



DEVON ENERGY

DEVON ENERGY DOUBLES ITS DISK SPACE WHILE REDUCING NUMBER OF SERVERS BY ALMOST HALF

HIGHLIGHTS

Company

Devon Energy

Industry

Oil and Gas

Applications/Solutions

- Landmark Openworks software
- Sun's Solaris™ Operating Environment, versions 2.6
- Sun's Solaris 7 Operating Environment
- Sun's Solaris 8 Operating Environment
- Jiro™ technology
- Oracle databases

Products/Services

- Four Sun Enterprise™ 4500 servers (6 CPU)
- Three Sun Enterprise 450 servers (4 CPU)
- Seven Sun Enterprise 420 servers (4 CPU)
- Three Sun Enterprise 220 servers
- One hundred Sun Blade(1000 workstations)
- Sun StorEdge™ T3 arrays (11 TB)

Key Business Goals

- Complexity and costs of managing different IT systems
- Provide effective computing for 3D seismic software
- Provide single vendor, integrated and expandable infrastructure
- Increase disk space and speed

Key Service Solutions

- Seamless scalability to support growth
- Consolidate from 25 to 17 servers
- Simplified and reduced administrative costs
- More than doubled performance
- Increased efficiency of 3D software
- Provide SAN-ready technology

“Key factors in our decision really came down to Sun’s excellent performance, scalability, flexibility and expandability.”

Brad Whitley

Senior Network Engineer

Devon Energy Corporation is an independent energy company involved in oil and gas property acquisition, exploration, and production, and it ranks among the top five US based oil and gas producers. Devon sells oil and gas on the open market. In the last several years, the company has grown tremendously – mostly through acquisitions including Northstar Energy (1998), PennzEnergy (1999), and Santa Fe Snyder (2000).

Through these significant acquisitions, Devon has inherited a variety of IT systems, whether owned or leased. The complexity of supporting many different computing and storage systems was getting overwhelming in terms of time, personnel, and cost, so Devon began to consider consolidating and moving to a single vendor solution. “We wanted one vendor across the board, so we could call one number and get anything fixed,” said Senior Network Engineer, Brad Whitley.

In addition, some of the systems were outdated, and Whitley knew that more powerful and streamlined technology was available. Fortunately at the end of 2000, lease expiration on many of Devon’s systems opened up a perfect opportunity to change to new computing and storage systems.

“In late 2000, Devon purchased 17 Enterprise class Sun™ servers and 11 terabytes of disk space using Sun’s StorEdge™ T3 disk arrays,” said Whitley. “With this purchase, we doubled the current usable disk space while in turn

decreasing the number of servers by 47 percent. This reduction was brought on by Sun’s new disk technology and adding Sun’s Enterprise class servers. They allowed us to consolidate and standardize across the board, which reduced administrative costs, while still improving performance by more than 100 percent,” added Whitley.

These new Sun servers and storage systems were divided among Devon’s three key divisions: Corporate, Offshore, and International. Offshore received the majority of the servers and disk space.

Devon Looks At Several Vendors, Then Chooses Sun

Prior to this big purchase, Devon looked extensively at hardware vendors, including HP and Sun Microsystems, Inc., and several storage vendors, including EMC, MTI, Auspex, and Baydel. “The servers from the top manufacturers all performed comparably, but one was three times the cost of Sun and one had integration issues with our existing Sun servers,” explained Whitley. “Salespeople can talk a lot of jargon, but really when it comes down to it, their numbers don’t compete with Sun,” Whitley observed.

A key factor in deciding which server and storage systems to buy, was how they handled 3D rendering software and graphic intensive applications. Devon uses Landmark’s Openworks, a suite of approximately 25 different applications specific to the oil and gas industry. Within Openworks

is a 3D seismic application which, along with well logs and history, is commonly used to find oil. According to Whitley, one of these pictures can be 5 gigabit large.

Devon Looks to Sun for Performance, Flexibility, and Linear Scalability

Devon was very pleased with the improved performance of its Sun servers and storage. "The Sun T3 arrays are 44 percent faster than the top performer we tested, and they give 102 percent performance gain over all of the old systems we used," said Whitley. "So, you can see that performance improvements from going to the new Sun T3 arrays are phenomenal, as well as having outstanding performance in the current configuration. In addition, as we expand disk space, performance will increase as well. I like to say that the Sun T3 arrays have 'progressive performance' – meaning the more disks you add to the system the faster it becomes. This 'progressive performance' is inherent because for every Sun T3 array you add, you are adding backbone, controllers, connections, and disks. This concept in storage is cutting edge and in theory allows for infinite expansion," explained Whitley.

In addition, this Sun solution helps Devon enable highly scalable, complete end-to-end configurations with end-to-end system monitoring 24x7. And, Sun programs such as Veritas, Oracle, Sun initiative (VOS) and SunTonesm services allow quick problem resolution among vendors. Another advantage is Sun's linear scalability. The common, modular design of the Sun server family simplifies upgrades and helps to deliver exceptional investment protection and performance.

The Sun Enterprise[™] server family is the industry's only single, binary-compatible product line featuring a range of servers that scale from one to 64

processors and provide its customers with flexibility, investment protection, and an unparalleled growth path. Designed for workgroup, departmental, and data center computing environments, the Sun Enterprise server family provides an ideal platform for a variety of applications, including enterprise resource planning, electronic commerce, data warehousing, Internet/Intranet, and customer management systems.

Whitley summed up Devon's decision. "Key factors in our decision really came down to Sun's excellent performance, scalability, flexibility, and expandability."

Sun Helps Devon Build for the Future

The combination of new servers and new disks has helped Devon dramatically consolidate its servers while still providing outstanding quality of service to its user community. This in turn reduced administration costs throughout the whole company because there are fewer servers to manage. Now, Devon can focus on the future and become more proactive than reactive. "We are looking forward to our future growth instead of trying to catch up with the latest acquisition. We are now ahead of the curve and ready for the new growth spurt to hit," added Whitley.

"We're planning to expand to 50 terabytes of storage in two years," explained Whitley. "And we're looking forward to upgrading without any downtime – in place upgrades are very nice!"

Devon easily reached one of its key goals – user acceptance. "We wanted to get our user community to accept applications, databases, servers, and that goal has gone over with flying colors. Users are telling me how much faster and better their applications run, without any prompting from me," beamed Whitley. "I would recommend Sun in a heartbeat."

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