

Re: Recommended Sun hardware SAN

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Nigel P. Longbottom wrote:

> *Has anyone had any experience with Sun hardware connected to a SAN?*

We've got about 20 systems hooked up to an EMC CX600 with 11TB of storage.

> *I'm looking to connect approx 6 small Sun boxes (from V240R up to V880 /*

> *V890 in size) so that they have two internal mirrored disk for the OS,*

> *then pick up the rest of their disks from a SAN.*

>

> *Can anyone recommend compatible FC cards that you have used and work*

> *well. Also a SAN manufacture and model you have had experience with. I'm*

> *looking around the 10TB range for six server.*

EMC has a few different cards they recommend, as do most other vendors.

We are using Emulex's and they work very well and have very nice drivers too. Sun's cards would have the advantage of having drivers included with the OS and a single point of contact.

> *What would your recommended LUN size be? Do you still have to slice the*

> *disks up even if they are part of a SAN LUN? I'd also appreciate backup*

> *strategy if you have one. The servers are likely to be running Solaris 9*

> *with Oracle 9i.*

Managing LUNs are just like managing real disks, and yes you have to slice them up. A SAN is almost worse than standalone disk if you need lots of filesystems or raw slices. Of course, managing hundreds of 2gb slices for Informix (as I do) whose DBAs can't plan for 3 months of growth sucks, with or without a SAN.

Since you have a lot of data and few servers, you may run into bottlenecks with a LAN based solution. We use Netbackup and a STK L180 (6 SDLT drives, 140 slots) and LAN-based backups. We have lots of servers and relatively little data per server so 100mbps clients/1gbps server gives us a very reasonable backup window. Netbackup also has LAN-free and Server-free backups for those with more data. The complexity and cost goes up in order of LAN, LAN-free, Server-free. You would probably be able to get away with 1gbps client and server LAN based, with staggered backup windows.

> *This is all theoretical at this point so your experiences would be very*
> *helpful.*

I would be hesitant to recommend an EMC CX-series to somebody. We've had very good luck with ours, and it is nicer than the 15 A5200's we had before. However, I'd look at somebody else who might offer better features first. The fact that it runs Windows NT as it's embedded OS kinda sticks in one's craw too. EMC is not what one would call an open company like Sun either, they want to do everything themselves (or have Unisys do it, and they have zero Solaris knowledge). When we purchased it, Sun had no competitive mid-range equipment, now they have some very attractive looking stuff so I'd consider them first.

> *Nigel.*

-JD