

**Tour de Force** which provides CRM and other B2B productivity software for small and mid-sized companies, needed a modernized IT infrastructure to support its rapid growth and accelerate time-to-market for new products. The answer was a virtual infrastructure running on all-flash arrays from Pure Storage. The new infrastructure has reduced build times for the software development team by 50%, cut latency from as much as 60ms to less than 1ms, and reduced storage administration to almost zero.

**BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION**

Dramatic improvement in developer productivity, allowing creation of new software to keep pace with fast-changing market dynamics.

**GEO**

North America

**INDUSTRY**

Technology

**"I know the Pure architecture. I know its reliability. It's the best on the market."**

*Eric Cornwell, IT Manager*

**TOUR DE FORCE TRIUMPHS WITH PURE STORAGE'S HIGH RELIABILITY AND SIMPLIFIED MANAGEMENT**

One of the core values at Tour de Force, Inc. is making a meaningful impact in the operations of its customers. The company provides enterprise software solutions for small and mid-sized firms with more than 200 customers, mostly in distribution-related businesses.

The Tour de Force suite includes modules for customer relationship management (CRM), sales force automation, business intelligence, and business process improvement. "Our goal is to provide useful CRM tools that continually evolve with the needs of our customers," says Eric Cornwell, IT manager for the Findlay, OH, company. "Instead of making customers change their processes to fit the software, we make our software customizable, so it will do what you need it to."

The need to improve Tour de Force's operational efficiency was on Cornwell's mind when he arrived at the company and inherited an aging IT infrastructure. A major revamp was clearly evident in order to support goals for continued growth and improved products for customers.

**RELIABILITY OF PURE ARRAYS DRIVES STORAGE DECISIONS**

In less than six months, Cornwell designed, acquired and installed the hardware and software needed to convert the entire company to a virtualized infrastructure. A critical component of the change was the supporting storage system, and Cornwell knew exactly what he wanted – an all-flash array from Pure Storage.

Cornwell is a "three-peat" customer of Pure. He first bought a Pure array at a company that was subsequently acquired, then another at the organization he worked at before joining Tour de Force. In his experience uninterrupted uptime and "bullet proof" reliability have earned his loyalty to Pure.

"The biggest issue for me is availability: How does the array respond to failovers, upgrades, and all the other things that will happen?," says Cornwell. "Given my experience, I know the Pure architecture inside and out. I know its reliability. It's the best on the market."

In nearly three years' experience with Pure equipment at three different companies, Cornwell says, "I've never seen a workload that stressed my Pure array."

**PERFORMANCE UP, MANAGEMENT HEADACHES DOWN**

The heart of the company's IT operation is its Microsoft SQL backend, which hosts all the company's production applications, as well as customer and supplier data, e-mail logs and user-generated content. The Pure array holds 2.75 TB of data, with a current compression ratio of about 3:1.

**COMPANY:**

Tour de Force, Inc.  
[www.tourdeforceinc.com](http://www.tourdeforceinc.com)

**USE CASE:**

- Database – MSFT SQL Server

**CHALLENGES:**

- Replacing an aging IT infrastructure with a virtualized environment
- Overcoming erratic application performance

**IT TRANSFORMATION:**

- Software build times cut in half
- Sub-1ms latency for all applications
- All flash storage provides growth-ready infrastructure for new service offerings

**“I’ve never seen a workload that stressed my Pure array.”**

*Eric Cornwell, IT Manager*

With all production applications now running on Pure arrays, Cornwell sees an impact in several areas – performance, administration and future growth.

“We’ve seen performance increases for SQL queries, and a lot of positive impact from a software development and testing perspective,” he notes. “When we need to test a web server, for example, we can just do it; we don’t have to wait.”

The time to merge code has gone down considerably, he adds, and build times for software development have been cut in half.

One very visible application that has benefited from all-flash storage is the company’s software demo. By moving the demo to Pure, Cornwell observed much better performance, not only for the software, but also for the virtual machines. The result, he notes, is a much more effective sales process.

When the customer-support staff used to log in during a sales demo, there was a significant disruption in performance. With the Pure array, Cornwell was able to quickly duplicate the database and support its own software image to avoid disrupting strategic sales efforts. Cornwell says the most obvious performance improvement with an all-flash array is in latency. “Consistent sub-millisecond latency fixes so many little things that people don’t realize. They really add up.”

At previous companies, Cornwell says, he got used to suffering through high latency – averaging as much as 60ms, even with arrays that contained some flash technology. “But with Pure, it’s always fast and just keeps humming along.” As a one-man IT department, Cornwell especially values the ease of management that Pure provides.

“We don’t have the time or the resources to have a SAN engineer,” he notes. “So I need something that works reliably. The ability to quickly deploy servers and not have it disrupt anything is very important. I have a lot of things to do, and I can’t afford to waste time babysitting storage equipment.”

With Pure, Cornwell notes, “I can have a new virtual machine joined to the domain and ready to go in less than five minutes, and cloning takes less than 30 seconds,” compared to hours before the FlashArrays were installed.

**LOOKING TO THE FUTURE WITH CONFIDENCE**

Cornwell says that when he schedules upgrades for the Pure array, he doesn’t even mark them on his calendar, because he knows they will be completed without interruption or intervention. “Pure has made my life easier, so I can focus on other things.”

One of those other tasks is preparing the infrastructure for Tour de Force’s new hosted offering, which will include another Pure array. “To deliver a hosted solution, you need performance, and you especially need uptime. With Pure, I know I don’t have to worry about the storage. And with their scaling model, I can start off small and grow as we need – all non-disruptively.”

Cornwell advises other IT managers to fully appreciate the broad benefits of flash storage. “Sure there is the performance, which is excellent, but we really bought it for the reliability and the ease of management. Provisioning becomes just second nature. Boom; I just do it without a small army of IT resources or productivity-killing install cycles.”

“With Pure, I know that as the company grows, the IT infrastructure will scale to support it, and I won’t have to worry about it.”

“Pure has spoiled me rotten!” Cornwell says.



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