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Casino Deploys Pillar Axiom to Support Virtualization Migration while Achieving

Superior I/O Prioritization for IGT Gaming System, Tribal Operations & Integrated DR -

SAN JOSE, Calif., Oct. 5 /PRNewswire/ -- [Pillar Data Systems](#)

News Facts

- [Bear River Casino](#) , consistently voted the best casino, dining and entertainment venue along California's North Coast, has deployed the [Pillar Axiom 600 unified storage system](#) to support a virtualized gaming platform while also accommodating data storage for tribal operations and integrated disaster recovery efforts.
- The casino, based in Loleta, Calif. and operated by the Bear River Band of the Rohnerville Rancheria, demands "always-on" availability of all critical systems as the inability to access vital data could result in huge dollar losses—tens of thousands on weekends—for every minute of downtime.
- To keep pace with aggressive five-year growth projections while reducing capital costs and increasing operational efficiencies, Bear River decided to implement a virtualized version of its [International Game Technology](#) (IGT) casino management system, which ran on [VMware's ESX Server](#) platform.
- In seeking high-performance storage to accommodate IGT's virtualized software, Bear River reviewed benchmark tests conducted by the [Storage Performance Council \(SPC\)](#) , assessing the price/performance of competing products from EMC, Sun, NetApp, Dell and Pillar Data Systems.
- According to Bear River, Pillar Axiom provided unparalleled storage utilization and I/O

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prioritization (enabled by its patented Quality of Service capabilities), so they could address casino, tribal operations and disaster recovery requirements with a singular platform. As a result, Bear River was able to do more with less while achieving savings of more than \$265,000

over five years when compared to other storage solutions.

- Pillar will be on hand to highlight the Bear River Casino implementation as a bronze sponsor at [TribalNet](#), to be held at Atlantis Casino Resort in Reno, Nev., on October 4-7, 2010 (Booth 12).

Betting on Pillar Axiom for Winning Performance, Scalability & Reliability

- [Senacon, Inc.](#), an Irvine, Calif.-based technology provider with extensive experience in the gaming industry, drove the virtualization and storage deployment at Bear River, which included a Pillar Axiom with 6 TBs of Fibre Channel storage and 18 TBs of SATA storage; additional capacity can be added easily due to Pillar's modular product architecture.
- Bear River reports achieving performance that was three times greater than what had been recorded with typical storage configurations for the virtualized IGT software.
- According to Bear River, Pillar Axiom was capable of supporting the most virtual machines over time along with providing [system-wide Quality of Service](#), which dynamically manages I/O prioritization to ensure critical applications perform optimally under any condition.
- With Pillar's thin provisioning, Bear River has boosted capacity utilization and streamlined management; "point and click" operation lowered administrative overhead for the small IT team.
- Pillar's fault tolerant design, which includes active/active storage controllers and distributed RAID architecture, eliminates any single point of failure while elevating overall reliability, availability and performance.

Supporting Quotes

From Scott Joachim, director of information services for Bear River Casino:

- "Nothing could match Pillar's performance. No other vendor enabled us to assign as many priorities to different storage enclosures and LUNs. With Pillar, we could achieve multiple layers of QoS, while the comparable EMC product would probably support two. To get the same QoS on EMC, we'd have to buy another enclosure at a 50 percent budget increase."
- "Performance is tuned to our business and application needs. Critical databases and

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application services are performing beyond expectation. Choosing Pillar was a solid decision for us."

- "With Pillar's QoS templates, we were able to fold the Axiom's application-aware storage with IGT's Advantage specifications to deliver maximum performance for our mission-critical application suite on vSphere. Similarly, we can optimally tune our less- critical applications according to priority."

- "Pillar delivers huge ROI for us. The greatest value is unifying everything for our businesses and DR on one platform, which reduces costs, ensures optimal uptime and provides an economical growth path for the future."

From Jesse Orr, network administrator for Bear River Casino:

- "Everything worked as planned and the implementation was completed in half the time projected. We were up and running in 30 minutes."

- "Carving out a LUN is easy, as is setting QoS for each application appropriately. For example, we can assign a premium LUN for an important database and then a lower priority LUN for the operating system. Pillar is much more granular than typical storage in how you set up the system, which effectively optimizes storage utilization."

- "Pillar's 'point and click' GUI is wonderful. So is the proactive support capabilities that automatically notify Pillar and us if anything is about to happen. I'm not aware of anyone else offering that level of preventative maintenance."

From Donovan Durbin, CIO for Senacon:

- "The majority of Native American casinos run two distinct IT entities, with separate hardware and different administrative teams, and that drives up cost and complexity. With virtualization and flexible SAN technology, it's now possible to integrate casino and tribal technology in one integrated platform that scales easily to accommodate both operations. Now that the technology is available, the next step is regulatory buy-in as some jurisdictions may be more complex than others."

- "Pillar is the right solution for this environment. The gaming world is changing and what's needed in a storage platform is high performance, fast transaction speed, scalability and the ability to provision storage based on application needs."

- "With Pillar in place, Bear River can realize the clear benefits of integrated storage for all its operations without compromise. In this environment, immediate access to real-time information is critical; Pillar enables Bear River to tune workloads to meet whatever business demands arise."

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Resources

- Bear River Casino case study

<http://www.pillardata.com/resources/case-studies/bear-river>

- More on Pillar's unified storage system

<http://www.pillardata.com/products/san-nas-unified-storage>

- More on Pillar's solution for server virtualization

<http://www.pillardata.com/solutions/server-virtualization/>

- More on Pillar's 80-percent utilization guarantee

<http://www.pillardata.com/innovations/storage-utilization/>

- More Pillar resources

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<http://www.pillardata.com/about-pillar/media-center>

About Pillar Data Systems

Founded in 2001, Pillar Data Systems develops Application-Aware Storage systems for midsize and enterprise organizations. With the highest utilization rates in the storage industry, the Pillar Axiom solution is the most efficient storage system on the market today. The Pillar Axiom cuts administrative time and total cost of ownership by more than 50 percent as well as provides the only storage system that can differentiate services based on application priority. Designed from the ground up as the only true Application-Aware Storage system, the Pillar Axiom allows users to match multiple application characteristics to the appropriate service levels within a single storage platform. Pillar Data Systems is privately funded by Tako Ventures, LLC, the venture arm of Larry Ellison.

The company is headquartered at 2840 Junction Avenue, San Jose, California 95134. The company can be reached on the Web at

<http://www.pillardata.com>

, by phone at 408-503-4000.

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