

## Canadian law firm consolidates IT with HP server blades, storage array



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### Objective:

Reduce space requirements while improving performance and providing room for future growth.

### Approach:

HP migrated applications on a Novell server and consolidated older Windows servers to HP BladeSystems and ProLiant BL20p server blades running Microsoft Windows. An EVA4000 storage area network provides flexible storage that can be easily re-allocated as needed, and will grow through the addition of more drives.

### IT improvements:

- 200 percent performance increase
- Flexible EVA-based Storage Area Network enables disk allocation in seconds, simple growth through addition of additional drives
- Rapid deployment of new servers as needed in just 20 minutes
- Reduced backup times using HP StorageWorks MSL6000 mass storage LTO tape library

### Business benefits:

- Faster access to desktop applications and databases
- Reduced data center space requirements
- Flexibility to link IT with the business

It's a common story: an organization finds its server room filling up rapidly as new applications demand new hardware. But with limited room to grow, it needs a space-saving alternative. Enter HP with the perfect solution: HP BladeSystem and an Enterprise Virtual Array-based Storage Area Network.

“Like every IT department, we were always buying another server for a new application,” says Laurie Hause, Director of Technology & Marketing for Siskinds LLP, a large law firm based in southwestern Ontario. “We're limited in space and continue to grow as a firm, so we realized we needed to find way to make better use of the space in the existing data center.”

The firm would have pursued a virtualization strategy, but many legal applications don't yet lend themselves to virtualization. So the firm turned to HP for guidance in other approaches to consolidation and optimizing its IT environment.

An HP Services consultant analyzed the network and proposed consolidating existing servers using an HP BladeSystem solution, and to support them with an easily managed Storage Area Network based on an HP StorageWorks 4000 Enterprise Virtual Array (EVA4000), all managed using HP management software.

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HP consultants moved applications from an older Novell server to a Windows environment running on two HP ProLiant BL20p server blades. Consultants also moved the Citrix remote access application to a new HP blade server. All told, the firm will retire five older servers through the current consolidation, and replace them with a single rack of blades.

# Customer solution at a glance

## Primary applications

IT consolidation

## Primary hardware

- HP BladeSystem with ProLiant BL20p server blades
- HP StorageWorks 4000 Enterprise Virtual Array
- HP StorageWorks MSL6000 tape library

## Primary software

- HP Systems Insight Manager
- HP StorageWorks Command View EVA
- HP Instant Support Enterprise Edition (ISSE)
- HP Rapid Deployment Pack

## HP Services

- HP consulting & integration services, including application migration and server consolidation
- HP hardware installation and ongoing Proactive 24 Service
- HP Education Services
- HP Financial Services

"I think the blades are at least twice as fast as what we had in the past," says Donelda Davidson, IT manager for the firm. "That gives us faster access to the desktop and to processing our databases." Not to mention space savings. For every rack of new BladeSystems, the company can retire two full racks of older technology servers.

Through the use of gigabit switches in the HP BladeSystem, the firm is able to route applications to reduce traffic on its Local Area Network. And the HP EVA4000-based storage area network allows the IT staff to allocate drive space as needed for various applications. The time required to run backups has been slashed from six hours to just 20 minutes.

## Improved availability

In addition to saving space and improving performance, the firm also gets improved system availability. "Redundancies in the blade technology and the EVA, combined with the monitoring and management capabilities of HP Systems Insight Manager, help to reassure us that nothing will ever go down," says Davidson. "That's a major improvement."

HP Systems Insight Manager management software lets Davidson's staff quickly assess and run reports on the health of the entire system. "We can look at the management server and see if there's any kind of intervention required, long before problems become evident to users. So we're very proactive now in heading off system problems." She also uses secure socket layer web based software to remotely access and manage the ProLiant server blades via the HP Integrated Lights-Out maintenance processor from anywhere on the web.

HP StorageWorks Command View EVA software helps them allocate and manage drive space. In order to size the EVA correctly, Davidson's staff had to go back and determine how much drive space was being used by each of the old servers, prior to consolidation. It proved to be a full day's work. "But now, with a few clicks of a mouse, we can see total drive space, free space, and space in use on each drive. The moment I saw that capability being demonstrated, I thought, 'I want that!'"

## Rapid deployment is just the beginning of time savings

The firm sent two staff members for training on blade deployment using HP's Rapid Deployment Pack. "Once the equipment arrived, it took about two days to get the new servers up and running," Davidson says. She estimates that in the future, RDP will allow her staff to deploy new server images in as little as 20 minutes — compared to a full day to deploy a server in the past.

She also anticipates big savings in managing storage. In the past, she notes, if an application was running low on drive space, she might be forced to put in a brand new server, then move the data over to it. Now with a few clicks in HP Command View enterprise virtual array storage management utility, she can enlarge the partition in seconds. "It's all about saving time. And time is something we never have enough of," she says.

Statistics indicate that the firm's storage needs will grow a minimum of 30 percent per year. That's based on a growing number of applications, including the stringent requirements of Ontario's PIPEDA law designed to protect personal information and privacy. On top of that, the firm is planning to implement an electronic records management system to support not just business functions of the firm, but litigation requirements as well. That could add hundreds of thousands of documents annually to the storage requirements.

Fortunately, the EVA4000 has the capacity to grow to 400 percent of its current size with very little effort. "Every year, there will be more records and more documents saved. It's hard to predict how much our needs will grow. The beauty of the HP Enterprise Virtual Array system is that we can grow our storage simply by plugging in more drives," Davidson says.

## Aligning IT with business

Hause notes that the IT consolidation at Siskinds is a perfect example of how IT has been transformed. Today, it's not just about managing the technology, but about aligning technology with business needs.

"Reducing our physical space requirements, improving performance, building in scalability and redundancy — all these things demonstrate to our firm's leaders the importance of optimizing IT to increase business value. IT is helping the firm to meet its long-term goals. And they're all possible because of our partnership with HP."

To learn more, visit [www.hp.com](http://www.hp.com)

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