

Marico Industries



EMC SAN centralizes information, ensures realtime access to SAP supply chain data, and enables business continuity

Every month, over 56 million orders from Marico Industries, a leading distributor of consumer products, skin care services, and global Ayurvedics, reach approximately 100 million consumers in about 20 million households through a distribution network of over 1.2 million outlets in India. In addition, the overseas sales franchise of Marico's consumer products is one of the largest among Indian companies.

An early adopter of technology, Marico Industries leverages IT as a critical tool in the fast-moving consumer goods industry to gain a competitive advantage. With a widespread network of manufacturing locations as well as dealers and retailers, availability of realtime information is critical for planning and decision-making. For this reason, Marico became the first organization in India to implement a supply chain solution that comprises SAP R/3, APO, and Business Warehouse supported by an EMC® CLARiiON® CX series-based storage area network (SAN).

“Our information is critical,” says Mr. Vinit Thakur, Head of IT. “We operate in a competitive environment and we must be able to respond faster than our competitors to changing demand and supply dynamics. We believe technology must provide effective tools to access, protect, and leverage our information. That is the ultimate test.”

Leading the way with a consolidated, centralized, and integrated IT architecture

Deployed in nine months, far ahead of schedule, the SAP/EMC implementation was a significant milestone for the IT department and identified Marico as a pioneer because no other organization in India had a running prototype at the time.

“At Marico, we are willing to be pioneers if we believe that the return on investment is worth the risk,” says Thakur. “As a matter of fact, we were the first company in India to implement EMC's Fibre Channel SAN.”

Marico's EMC SAN, which consists of an EMC CLARiiON CX500, two SAN switches, EMC Navisphere® Management Suite software and Navisphere Agents for HP and Windows, enables the company to protect, share, and leverage its information. It supports Marico's core applications and e-mail; addresses key challenges such as shorter data backup windows, faster application performance, and system availability of more than 99 percent; and provides enhanced storage capacity and resiliency.

“Our underlying technology is critical for successfully implementing Marico's strategies and achieving our vision. EMC is well known in the market with a proven track record. Its networked storage platforms and software are highly mature and it provides outstanding support services.”

Vinit Thakur
Head of IT

Accommodating approximately one terabyte of application data, Marico's EMC SAN now consolidates mission-critical data from a previously distributed heterogeneous environment into a single platform for centralized management, backup, and protection. This allows the company to share common resources, simplify system administration, and improve productivity.

“EMC's powerful Navisphere Management Suite enables Marico Industries' operators to control, discover, monitor, and configure storage facilities anywhere and anytime through an easy-to-use, Web-based console,” says Mr. Satish Pai, Manager, Systems Administration. “EMC's support services have also earned high marks at Marico.”

Marico's technical staff has been impressed with EMC's ability to interoperate with different hardware platforms.

“Our SAN has four servers and a tape library,” says Mr. Girish Rao, Systems Manager. “We have adopted the HP Itanium-based (IA-64) solution for running SAP, and we have some of our applications running on Windows 2003 64-bit and others on HP-UX 11.23, yet the EMC storage seamlessly interoperates with each operating system and has, in fact, improved their performances.”

The benefits of consolidation

Consolidating and networking storage has many benefits for customers like Marico Industries. The most tangible business benefit is that all information is in one place. A consolidated, networked storage infrastructure delivers the best performance and efficiency. With networked storage, users consolidate their storage management and share from a common pool. This results in increased storage utilization, while reducing the total amount of storage organizations need to buy and manage. A study conducted by McKinsey & Co. and Merrill Lynch points to a 47 cents per megabyte total cost of ownership advantage for networked storage over the traditional, direct-attached storage approach.

Another key advantage is that networked storage protects Marico's IT investment. Unlike server-based storage where disks are likely to be discarded every time an upgrade is done, networked storage enables Marico to protect investments by allowing the reassignment of volumes in response to upgrades or changing needs—without disrupting processes and production.

“Over the years, EMC has been creating mission-critical features and functionality—previously found only in high-end solutions like Symmetrix®—within its mid-tier solutions,” says Rao. “To take advantage of this, we migrated our EMC CLARiiON FC4500 to the CLARiiON CX500. The entire exercise was completed within a downtime window of just two hours.”

In addition, networked storage protects Marico’s information availability. Typically, when a server goes down, so does the data. Restoring from tape can take days, halting important business functions. Consolidating through networked storage can cut downtime to minutes. The ability to back up, store, access, and restore information quickly and efficiently directly impacts Marico’s daily operations and ensures business continuity.

Marico’s networked storage infrastructure is also the foundation from which the company has launched its information lifecycle management (ILM) strategy. ILM enables a business to manage information based on its changing value to the business over time. It means mapping the value of information and the resources to manage it to the goals of the business—all at the right time. Through ILM, Marico will be able to maximize the value of information at the lowest possible cost—while preserving today’s investments in storage applications and technologies. The result is a simpler way to match information to the goals of the business.

“Our underlying technology is critical for successfully implementing Marico’s strategies and achieving our vision,” says Thakur. “EMC is well known in the market with a proven track record. Its networked storage platforms and software are highly mature and it provides outstanding support services.”



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