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Matthew Stroh
 SAP Basis Administrator
 Industrial Electric Wire & Cable

Industrial Electric Wire & Cable (IEWC)

INDUSTRY Retail/Wholesale

SOLUTIONS **Business Continuity**
Hardware — Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2300, Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 500
Software — Hitachi ShadowImage® Replication and Hitachi Copy-on-Write Snapshot
Services — Implementation Service for Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 provided by Hitachi Data Systems Global Solution Services; presales, implementation and connectivity services provided by Hitachi TrueNorth Channel Partner AE Business Solutions



IEWC Gets Wired for Resilient Business Continuity with Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage

With double digit business growth and recently installed SAP systems, Industrial Electric Wire & Cable (IEWC) company needed a highly reliable storage foundation to embrace new capabilities and escalating data volume. Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage models 2300 and 500 answered these challenges by delivering extensive scalability, 99.999 percent data availability and a suite of flexible, progressive storage features designed to heighten business continuity and performance while simplifying administration.

Running under or through nearly every industry are the wires, cables and wire management products of Industrial Electric Wire & Cable. This premier distributor of wire and cable order fulfillment is dedicated to helping OEM and sub-assembly customers worldwide meet their supply chain needs. IEWC is an employee owned company headquartered in Wisconsin with distribution centers across North America, Europe and China, and it has operated under a mantra of continuous improvement and service excellence for nearly 50 years.

IEWC delivers solutions for military, aerospace, automotive and manufacturing organizations, and has extended its technology expertise and services to include emerging

wind and energy industries. This expansion, combined with numerous business acquisitions and new locations, has made IEWC one of the fastest growing wire and cable distribution companies.

A Big Vision for Better Business

The company estimates that recent years have brought double digit annual business growth. In the face of a wobbly world economy, this is great news. But with ailing storage architecture and an abundance of newly installed large scale applications, IEWC must ensure that data growth can be safely and efficiently managed to support the business.

The IT department at IEWC is a small shop with big vision. The plan is to transform

an unruly server room and small database systems into a cohesive data center that can support 24/7 operations and new customer portals, substantial SAP systems and a service oriented architecture (SOA) — all while improving business continuity and the customer experience.

“We were beginning to see shrinking backup windows, a pattern of disk failures and just way too many performance issues that can affect daily operations and our ability to manage the environment. The spotlight is on how well we meet the arduous demands for availability, performance, capacity and administrative efficiency, especially with a new set of programs and capabilities to bring online. We intend to shine,” says SAP Basis Administrator for IEWC, Matthew Stroh.

Cutting the Cord on IT Complexity

The IT environment at IEWC had become complex and distended very quickly, with a flood of new SAP environments and applications trying to run on existing EMC Clariion storage and Oracle databases. Full backups of the databases were done daily and took between four and five hours, with a complete restore running close to eight hours. With a dozen Fibre Channel disk failures occurring inside of two years, IEWC was adamant about finding a more reliable, flexible solution with the scalability to support the programs being brought online.

“We had all these great new capabilities but no way to exploit them on the current



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SAP Basis Administrator
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equipment. We were deploying everything from CRM [customer relationship management] and new Web services, SAP Business Information Warehouse and SAP NetWeaver Development Infrastructure (NWDI), to the all-important SAP ECC 6.0 — an enterprise SOA-based platform that supersedes ERP [enterprise resource planning]. Now we needed a higher caliber of storage functionality to facilitate it all,” explains Stroh.

The search for advanced storage architecture was based on “must have” core competencies, including high availability and performance and snapshot technology for data cloning and protection. Also, server virtualization along with storage that can support resulting high I/O throughput would be key to optimizing resources and avoiding performance bottlenecks. Finding a storage vendor with local expertise and support was critical to IEWC as well.

“We looked at many potential solutions. Hitachi Data Systems was the only vendor to demonstrate and prove how the cloning process would work in our environment. The expertise of the Hitachi team really showed, from the concept phase through planning and implementation. And the resiliency of Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage was clearly impressive,” Stroh says.

Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 Bundles Resilience, Performance and Simplicity

To begin the IT makeover, IEWC first implemented the Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 500 with Hitachi ShadowImage® Replication and Hitachi Copy-on-Write Snapshot software. Designed to enhance business continuity with nondisruptive local mirroring for multiple copies of mission critical information, the Hitachi software takes snapshots that IEWC can use for rapid restores and production backup, SAP development and testing environments. The Adaptable Modular Storage 500 is currently primary storage the ECC platform and is providing SATA backup for EMC NetWorker running on HP-UX systems.

With the release of Hitachi Adaptable Modular Storage 2000 family systems,

IEWC can continue bolstering business continuity and application performance. A newly implemented Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 is already fast at work with high speed data transfer rates and exceptional bandwidth to accommodate the bulk of SAP modules, plus the company’s move to server virtualization. Adaptable Modular Storage 2000 family systems provide the industry’s first point-to-point 3Gb/sec serial attached SCSI (SAS) architecture with 9600MB/sec total bandwidth and up to 32 links. And the Hitachi Dynamic Load Balancing Controller feature supports highly efficient data transfer, automated storage provisioning, excellent fault isolation and always balanced performance.

Meeting the benchmarking standard of 99.999 percent uptime and delivering four times the performance of previous generations, the Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 is capable of fronting IEWC’s data growth and workload demands. All hosts connect to both Hitachi systems through two fabrics comprising Brocade 300E Full Fabric Switches with 4Gb Fibre Channel, allowing storage to be pulled seamlessly from either system at any time. Attached to the storage network with their Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 are two VMware ESX Server boxes, 18 main servers and numerous applications.

The next phase of IEWC’s business continuity plan is to further consolidate and virtualize the environment, and eventually to create a virtualized desktop strategy and offsite disaster recovery. Unlike traditional most recently used (MRU) policies that can create workload imbalances in virtualized VMware environments, the Adaptable Modular Storage 2000 family systems eliminate primary paths to automate multipath management.

Gaining Control with Highly Available Data Storage

Hitachi storage has helped IEWC dramatically reduce backup and restore processes and deployment time of SAP systems, while simplifying storage and increasing customer offerings. “I used to need days to install, configure and patch new SAP systems. Now I only do it once, then use snapshot

About AE Business Solutions

As a leader in end-to-end IT consulting services and technologies, AE Business Solutions helps organizations design and implement effective, innovative business solutions. AE Business Solutions complements its data center solutions with capabilities around network solutions, security, virtualization, application services and consulting and staffing services in a well-rounded approach that ensures depth, breadth and greater project understanding. With a focus on customer value, AE Business Solutions uses a proven work model to enable its team of experts to quickly respond and move ahead of changing trends in the marketplace.

AE Business Solutions aligns its expertise and professional certifications with the exceptional engineering and proven enterprise storage solutions provided by Hitachi Data Systems. As a Hitachi TrueNorth Channel Partner, AE Business Solutions is dedicated to ensuring the quality, reliability and performance of storage solutions for its customers.

For more information, visit <http://www.aebs.com>.

clones for subsequent systems, which saves me three days per system — for 18 systems,” says Stroh.

“The Adaptable Modular Storage 2300 lets me use multiple paths at once with zero performance degradation or bottlenecks. In fact, we are seeing turbo speed throughput and performance increases. These systems are so resilient and flexible and easily expandable. Before, we were stifled by limited storage capacity and technology. With Hitachi, we’ve gained brand new capabilities and nondisruptive data protection that allow us to manage rapid business growth and deliver a broader, deeper set of services to customers,” Stroh concludes.

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