

Fast-Growing Top 100 Home Loan Company Gets 2x Application Performance Improvement with 2x Better RTO Using Datrium DVX



CERTAINTY HOME LOANS CASE STUDY



Financial Services
certaintyhomeloans.com

Challenge

With its EqualLogic solution nearing end of life, the company sought solutions that would deliver performance, like existing Fusion-io cards, and take the complexity out of management.

Results

- 75% less storage management time
- Same low-latency performance
- 3x RTO improvement
- Upgrades with no downtime
- A smaller rack footprint and associated power savings

“Datrium DVX takes virtually no effort to manage. And when we need support, we get one person who understands storage and VMware, which gets us to a resolution faster. As an engineer, I can focus on more pressing things.”

James Jordan
Systems Engineer

Company Challenge

Improve Performance and Uptime

Certainty Home Loans, with branches across 15 states, has helped more than 170,000 families finance their homes. As the company expands, the IT team must stay ahead of data growth to keep systems available to process loans and serve customers quickly.

As the company’s EqualLogic solution neared end of life and would no longer be supported by Dell, the team looked to the market for innovative solutions that would support planned growth. Certainty had recently purchased Fusion-io cards to improve performance and hoped to preserve that investment.

The IT team also sought simpler management. At the time, making space on drives required the better part of a day and the time of one of the more qualified engineers – time that could be spent on more strategic activities.

Results

2x Performance Improvement with Better Availability

Compatibility with Fusion-io quickly narrowed the field, eliminating Nutanix and Dell EMC. Datrium, however, would pair agnostically with Fusion-io in any new or existing host, providing Certainty with investment protection and the freedom to adopt new technology as desired. Plus, Datrium’s DVX brought the speed advantages of local flash in hosts along with built-in scale-out backup and cloud-based DR.

“With DVX, I/O really is local to the host. It’s not going across a wire to a storage system, which reduces the chance of latency,” said James Jordan, Systems Engineer at Certainty Home Loans. “Our users experienced half the application latency, which helps us accelerate business performance.”

Maintaining low latency performance for critical loan processing systems was a key success factor for the IT team and the business.

“From the start, we put DVX into Insane Mode and noted zero bottlenecks as a result,” Jordan said.

Performance was only half the challenge. The business also required 100% availability, so home loans could be processed 24 hours a day. Storage array upgrades required six hours of downtime – a process so disruptive that the team only did them about every 18 months when they took advantage of new features.

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SQL Server recovery took 12 hours, and only daily snapshots were possible, given the storage required. With DVX, they upgrade any time new features come out, and the infrastructure remains up the entire time, thanks to the innovative built-in backup capabilities of DVX. If an SQL recovery is needed, it can now be completed in half the time. And given that DVX snapshots have no performance impact and only take minimal space, hourly backups are possible for a 24x improvement in RPO.

Certainty Home Loans deployed Datrium at three sites: its headquarters in Plano, Texas; a DR site in Aurora, Colorado; and a third site in Atlanta. The IT team is evaluating Elastic Replication, which would provide instant recovery across sites for even better data availability. The short-term improvements and continued pursuit of better system uptime is a key success factor for the business and a major benefit of moving to Datrium’s platform.

2x Data Reduction with 50%+ Capacity Free

The company’s previous storage system didn’t have several features that come with DVX, including always-on global deduplication, erasure coding, and compression. Certainty Home Loans got 2x data reduction and headroom to grow.

The company also went from half a dozen storage arrays to a single Datrium DVX at each location. That consolidation freed considerable rack space and reduced power costs.

75% Less Storage Management

Before choosing Datrium, provisioning capacity for VMs required a higher-level engineer. Now, anyone on the IT team can take care of it. And when they do, it takes less time than before.

Team members add capacity and manage storage right in VMware vCenter, eliminating storage management time. In total, Jordan estimates that they have cut at least 75% of the time they previously spent on provisioning new VMs. The team also knows it can count on Datrium for unrivaled support if the need arises.

“Datrium takes virtually no effort to manage,” Jordan said. “And when we need support, we get one person who understands storage and VMware, which gets us to a resolution faster. As an engineer, I can focus on more pressing things.”

About Certainty Home Loans

Certainty Home Loans is a nationally recognized residential mortgage company intent on providing exceptional, individualized service and maintaining supportive, lasting relationships with borrowers, Realtors®, and builders. Headquartered in Plano, Texas, the company (formerly Starkey Mortgage) opened its doors in March 2000 and offers home purchase, refinance, renovation, and reverse mortgage loans with offices throughout Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, District of Columbia (D.C.), Florida, Georgia, Kansas, Louisiana, Maryland, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Certainty Home Loans has been recognized by National Professional Mortgage Magazine as a Top Mortgage Employer (2016), and by Mortgage Executive Magazine as a Top 100 Mortgage Company (2011-2016), and Top 50 Company to Work For in America (2014 – 2015).

Learn more about Datrium at www.datrium.com.