



xiotech

Xiotech and DataCore Drive Knight Transportation Business

Customer Success

It takes more than just trucks and drivers to become one of the nation's leading transportation companies.

For more than a decade, Knight Transportation has been recognized as one of the "200 Best Small Companies in America," as well as a "Hot Growth Company" by BusinessWeek magazine. The company offers dry van, refrigerated, and brokerage services through a network of 47 service centers and branches in the United States. It has 650 employees at its offices and more than 3,700 trucks.

A critical requirement for the company is a high-availability IT infrastructure to ensure everyone from office staff to truck drivers and customers can access data such as driver logs, customer orders, and mileage information.

In an effort to improve its systems, Knight focused on upgrading the storage area network (SAN) that housed its critical data. A failure of the SAN carried the risk of downtime, lost revenue, and business interruption.

"We needed a more reliable storage solution," says Shawn Smith, systems manager for Knight Transportation.

"We selected XioTech's Emprise™ 5000 storage systems with DataCore SANmelody software, and I can easily say it is one of the best IT purchases I have ever made."

Zero Downtime

Knight implemented two Emprise 5000 storage systems along with DataCore's SANmelody software to support a variety of applications, including its

VMware environment. Emprise 5000—built on patented Intelligent Storage Element (ISE™) technology—is an affordable, highly reliable storage building block, perfect for use with DataCore's SAN software. SANmelody virtualizes storage across the Emprise 5000 systems and provides easy, centralized storage management. SANmelody also replicates volumes in real time between the two Emprise 5000 systems, creating a high-availability storage cluster.

"A lot of vendors said they could replicate data across their SANs, but many were really offering snapshot, not real-time replication," says Alex Trusler, systems engineer at Knight Transportation. "With a scheduled snapshot there always is a possibility of data loss."

"With Emprise 5000 and DataCore SANmelody, replication is real time and the solution is completely resilient. If we have a power outage, connectivity issue, or even loss of an entire system, we do not lose access to data. The second Emprise 5000 unit automatically picks up where the other left off, and the systems are resynchronized as soon as everything returns to normal. It's amazing."

In contrast, a failure with Knight's previous storage system would have

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Industry

- Transportation

Location

- Phoenix, Arizona

Requirements

- High availability
- Real-time data replication
- Reduced maintenance costs

XioTech Solution

- XioTech® Emprise™ 5000
- DataCore™ SANmelody™

Benefits

- 100 percent uptime
- Real-time data replication with automatic system failover and resynchronization
- Five-year warranty, enabled by self-healing technology, dramatically reducing maintenance costs

SAN Infrastructure

Brocade®

required the IT staff to restore 30 to 50 virtual machines from tape—a two-day process.

“While recovering data from backup tapes, we weren’t providing services to our customers and employees,” says Smith. “With Xiotech and DataCore, I am confident we have the most highly available solution out there. We’ve had 100 percent uptime since installation.”

Nonstop, Fast Storage with ISE

Emprise 5000 provides the high-availability storage foundation Knight Transportation requires, while improving performance and lowering costs. Its self-healing ISE technology prevents most disk failures and fixes those disks that do fail, in place, without any downtime. Because of its unmatched reliability, each Emprise 5000 system comes with an industry-exclusive five-year hardware warranty.

“The Emprise 5000 solution was less expensive from the start,” explains Smith. “But the greatest savings are from the low maintenance costs.

“The Emprise 5000 self-healing technology is amazing. In my opinion, Xiotech is creating a road for others to drive on with its innovative ISE technology and five-year warranty. I believe it will create an evolution in the SAN industry, and other vendors will be forced to follow.”

Knight’s team also is impressed with the new solution’s faster performance.

“Reliability is a top priority, and we have that with Xiotech.”

“With the Xiotech and DataCore solution, we noticed a performance improvement right away,” says Trusler. “Operations like moving virtual machines used to take a long time; but now they are incredibly fast.”

Smith adds: “We configured our systems for high capacity rather than speed, but we still saw a significant performance increase. For instance, it took up to 30 seconds for a user to pull an archived email off our old system. Today it is almost immediate.”

Increasing Reliability

By eliminating downtime, the new solution helps Knight Transportation provide uninterrupted service to its customers and employees.

“Knight is committed to providing the highest quality of service to its external and internal customers,” says Vice President of Information Technology Cory Staheli. “That means we have to deliver data to our partners accurately and on time, just like we deliver our customers’ freight. Our purchase of Emprise 5000 and SANmelody strengthens our ability to deliver on our commitment. Having a highly reliable and resilient infrastructure is one of the fundamentals that you have to get right. Xiotech and DataCore have delivered a solution that has exceeded our expectations.”

Great Relationship

While the technology has exceeded Knight Transportation’s expectations, the company is even more impressed with Xiotech’s service.

“Our experience with Xiotech has been fantastic,” says Trusler. “We get fast response to our questions. Plus Xiotech monitors our solution and tells us about any potential issues before we ever know about them.”

“IT vendors are always updating their technologies, but I usually have to seek out these improvements,” adds Smith. “When Xiotech had a firmware upgrade, they called to tell me about it and set a date for installation. With 15 years in IT, I don’t think I ever have had that kind of customer experience. It is very satisfying to know that Xiotech has my back.”

About Knight Transportation

Knight Transportation is a truckload carrier offering dry van, refrigerated, drayage, brokerage, and dedicated services to customers through a network of service centers across the United States. Knight strives to offer customers and drivers personal service and attention, while offering integrated freight transportation through the scale of one of North America’s largest trucking companies. Knight provides high service levels to a diversified base of full-truckload shippers across a broad range of industries and freight types.

Visit www.knighttrans.com to learn more.



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