



Advanced storage solution



Good Cause for Technology

World Vision looks ahead with an advanced storage solution from Sentia



Worldwide poverty and injustice are rampant. World Vision Canada, a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization is dedicated to working with children, families and communities to overcome these hardships - in Canada and around the world.

Canada's first World Vision office opened in Toronto in 1957. Today, the national headquarters in Mississauga, Ontario is one of World Vision's busiest offices. Canadians sponsor over half a million children around the world through World Vision, which is Canada's largest private relief and development agency. Child sponsorship helps fund the not-for-profit organization's programs for emergency relief, education, health care, economic development and promotion of justice. Closer to home, World Vision runs four major programs in Canada.

With all of these initiatives on the go, it's no wonder World Vision accumulates enormous amounts of information. Donations received through various methods, including online transactions, generate considerable data. Add to that the high volume and variety of organizational data - including multimedia like photos, videos, and text - and the result is information overload.

Ever-increasing quantities and types of information caused significant storage capacity and management issues for World Vision. Downtime, system interruptions, and poor reliability resulted in low productivity for both IT staff and business users. Pam Cocca, Director - Support & Operations, Information Technology, World Vision Canada explains, "We needed to improve many aspects of information storage - where to store it, how long to keep it, how to classify it, how to easily search for and find it." And value is critical. Ms. Cocca adds, "As a not-for-profit, we always have to be mindful of how we can improve the donor experience in the most efficient and cost-effective way possible."

World Vision turned to IBM for answers to their storage challenges and IBM promptly recommended Sentia, a Richmond Hill, Ontario-based IBM Premier Business Partner, to take the lead.

After conducting an Information Infrastructure Review - a detailed assessment and study of their storage environment - Sentia was clear on what World Vision needed for their storage environment.

"We recommended a storage solution that would allow World Vision to manage their data more easily and support their forecasted data growth over the next five or more years," says Scott Constance, Account Manager, Sentia. "Also, the proposed system's intelligent user interface would give their IT team the ability to vastly streamline and simplify system monitoring and management."

"We're no longer worried, day-to-day, that we're going to run out of space. It all comes back to less downtime, more reliability, fewer system interruptions, and increased productivity all around."

Pam Cocca,
Director - Support & Operations, Information Technology,
World Vision Canada

Big on heart, short on storage

In Canada, World Vision develops national strategies with community-based organizations to advance the peace and well being of children, their families, and the communities in which they live. Programs focus primarily on vulnerable children and their families living in five of our largest cities: Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Hamilton, and Montreal. With massive data growth resulting from these and numerous other programs, the agency had to take immediate steps to improve their data storage and management capabilities.

Ms. Cocca describes World Vision's storage woes. "Users were knocking on our door because they were out of space. Our IBM DS4700 SAN had reached capacity and every time we added a disk on that unit, it was very labour intensive."

"We were looking for a solution that would allow us to be more proactive, something scalable and easier to manage. Also, we had to implement much better reporting and metrics around our storage infrastructure," Ms. Cocca explains. "The bottom line was, we had to get smarter and come up with more creative ways to store and manage our data."

Sentia aids World Vision

The Information Infrastructure Review conducted by Sentia was a key deciding factor in World Vision's choice of technology vendor. After performing the review, Sentia produced a 15- page document that detailed World Vision's existing storage infrastructure, where they could go from a technology standpoint, and how they could get there.

Ms. Cocca comments, "We had initially worked with Sentia to develop a storage roadmap, independent of the technology behind it. The review was very useful and the people at Sentia were extremely knowledgeable. When it came time to select a technology partner, we felt very comfortable with Sentia."

While the implementation process ran smoothly, Sentia had to work around World Vision's variable timetable. "Our priorities were constantly changing and the people at Sentia were very flexible in working around our schedule. We found Sentia to be responsive and technically very skilled," says Ms. Cocca.

"Due to the pre-work Sentia has done, there was not a single outage for any server, and I can't commend that enough. To this point, working with Sentia has got us days, if not weeks, ahead of where I thought we might be."

Jeff Freeman, World Vision Canada,
System Administrator & Technical Lead for implementation
of the IBM Storwize®V7000

Technology brings relief

How has this storage solution benefited World Vision?

From the perspective of key business users, it's been a blessing. "Some users would quite often experience outages. Reports they were running required space and users couldn't complete them. With our new storage infrastructure, that's no longer a concern," states Ms. Cocca.

As for the IT team, the increased storage capacity and management capabilities are a big improvement. Ms. Cocca says, "This is a much more streamlined solution. We're no longer worried, day-to-day, that we're going to run out of space. It all comes back to less downtime, more reliability, fewer system interruptions, and increased productivity all around. The IBM Storwize® V7000 puts us in an excellent position to migrate the rest of our data when we're ready to do so."

And with the world's rapidly growing need for the services World Vision provides, scalability is key. The IBM Storwize® V7000 enables World Vision to scale easily and cost-effectively to support their ever-growing data requirements.

The vision for World Vision

A must have for World Vision's future is more disk space and their new V7000 provides that. For one thing, that will allow the organization to add IBM's FlashCopy feature, which will enable them to make point-in-time, full volume copies of data, with the copies immediately available for read or write access. With extra disk space, World Vision will be able to add more applications and systems without worrying about a shortage of storage.

Additional policies and procedures around data management are in the works, as are strategies to deal with issues around mobile devices, such as security and standardization.

World Vision – helping the world with the help of technology

Storage strategy with a view to the future

The advanced storage solution implemented for World Vision Canada is an IBM Storwize® V7000. It helps improve storage efficiency and application availability, integrates easily with existing applications, provides storage tiering and is deployed with minimal disruption to employees and operations.

Management tools mean smart decisions

"Virtualization capabilities and the intelligent user interface provides World Vision's IT team with the ability to quickly and easily provision disk space for new servers - and in just one click, access storage capacity details - making system monitoring and management a breeze," explains Mr. Constance.

Tivoli® Storage Productivity Center, a software-based tool, allows World Vision administrators to monitor and run reports about a wide variety of disk metrics - giving deep insight into the storage environment and network - and ultimately helping them make smarter decisions about their infrastructure moving forward.



Advanced Storage Solution by Sentia, an IBM Premier Business Partner

Featuring:

- IBM Storwize® V7000
- Tivoli® Storage Productivity Center
- IBM SAN Switches
- Sentia Design, Implementation and Migration Services