benefits that SvSAN brings, but to do so on the latest infrastructure, configured to their precise needs. In the case of MeDirect Bank, the refresh saw the installation of Lenovo servers running VMware vSphere hypervisors, all of which are fully compatible with StorMagic. At the Malta HQ site, eighteen drives ranging from 500GB to 800GB were installed per server alongside two SSDs for additional performance. At the remote Brussels and London sites, storage requirements were smaller, with seven drives per server at each site with a mixture of capacities of 500GB and 1.8TB. With the lower storage requirements, no SSDs were required at these branch locations.

WHY STORMAGIC

Installing StorMagic SvSAN delivered a range of benefits to MeDirect Bank. Their requirement for physical storage was eliminated along with the additional expenditure on cooling, power consumption and maintenance. By reducing their reliance on physical hardware and moving to virtual SANs, the bank modernized their architecture and enjoyed much improved resiliency. They avoided the purchase and installation of physical SANs which would have been significantly more expensive and more complex than virtualization, particularly at the remote sites in Belgium and the UK.

Server Configuration (Per Server)

SvSAN License	SvSAN 6TB Gold
Hardware	Lenovo
CPU	**Remote sites:** 1 per server, 8 cores each **Malta HQ:** 2 per server, 10 cores each
Memory	Remote sites: 128GB per server **Malta HQ:** 144GB per server
Storage	Mix of 2.5" 7.2K and 10K disks, RAID 1 (ESXi OS and cache) and RAID 10 (data store) **Remote sites:** 7 disks per server (x2 500GB and x5 1.8TB) **Malta HQ:** 18 disks per server (x2 500GB, x14 600GB, x2 800GB) plus x2 SSDs
Networking	1GbE direct connection at each site, 4 network cards per server Bandwidth: Brussels - Malta: 20Mb London - Malta: 100Mb Stretched cluster within Malta: 1Gb
Hypervisor	vSphere Enterprise and Enterprise Plus Editions
Applications	Customer database and storing phone call recordings
Data Protection	Data domain and Veeam