

White Paper

StarWind Virtual SAN (VSAN)

Introduction

As data volumes and storage capacity needs keep on growing and rising, software-defined storage (SDS) has emerged as one of the most profitable solutions for this issue. There current options on the market put potential customers at the crossroads of either the products of IT giants with exorbitant price tags or those of niche players that offer pay-as-you-use. If the first option is acceptable for large corporate budgets, it is virtually unsuitable for small-to-midsized businesses (SMBs), remote and branch offices (ROBOs), or Edge. Subsequently, the total cost of ownership (TCO) becomes unnecessarily high.

Being fully aware of the mentioned consumer targeting disparity, StarWind has developed Virtual SAN (VSAN), a virtual shared storage specifically designed for Enterprise ROBO, SMB, and Edge environments. StarWind VSAN is a cost-efficient, rock-solid, and ultrafast solution for clusters governed by the hypervisor of your choice and wins the lead over the moguls of the IT business by providing constant application uptime, fault tolerance, and fantastic support on minimalistic terms.

Problem

For Enterprise ROBO, SMB & Edge, the primary key factor for buying SDS is cost efficiency. Hyperconvergence market leaders offer SDS products that at exorbitant prices. In addition, licensing options are veiled, complex, and have multiple unobvious pitfalls. Typically, such options will present 2 nodes as being enough for great performance but then, to achieve disaster resistance, you would need a witness or 1-2 other nodes at additional cost. All this entails unobjective expenditure.

As if that wasn't enough, most SDS solutions from such vendors include mandatory compliance with strict hardware compatibility list (HCL). And this is not about actual hardware minimum requirement to run the solution. HCLs limit the flexibility of hardware sourcing, chain customers to expensive and explicitly indicated hardware components without which it's impossible to get the benefits that you're paying for. If such an SDS solution runs on non-HCL hardware, the vendor will refuse to troubleshoot any issues arising in your cluster.

If unwanted increased TCO, as a result, wasn't enough, there also comes the issue of rigid support. Leading SDS vendors overlook that necessity to assist their customers with their newly found products for free. Deployment, configuration, and integration usually comes at additional cost for the "expertise." There is no proactive approach to supporting any issues that arise during the use of the product and troubleshooting or any other kind of assistance from such vendors takes forever, leading to downtime and financial loss.

Storage management is, also, often confusing when buying an SDS. Licensed, SDS-native monitoring and management tools, usually, are not included in the bundle. Whether you decide to buy the tool or not, it will require your network admin to spend much effort on studying the ways to manage the SDS. Instead of focusing on managing your production virtual machines (VMs) and services, you're forced to babysit your clustered storage on an hourly basis. Very little simplification from a solution that is supposed to optimize.



Solution

StarWind VSAN addresses all the aforementioned problems and some more.

StarWind VSAN's set of features allows for reasonable and accessible pricing. The licensing is transparent, granting access to all the features immediately. Diversification relates to capacity volumes only, as the solution removes the need for physical shared storage fully. StarWind VSAN requires only 2 nodes, can be completely switch-less and needs little to get started. The hardware footprint is minimized leaving room for smart budgeting. There are no restrictions on socket numbers, cores, or features — genuine cost-efficiency.

StarWind VSAN is hypervisor- and hardware-agnostic. It is easily integrable into your existing infrastructure, as it needs little to get started and keep running. There are no HCLs, which means that you can scale up and out however you need it. Plus, thanks to high availability, you can make any configuration changes without any drops in performance at all. It is also compatible with whichever hypervisor you have or want, eliminating the problem of revamping your environment's internal architecture. Simplicity is what you get.

With one of the highest performing and most reliable iSCSI stack implementation in the market, StarWind VSAN gives full throttle to your existing hardware. You will be astonished at how much power and performance was hidden under your commodity hardware's hood; you just didn't know about it. Additionally, StarWind Virtual SAN supports multiple protocols such as iSCSI, iSER (iSCSI Extension for RDMA), NFS, SMB3, and NVMe-oF (NVMe over Fabrics), allowing to experience utter seamlessness of performance.

StarWind VSAN is easy to deploy, manage, and support. StarWind support engineers deploy the solution free of charge. Professional and responsive technical support comes by default and is available through a convenient and fast ticketing system. However, if you want to minimize your IT resources management expenditure further, there is StarWind ProActive Premium Support, for 24/7/365 monitoring, instant response and automatic failure detection. If not, your network admin will get the hand of the solution in no time; it's simple to both monitor and manage



Conclusion

All things considered, when it comes to Enterprise ROBO, SMB & Edge, the far-sighted use of resources, including financial ones, takes center stage. StarWind VSAN allows you to achieve constant uptime, fault tolerance and automation in cluster managing without complicated licensing schemes and needless hardware replacement. By choosing StarWind VSAN, you will reimagine what it means to use IT resources to reach business agility, continuity, and sustainability. With StarWind, you will have your cake and eat it, too.

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