

iStor Networks Fills a Market Niche for Channel Leader R&D Data Products

R&D Data Products is a value-added reseller (VAR) that has provided best-in-class IT solutions and services to its clients since 1991. The company specializes in the midrange market, providing storage and backup, secure networking, wireless and telephony, contract consolidation, and data center services. R&D's customer-centric approach has contributed to the company's success as a VAR, garnering it a spot on the INC. 500 list of the fastest growing privately held companies in America, as well as the Lockheed Martin Excellence Award in recognition of outstanding performance as a supplier to Lockheed Martin Missiles and Space Division. To continue its leadership in the channel, it is important for R&D Data Products to partner with leading technology vendors and make the best products available to its clients.

Partnering with the Right Vendors: iStor Offers the Winning Combination of Proven Products and Superior Service

Rich Diatlo, founder and president of R&D Data Products, first heard about California-based iStor Networks, a leader in high performance iSCSI solutions, from one of his distributors. R&D Data Products was in the beginning stages of preparing a storage area network (SAN) implementation for one of its clients, a department at a multibillion dollar global conglomerate that needed additional storage for critical applications but had strict budget constraints.

After looking at iStor's product offerings, R&D Data Products believed they would be an ideal fit to its existing portfolio. Of particular interest was the integraStor iSCSI array, a powerful foundation for an IP SAN solution. The integraStor leverages the speed of iStor's flagship iSCSI RAID storage ASIC for block-based applications such as database, email, disk-to-disk

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backup and near line storage. Key features include flexible configuration with 4 or 8 port GbE and/or 1 port of 10GbE performance, support for SAS and serial ATA drives, and the ability to create multiple simultaneous RAID volumes.

"I thought iStor's products were a great fit," said Diatlo. "Since we regularly recommend and install SAN technology to our clients, we are always looking for new vendor partners that have a unique value proposition. iStor's products are rock solid and have an excellent reputation. It is very detrimental to my business to sell products that don't perform as they're supposed to. Not only do we lose money, but more importantly, we lose valuable client relationships. With iStor, I knew I was getting a reliable, proven product that would do its job well. Availability of staff resources from the manufacturer is also important to us. Are good systems engineers and salespeople available should I need them? One of the reasons we partnered with iStor is because they proved their willingness to step up and help us out when we needed them."

Filling a Market Niche: The "Build-as-you-Go" SAN

R&D Data's partnership with iStor fills a niche for businesses that are looking to leverage the benefits of an iSCSI SAN, but prefer an implementation that can grow in proportion to their needs and budget dollars. The value proposition of this approach was demonstrated when Diatlo was tasked with creating a robust, budget-conscious storage solution for one of his biggest clients.

"One of my client's original options was a SAN blade to go into their blade chassis, but it was quite expensive. I suggested an iSCSI SAN instead and they were interested in the idea, but didn't



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feel they needed all the bells and whistles,” said Diatlo. “That’s where iStor’s product fit in perfectly. It offers all the capabilities of an iSCSI SAN, but you

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don’t have to purchase numerous add-ons up front that you’re not going to use. We work with other SAN offerings but they pack in all the capabilities in the initial purchase. It is nicely integrated, but if you don’t need all the features right away and don’t have the budget dollars, it doesn’t make sense.”

“With iStor, you can simply build as you go, and that was ideal for my client and a great alternative to costly blade storage,” continued Diatlo. “Their product approach is unbundled, so you buy only what you need up front and seamlessly add various software packages as you go along. iStor fits that niche very nicely and at a cost-effective price point.”

R&D Data Products implemented two of iStor’s integraStor 3TB arrays for a client and enjoyed a personalized service experience with iStor. “We handle every transaction with a sense of urgency because businesses run on technology, and they have better things to do than wait,” said Diatlo. “iStor is of the same mindset, so working together has been very easy. And being a smaller company, iStor is very good at wrapping their arms around you to help you out. I have one point of contact I count on to get me everything I need, and I don’t have to wait two or three days for it to get done. iStor will definitely continue to be a strong partner for us going forward. We have had no complaints, and my client seems very happy with their choice of an iSCSI SAN and iStor’s product.”

The Future of SAN: iSCSI is a Compelling Alternative to Fibre Channel

As data protection needs continue to grow, R&D Data Products expects to see increased demand for storage and backup products. Storage area networks will continue to be an attractive and viable option for businesses of all sizes, but especially in the midmarket. “I think you will see both iSCSI and Fibre Channel-based SANs out there in the future, but I expect iSCSI

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to be a major competitor and overtake Fibre Channel,” said Diatlo. “As an Ethernet-based application, iSCSI is much more cost-effective. And with the advent of 10 Gigabit Ethernet and costs being driven down for a 10 GbE port, businesses can get as good, if not better performance, than Fibre Channel.”

“Partnering with an iSCSI vendor like iStor, who holds such a unique niche with its ‘build-as-you-go SAN,’ expands the breadth of our product offerings and makes it easier for me to fulfill clients’ needs,” concludes Diatlo. “The integraStor products provide sophisticated capabilities and applications at a very reasonable cost, making return on investment much quicker, especially for the midmarket and small enterprise departments. We are very pleased with our partnership with iStor and will continue our

mission of delivering complete solutions that combine best-in-class products with competitive pricing and award-winning service.”

About iStor

iStor Networks, Inc. is an innovative technology leader that provides leading edge network storage solutions that are scalable, flexible, and high performing. iStor has professional storage solutions for small to medium business and enterprise ROBO (remote office/branch office) environments that are recognized for bringing leading edge iSCSI technology to the marketplace, setting new standards for cost effectiveness, world class performance, and ease of use. iSCSI IP-based Storage Area Networks (SAN) represent the fastest growing segment of the storage industry and iStor is uniquely positioned to provide the next generation of network storage technology to the marketplace.



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