



iland drives SLAs up and costs down with purpose-built backup appliance

iland:

Size: More than 50 employees

Industry: Service provider

Location: Houston, Texas

United States

Solutions

- Move backups to dedicated storage servers for efficiency and performance

For More Information

To learn more about Cisco data center solutions, visit: www.cisco.com/go/datacenter

iland is a leading cloud infrastructure provider for enterprises. Services include iland's flagship Enterprise Cloud Service (ECS), private-cloud hosting, disaster recovery as a service, and cloud backup with Veeam.

iland operates eight data centers in the United States, England, and Singapore. In 2012, the company replaced its rack servers with Cisco UCS blade servers and Cisco Nexus® switches. iland has earned the Cisco Cloud and Managed Services Provider certification, indicating elite expertise.

Challenge: faster backups and restores at a lower cost

iland's backup and disaster recovery business is burgeoning. "Businesses need to know they can quickly restore data and virtual machines, both for compliance and business continuity," says Justin Giardina, iland's chief technology officer.

iland offers two popular backup services. Enterprise Cloud Service customers receive seven days of backups using Veeam Backup & Replication, and private-cloud customers can use Veeam Cloud Connect.

iland wanted a less costly repository for Veeam backups. "Cloud storage prices are

going down, down, down," Giardina says. "We pay a premium for high-performance production storage, and backups take up a lot of space."

iland decided to use the Cisco UCS C3160 storage server as its new Veeam backup repository. "When we heard about the UCS C3160, we borrowed a demo unit and tested it by backing up 200 terabytes," Giardina says. "Compared to our SAN array, the UCS C3160 backed up five times more data in the same amount of time. And the five times better performance came at one-fifth the price."

Installation in less than 5 minutes

iland deployed multiple C3160s in each data center, one each for ECS customers and Veeam Cloud Connect customers. The IT team installed Linux on the two solid-state boot drives and ran a script to configure the RAID as a back-end storage pool.

Then, the team had to only connect the C3160 to the data center fabric. "We automated everything except connecting the cables," Giardina says.

Storing a gigabyte costs 55% less

iland can store 360 terabytes of backups in four rack units (RUs). "One cabinet—40 RUs—of the Cisco and Veeam solution

With Cisco UCS and Veeam,
iland:



Backs up 2.2x more data for the same price



Restores virtual machines 50 to 75 percent faster



Deploys backup solution in less than 5 minutes

would hold 3.6 petabytes,” Giardina says. “In contrast, our SAN cabinet holds just 800 TB. The Cisco and Veeam solution is 4.5 times more efficient.” Because iland can store 2.2 times as much backup data for the same price, cost per gigabyte is 55 percent less than before. Storing more data in the same space also lowers data center power and cooling costs.

“And our staff is already familiar with Cisco UCS, so there’s very little extra management overhead,” Giardina says. “We see right away if there’s an issue with a disk, memory, or processor.”

Customers are back in business in half the time

Customers can get back to work quickly if a virtual machine fails. For example, if a virtualized mail server goes down, just one click in iland’s self-service portal mounts the backup file from the C3160 and immediately starts the virtual machine.

“We can restore virtual machines faster with UCS C3160 than we could with SAN arrays,” Giardina says. The reason is scalable processing power and fast I/O: 20Gbps. By comparison, the I/O for a leading public cloud provider is 8Mbps.

Faster restores and lower costs attract customers

The Veeam Cloud Connect service has grown rapidly, and iland backs up thousands of virtual machines—from 2 TB

to 300 TB for each customer. “Enterprise customers looking for cloud backup care about two things: SLAs and price,” says Giardina. “The UCS C3160 is good for business because we can restore virtual machines 50 to 75 percent faster, at a competitive price.”

Moving backups off the SAN array also improves availability. “If our whole production SAN went away, customers could still restore their virtual machines and data from the Cisco UCS C3160,” says Giardina.

Hybrid clouds and even simpler management

Now iland is preparing to offer new services using its Cisco® Unified Data Center solutions. One is hosting OpenStack environments. Another is backing up on-premises private clouds to the C3160 using Cisco® Intercloud Fabric. iland also plans to deploy the new Cisco UCS S3260 storage optimized server, which increases the efficiency of backup, recovery, and archiving by moving more data in less time.

Giardina concludes, “The Cisco Unified Data Center gives us a scalable foundation to introduce new services and serve more customers. The UCS C3160 is a useful new building block for cost-effective, fast backups and restores. And adding the UCS C3160 didn’t require us to learn a new interface or talk to another vendor for support.”

Products and Services

Data Center

- Cisco UCS C3160 Rack Server for Veeam Backup
- Cisco UCS B200 and B440 M2, M3,

M4 High-Performance Blade Servers for production workloads

- Cisco Nexus 7000 Series Switches



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