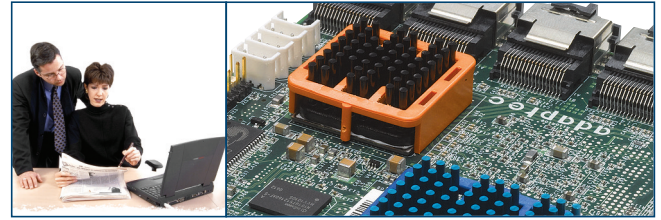


On-Demand Hosting Provider SoftLayer Relies On Adaptec



Only Adaptec delivered the product range, performance, protection, and SATA/SAS flexibility that SoftLayer needed

Introduction

SoftLayer Technologies of Dallas, Texas is an industry-leading on-demand hosting provider offering world-class datacenter capabilities for small to medium enterprise. SoftLayer provides both gigabit public and private networks to ensure complete control security over the outsourced environment. Comprised of two separate and distinct redundant network architectures, the SoftLayer network-within-the-network design delivers enterprise-level hosting services while adding complete management and flexibility to the outsourced environment. By managing all physical elements of the data center and providing best-in-class solutions that mimic private data center quality and practices, SoftLayer offers customers a cost-conscious yet flexible performance solution.

The Challenge

SoftLayer delivers its next-generation virtual IT environments to thousands of small and medium-sized customers around the world. The company leases servers to customers and needs the flexibility to configure servers with from 2 to 12 drives, a choice of RAID levels, and the ability to mix and match SATA and SAS drives, to address varying performance, cost and capacity requirements. To meet the demands of its unique network infrastructure, the RAID controllers integrated into SoftLayer servers must also provide optimum I/O performance, maximum scalability, and high throughput.

SoftLayer prefers PCI Express (PCIe) connectivity, which allows a single controller to be used in a wider range of machines, and offers a performance boost over PCI-X. The configuration of SoftLayer servers requires a low-profile form factor.

“The vast majority of our machines are 1U and fitting a full-height card into them is a bit of a challenge. Even in our 2U chassis configurations, we need to be able to place the controller upright, so once again, a full-height card does not work, as it requires a minimum of 3U,” said Jacob Linscott, SoftLayer Director of IT Systems –UNIX.

“Adaptec was the sole vendor that enabled us to completely standardize on a single family of controllers. We looked at LSI and 3ware solutions, but only Adaptec offered a broad line of low- and high-port Unified Serial® RAID controllers, which we absolutely needed to help scale and maintain our IT infrastructure and better support our rapidly growing customer base.”

Jacob Linscott,
SoftLayer Director of IT Systems –UNIX

Executive Summary

Challenge

Finding a single provider who offered the flexibility SoftLayer needed

Solution

Adaptec Unified Serial® (SATA/SAS) Controllers for PCIe

Results

Meet the widest range of needs with a single controller family, minimizing overhead

Provides the performance, protection, and flexibility customers expect

Delivers a solution from a trusted provider for today's and tomorrow's needs

On-Demand Hosting Provider SoftLayer Relies On Adaptec

To minimize overhead and qualification costs, SoftLayer was looking for a single vendor to provide the full range of RAID controllers it needed.

“When we only have to worry about one manufacturer, it lowers our costs by reducing unnecessary inventories of RAID cards and battery-backup units, cutting staff training, and minimizing other overhead,” Linscott said.

The problem is particularly acute for customers using Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft SQL, and other popular business applications that generate block-level data. Ethernet-based solutions have typically been used for file data, while scaling and protecting block data previously required a separate Fibre Channel network whose cost and complexity put it out of the range of many businesses.

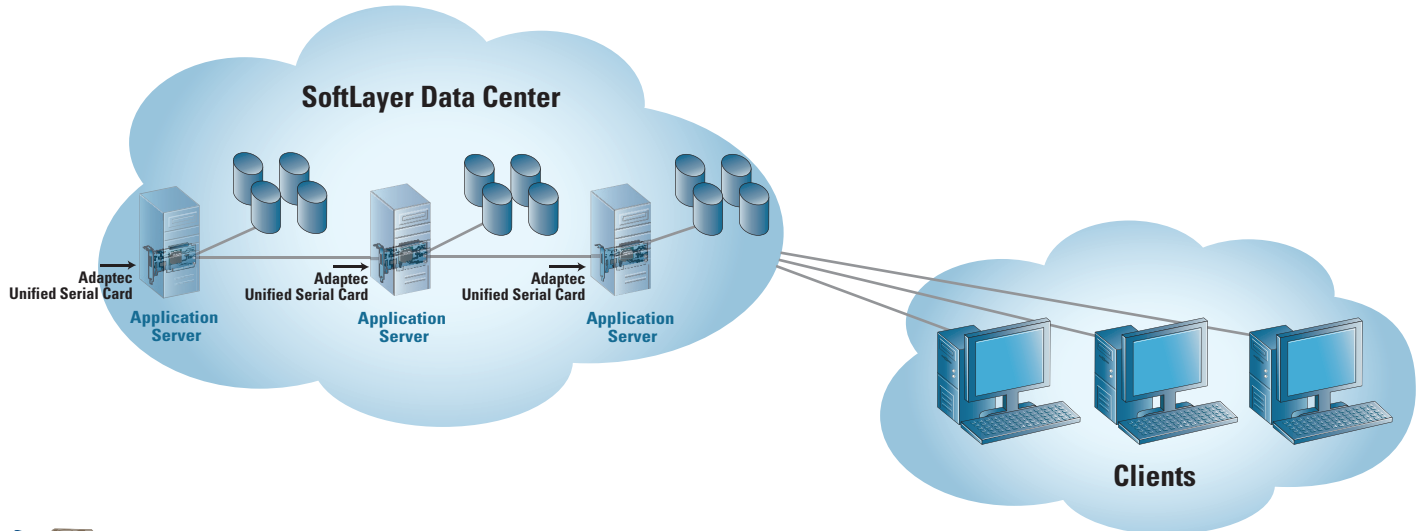
The Solution

SoftLayer standardized on Adaptec Unified Serial® (SATA/SAS) RAID controllers, choosing Adaptec Series 5 RAID controllers with Intelligent Power Management for their high performance, extensive RAID feature set, affordable cost and trusted reliability – ensuring that SoftLayer would have the flexibility it requires to meet a wide variety of customer needs. The Adaptec Series 5 offers the industry’s highest performance and the broadest port count portfolio – from 4- to 28-port configurations.

“Adaptec RAID solutions have earned a reputation for proven reliability, which is extremely critical for a network infrastructure supporting over 20,000 active servers,” said Linscott. “In addition to rock-solid reliability, Adaptec was the sole vendor that enabled us to completely standardize on a single family of

controllers. We looked at LSI and 3ware solutions, but only Adaptec offered a broad line of low- and high-port Unified Serial RAID controllers, which we absolutely needed to help scale and maintain our IT infrastructure and better support our rapidly growing customer base.”

“The Adaptec brand has been in this game for a while. The company knows the market and puts out a very solid product. This is always important to us. Simply put, we know they will be there tomorrow when we need more equipment.”



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P/N: 907018-011 Printed in U.S.A. 12/08 4889_1.4