

Non-Profit Organization Improves Productivity and Extends Hardware Lifecycle by Deploying V-locity and Diskeeper



Supporting people in living the life they choose

“V-locity is just like changing the oil in your car. You change the oil to maintain your vehicle and just let it be. V-locity is a critical component of a smoothly running environment. You just install it and that’s it.” – Curt Dennett, VP of Technology and Infrastructure, PathPoint

CHALLENGES

- User complaints related to slow performance
- Productivity issues related to slow running applications
- Expensive upgrades not an option

V-LOCITY BENEFITS

- 50% or greater application performance improvement—with no additional hardware
- Latency and throughput dramatically improved
- True “Set It and Forget It” management
- Compatible with all SAN/NAS systems
- Easily deploy to the largest virtual, physical or cloud environments in just five clicks
- Before-and-after performance reporting to validate performance gains
- Enterprise-wide visibility into I/O performance, from VM to storage

PathPoint’s user community faced productivity impacts related to slow running applications and hardware lifecycles that were too short for their budgetary cycles. On top of this, the IT team lost valuable time that could have been spent on other mission-critical initiatives troubleshooting issues and reformatting hardware. Now with Diskeeper® and V-locity® installed and optimizing both their physical and virtual infrastructure, user productivity has drastically improved and they are extending hardware lifecycles by a minimum of 2 years. The IT operations team simply doesn’t know how they would function without Diskeeper and V-locity running quietly in the background, significantly optimizing their environment.

THE CUSTOMER

PathPoint, a non-profit organization based in Santa Barbara, supports people in living the life they choose. PathPoint partners with people with disabilities, people with mental health diagnoses, and young adults to pursue their hopes and dreams through strengthening workplace abilities, building life skills, and developing meaningful relationships. Founded in 1964, it offers services in five Central Coast and Southern California counties: Kern, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

THE CHALLENGE

With 14 Southern California sites and nearly 500 employees, PathPoint is a large non-profit organization with the typical budget constraints one would expect. Curt Dennett, PathPoint’s VP of Technology and Infrastructure, explained “When I started 24 years ago, I was the very first IT person for the company, and we didn’t have an IT infrastructure. I built the network from the ground up and it was great being able to connect all of the different divisions and staff.”

While this was a huge step forward for the growth and success of the organization, it was quite a job to keep the whole network running smoothly, and the IT staff of 2 had limited time for troubleshooting and performing on-going maintenance to keep the machines running as efficiently as possible.

“When users experience sluggish performance or mission-critical applications aren’t working, the staff is not able to maintain the high level of quality service they strive for, productivity declines, and the efficiency of the organization declines,” said Curt.

As technology became more relevant to PathPoint’s mission of providing clients with the skills and resources to set them up for success, Curt knew he had to find a solution to make the IT infrastructure as efficient as possible. Curt said, “I needed to find a way to work smarter, not harder,” and that’s when the company looked into Diskeeper as a solution and deployed it to all of the physical servers and desktops and it made an immediate difference. When virtualization came along, V-locity did the same for the VM’s running on Hyper-V.

CASE STUDY

ENVIRONMENT

- Key applications – SAGE 100, Exchange, Active Directory
- Servers – Windows Servers 2016 & 2019
- Operating System – Windows 10 Pro
- Hypervisor – Hyper-V
- Storage – Local and NAS
- Network – 14 sites connected via VPNs

V-LOCITY FEATURES

IntelliWrite® automatically prevents split I/Os from being generated when a file is typically broken into pieces before write and sequentializes otherwise random I/O generated by the “I/O blender” effect.

IntelliMemory® intelligent caching technology caches active data from read requests using only idle, available server memory.

“Time Saved” Benefits Dashboard shows ongoing benefit of the software by revealing the amount of I/O offloaded from storage and how much time that saves.

Benefit Analyzer™ embedded benchmark tool provides before/after performance comparisons prior to installing V-locity and after.

Set-It-and-Forget-It® functionality ensures V-locity is completely non-disruptive as it operates quietly in the background optimizing the I/O stream in real-time and doesn’t even need a reboot to install or upgrade.

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THE SOLUTION

Diskeeper for physical servers and V-locity for virtual servers are “set and forget” software utilities that run transparently in the background, automatically offloading I/O from underlying storage, then streamlining the I/O traffic that remains. All of this is done with near-zero overhead to the CPU.

First, Diskeeper and V-locity eliminate excessively small, fractured writes and reads, and displace them with large, clean contiguous writes so more payload is carried with every I/O operation. Second, the software establishes a tier-0 caching strategy by using idle, available DRAM to serve hot reads. Nothing has to be allocated for cache since both Diskeeper and V-locity dynamically adjust to only utilize what is otherwise unused. With as little as 2GB of available memory, many customers serve as much as 50% of their read traffic directly from DRAM at the speed of memory. That means all that I/O activity is handled server-side and isn’t competing for valuable I/O bandwidth at the slower storage level. As a result, most customers experience at least 50% faster application performance, typically double.

THE RESULT

“Now when we are configuring our workstations and laptops, the first thing we do is install Diskeeper. We have several lab computers that we don’t put the software on and the difference is obvious in day-to-day functionality. Diskeeper has essentially eliminated all helpdesk calls related to sluggish performance.” reported Curt.

Additionally, Curt found that workstations with Diskeeper installed have a 5-year lifecycle versus the lab computers without Diskeeper that only last 3 years. Moreover, he achieved similar results on servers. Curt has also extended the life of physical servers running full production workloads by years simply by installing Diskeeper from day one. Curt observed, “We don’t need to re-format machines running Diskeeper nearly as often. As a result, we gained back valuable time for other important initiatives while securing peak performance and longevity out of our physical hardware assets. With limited budgets, that has truly put us at ease.”

When PathPoint expanded into the virtual realm, Curt looked at what ConduSiv had to offer for optimizing their virtual servers and, after reviewing the benefits, it made sense to bring the software into the rest of their environment. As an example of the powerful capabilities of Diskeeper and V-locity, PathPoint has observed a 47% reduction of I/O traffic from having to go all the way out to storage on busy servers.

“Now V-locity is the standard for all of our virtual servers, Diskeeper Server for all physical servers, and Diskeeper Pro for our clients,” said Curt. “The numbers are impressive but what’s more for me, is the gut feeling and the experience of knowing that the machines are actually performing efficiently. I wouldn’t run any environment without these tools,” he concludes.

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