



## Thomson Financial

### EMC helps information-based solutions provider upgrade its IT infrastructure to accommodate growth and provide improved capabilities

Thomson Financial is a global firm specializing in providing integrated information-based solutions for business and professional needs. Rapid and consistent growth in its domestic and global business has paved the way for many new office openings throughout India. Expansion and enhancements of the company's IT infrastructure are also underway to help accommodate rising demands fueled by an increasing number of software development projects.

To better address the growing company's challenges, Thomson Financial began investigating IT solutions that would help to improve data availability, performance, and SAN manageability. The company also wanted to shrink backup windows and strengthen business continuity.

"With the old infrastructure, human error was a cause for concern," says Harish Gondavale, manager of IT infrastructure. "We were facing challenges with the administration of the infrastructure as well as recovery of databases and backup. This prompted us to look for solutions for file filtering, disk-to-disk backup, snapshots for restoration, and network-attached storage."

Thomson Financial decided to engage EMC as its technology partner to help plan and deploy solutions that would enable it address its pain points and achieve its goals for expanding IT capabilities.

Rolled out in phases, the EMC® engagement encompassed the implementation of an end-to-end 4 Gbps storage architecture based on EMC CLARiON® CX3 series storage; right-sized I/O for applications such as Exchange, Oracle, and Sybase; a PCI Express architecture; EMC SnapView™ backup and recovery software for creating non-disruptive business continuance volumes (BCVs); support for intelligent cache management; a dynamic prefetch algorithm; virtual logical unit number (LUN) migration capabilities; intelligent load balancing and path failover via EMC PowerPath®; cache destage functionality; proactive remote monitoring using EMC's dial-home capabilities; and EMC Celerra® IP storage technology to support high availability for file servers.

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## A multi-phased deployment

Planning is an essential component of any successful implementation and engineers from EMC and Thomson Financial worked closely together to successfully plan out what solutions were required to strengthen the company's IT infrastructure and effectively address its challenges. Kicked off in September 2006, the first phase of this large implementation was completed by November 2006 within the company's Pinnacle facility in Bangalore.

During this time an EMC Celerra NS Series/Gateway solution with a CLARiiON CX3 back end containing 146 GB FC disks with RAID 5 was deployed for file servers along with RAID 1/0 disk protection for applications such as Exchange, Oracle, and Sybase to enhance data availability. Another important aspect of the solution was the addition of EMC SnapView-generated BCVs for backup which are housed on 300 GB FC disks within the CLARiiON array. EMC Celerra IP storage technology also was used to enhance file server uptime.

**“We saw a significant reduction in the time spent on managing our IT infrastructure.”**

**Harish Gondavale, Manager of IT infrastructure for Thomson Corporation Pvt. Ltd**

The second phase of the implementation involved migration to the new infrastructure. The Thomson Financial servers contained volumes of confidential data which could not be compromised under any circumstance. As the data in the file servers was critical and needed high availability, it was essential to migrate live data. Disruption of services was not an option.

The organization did not want to involve any third parties in such a critical phase, so the bulk of this part of the project was addressed internally. However, EMC's team was on hand when help was required.

“It was mandatory for us to keep the servers up and running,” says Gondavale. “We know our environment well and decided to take this responsibility on ourselves. We used new production and file servers for messaging and Oracle databases. However, we are still continuing with our old IBM and Dell development servers. We also decided to retain the old IBM SAN boxes for production.”

The migration phase began in January 2007 and was successfully completed by March 2007.

After the data migration, server consolidation was required. This was facilitated through the use of VMware® virtualization software. EMC engineers proposed the ideal consolidation ratios and candidates for consolidation. Procurement and configuration of Virtual Center Management Server for centralized management of the VMware Server was done thereafter. To ensure that the Thomson Financial team was up to speed on the latest developments, EMC organized a two-day orientation and knowledge-sharing program on VMware implementation and performance tuning.

Thomson Financial did not have a disaster recovery site prior to this implementation. Support for the creation of a DR site was facilitated by the ability to move file and block data between the company's Pinnacle and UB facilities in Bangalore in an automated manner through the use of EMC Celerra Replicator and EMC MirrorView™ software. EMC SAN Copy™ asynchronous replication capabilities can also be used to copy data depending on the link and the recovery-point objective (RPO) and recovery-time objective (RTO).

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## Pain points eliminated

As anticipated, EMC solutions and service delivered considerable advantages to Thomson Financial and helped the company address its IT challenges.

Today, the company's EMC CLARiiON systems' dual controllers, redundant fans and power supplies, dual 4 Gbps switches, and path failover and load-balancing features and functionality help ensure the elimination of single points of failure for the highest level of availability possible.

The backup window has also been reduced through the adoption of EMC best practices for Oracle and Exchange servers, as well as through best practices for file data backup to disk and rapid recovery supported by EMC SnapView. A significant decrease in downtime was noted as well as a 50 percent reduction in call volumes.

"We saw a significant reduction in the time spent on managing our IT infrastructure," says Gondavale. "We were also able to improve the performance of the overall system through file filtering and administrative policies which, for example, restrict saving any video files on the NAS box. We have also introduced policies to enforce user-level and volume-level quotas so that users do not exceed a particular storage limit."



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