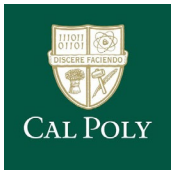# Cal Poly Replaces NetApp with Zadara, Delivers Better Storage Experience

Using Zadara's enterprise storage-as-a-service, California Polytechnic State University solves scalability, manageability and cost challenges.

The Cal Poly IT services group is responsible for the majority of the campus applications and infrastructure. Their goal was to move to a Service Provider (SP) model where they could offer Information Technology as a Service (ITaaS) to each of the colleges and departments within the campus.

No budget available to make large investments in infrastructure.

One of the challenges facing IT Services was a five-year budget lock that kept them from being able to purchase capital expenditure (CapEx) infrastructure to support the campus IT needs. Tim Schmidt, the Engineering Services Manager at Cal Poly explained, "We were forced to ride out the warranties on our existing equipment, but had no way to invest in future infrastructure."

An aging NetApp array, complex and difficult to manage.

To support the campus storage needs, they had one large NetApp storage array. The mixed workloads running on the array were causing an I/O storm impacting everyone's performance. The storage array was also complex and difficult to manage, causing them delays in responding to departmental requests for capacity. With expiring warranties and functional limitations, the IT Services group needed to make some serious changes, but were not sure they had any options.

Stuck with legacy equipment and searching for a way out.

Tim Schmidt described the situation, "We had a seven-year-old storage array with management, scalability and performance issues. We needed a solution that would allow us to scale, and therefore be agile and responsive to our clients. We also wanted a solution that would enable us to provide self-service deployment options to the campus departments. And we had very limited OpEx budgets to work with, so we weren't sure we had many options."

Cal Poly evaluated offerings from over 20 storage vendors, including incumbent NetApp, EMC, and Amazon S3. They chose Zadara Virtual Private Storage Array (VPSA), for its efficiency and ease of use.

Summary:
Founded in 1901 and located in San Luis Obispo, California, Cal Poly is a public university comprised of nearly 24,000 faculty, staff and students.

Challenges:
- Existing NetApp array was seven years old and coming off warranty
- Single array supporting all groups caused performance, scalability and management challenges
- Budget-locks did not allow new storage array acquisition options

Solution:
- Cal Poly adopted the Zadara VPSA Storage as a Service architecture

Results:
- Pure OpEx model enabled new storage capacity
- VPSA performance isolation resolved the "noisy neighbor" issue
- Storage-as-a-Service enabled full scalability and near instantaneous responsiveness to departmental requests

Case Study

"We chose Zadara because they fit our requirements, not the other way around," said Tim Schmidt. "Zadara gives us the scalability and elasticity we need to not only scale up, but scale down, as needed. With the VPSA, we can enjoy the economic benefits of a multi-tenant array, but maintain the performance isolation as if every department had their own storage. Best of all, the solution is provided as a service, so we can stay within our OpEx budget quarter over quarter."

Cal Poly is now using Zadara as their primary storage solution for centralized IT. They are offering storage-as-a-service to the departments and charge-back billing based on the Zadara management tools. With the ability to be deployed on premises, the Zadara solution enables Cal Poly to keep the storage within their data center, while still enjoying the benefits of the Storage-as-a-Service (STaaS) model. By changing the way they think about storage, Cal Poly have eliminated the 3-5 year purchase-manage-refresh cycle that got them into trouble in the first place.

Looking forward, Cal Poly plans to use the Zadara solution for critical applications and as overflow for their hyper-converged environment. They also plan to create a Zadara presence at the California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) and replicate between the two sites.

Tim Schmidt summarized, "Zadara solved our storage refresh problem, and helped us rethink how we can offer IT services to departments within the university. Now we can give groups and departments their own management portal to self-provision storage-on-demand. Zadara evolves with us as our needs change, so now we can focus on serving our internal clients."

"Zadara offered us a pure OpEx storage solution with greater functionality than our NetApp array."

Tim Schmidt,
Director of Infrastructure &
Platform Services,
Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo

zadara

+1 949 251 0360
sales@zadara.com
www.zadara.com

Transform your business with the world's only fully-managed, consumption-based enterprise storage.

Zadara transforms storage-related costs from a variable mix of equipment and management expenses to a predictable, on-demand, pay-per-use, elastic service that greatly simplifies planning, streamlines budgeting, and improves return on investment (ROI). Learn how Zadara can help you transform your business. Call or email today.

©2015-2019 Zadara Storage, Inc. All rights reserved. Zadara is a registered trademark of Zadara Storage, Inc. Rev. 0319