

ZARATTINI & CO. BANK: SOLIDITY AND PERFORMANCE WITH DELL EMC

Storage at the end of its life cycle and performance lagging. Zarattini & Co. Bank chooses Dell EMC SC Series Compellent storage technology both for its performance levels and for its project and maintenance costs.



Zarattini & Co | Bank

Financial Services

Switzerland

www.zarattinibank.ch

Needs

From Winchester to storage appliances

Roberto Palladino used to work with Winchester. No, not the rifles made famous during the days of the Wild West, but rather the old-school, 300-megabyte hard drives that were so heavy it took two people to mount them onto the system. Today, 300 megabytes can be downloaded in just a few seconds and take up relatively little space on a smartphone, but Roberto Palladino, who has been CIO for Zarattini & Co. Bank for six years and in the IT industry for 38, is still involved in storage. Banca Zarattini is an organization that has been pushing a vast project of digital transformation and technological modernization, as well as of progressive alignment with ongoing changes in laws and regulations. The IT infrastructure serving a total of 90 users at the Lugano head office and the bank in Malta comes complete with a disaster recovery site. The core banking systems are based on software from New Access in Geneva, whereas the Windows systems of the various departments are virtualized using VMware technology.

Solutions at a Glance

- [Dell EMC SC Series Compellent Appliances](#)

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Roberto Palladino
CIO Zarattini & Co. Bank

**25x
FASTER**



OLTRE
**55.000
IOPS**



Data is fundamental in the banking industry, and the existing storage systems were reaching the end of the support period defined under their maintenance agreement. In fact, in recent years, they had already been showing signs that performance needed to be improved. These have been years of growth and expansion for the Swiss bank, including the acquisition of another bank and the increase in workforce from 60 to 90 people. Along with this growth came complexities related to regulatory compliance and the need to integrate an increasingly significant set of applications. "We wanted to increase both available storage space and, more importantly, performance", explained Palladino. "Plus, mirroring storage at the disaster recovery site wasn't synchronous, whereas we needed a solution that could provide multiple snapshots in order to have multiple restoration points throughout the day". As the end of the maintenance support period was approaching, it was necessary to decide whether to upgrade the existing storage solution or purchase new technology. Palladino discussed the urgency of this decision with the experts at 4IT Solutions, a company with which Zarattini & Co. Bank had been working for several years. "The people at 4IT Solutions didn't limit themselves to providing a list of candidate solutions, but sought to find the best solution for our specific needs", Palladino noted.

Solution

The selection of Dell EMC

Raffaele Amoia, the specialist at 4IT Solutions who followed the project to upgrade the storage solution at Zarattini & Co. Bank, said, "We were aware of the performance issues and the expiration of support, so we presented a complete solution that would integrate both the storage needs and mirroring at the disaster recovery site with an extended five years of support, in order to be able to compare this solution with a possible upgrade of the existing system". Dell EMC technology, and the Dell EMC SC Series Compellent storage solution in particular, stood out both for its performance and based on an assessment of project and maintenance costs. After agreeing on the move to Dell EMC systems, the people at the bank and at 4IT Solutions worked together to replace the NAS with two new appliances, one for the main site and one for the disaster recovery site, both equipped with new solid-state drives (SSDs) and more traditional SATA drives, for a total capacity of 50 terabytes and performance levels on the order of 55,000 input/output operations



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Roberto Palladino
CIO Zarattini & Co. Bank



“The benefits of the solution can also be seen from the point of view of the system administrators. Maintenance and management have now been simplified and in large part automated with the help of a very user-friendly management console, and IT personnel can now focus on higher value activities, rather than on more routine busywork. These aspects may not be visible to the end user, but they have great value for the infrastructure as a whole”.

Raffaele Amoia
Technical Account Manager
4IT Solutions

per second (IOPS). The transition took place over the course of just a few days, during which normal operations were able to continue, with the exception of some very brief downtime for migration of the banking system over the weekend. When a piece of data is generated, this new solution writes a local copy and then makes a semi-synchronous copy at the disaster recovery site without the need for additional appliances, as was necessary under the previous configuration. More frequent snapshots have also been implemented with the new storage system, which gives access to prior states of stored data. At the disaster recovery site, these snapshots can then be stored for different periods of time, such that, for example, they may be saved for one day at the main site and for a week at the disaster recovery site. With the Dell EMC SC Series Compellent solution, these tools for optimizing data backup and recovery can be managed automatically.

Benefits

From drywall to reinforced concrete

With the new Dell EMC SC Series Compellent solution, Roberto Palladino can enjoy peace of mind with regard to Zarattini & Co. Bank operations for the next five years, at least in terms of storage, which has improved in both capacity and performance. “We used to have to wait up to 50 minutes before a snapshot was completed, whereas now it takes just two minutes, but the increase in storage capacity and the significant performance improvement are just the most evident benefits we have experienced”, explained the bank’s CIO. “The benefits of the solution can also be seen from the point of view of the system administrators. Maintenance and management have now been simplified and in large part automated with the help of a very user-friendly management console, and IT personnel can now focus on higher value activities, rather than on more routine busywork. These aspects may not be visible to the end user, but they have great value for the infrastructure as a whole”. Indeed, perceived



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performance depends on the application, and in certain areas of core banking there has been a modest increase, in the same way as in desktop virtualization, which has made jobs better for everyone who works for the bank. The solution also has a number of data autotiering features, so it is able to automatically move data from flash to mechanical storage depending on how it is being used. The system automatically shifts “cold” data to the mechanical drives and maintains “hot” data on the SSDs (which can access data more quickly). “In this way, latency times are much lower throughout the infrastructure for large capacity at a reasonable cost, and it’s all automated”, said Raffaele Amoia. “Updates are faster; snapshots are faster and don’t affect performance, like they did in the past”, Palladino concludes. “In terms of solidity and robustness, it’s been like going from drywall to reinforced concrete”.

Profile

A boutique bank on the banks of Lake Lugano

The Zarattini Group was created in 1985 by Mario Zarattini, a nuclear physicist with a passion for finance and a true genius of arbitrage and controlled-risk investment strategies who brought together a group of entrepreneurs—including Flavio Quaggio, the current CEO of Zarattini & Co. Bank—with the goal of developing and implementing innovative techniques of asset management. Today, Zarattini is an independent financial group with operations in Switzerland, Luxembourg, and Malta, providing a wide range of investment products and services to both individual and institutional investors. Zarattini & Co. Bank is a Swiss bank specialized in private banking, asset management, fixed-income trading and trade finance services, and has been based in Lugano since 1992. It is a boutique bank that provides high-level, custom consulting to both individuals and institutional partners.

4IT Solutions

Born as a spinoff of a company with thirty years of experience in the field, 4IT Solutions provides high-profile IT solutions to customers of all sizes and industries. Consulting, training and partnership with the main technological players worldwide, are the competitive advantages of the company.

This features integrate with the ability to listen and correctly interpret the needs and objectives of customers to suggest, design and implement IT infrastructures that meet the real needs, ensuring operations and total support. On the strength of its technological and commercial skills, 4IT Solutions also boasts (a unique case in the Canton of Ticino) a distance consulting service in Italian, English, French and German.