Nominee: Zadara

Nomination title: Zadara: Storage when you need it, where you need it

Industry research shows an accelerating transition from traditional CapEx purchases to OpEx-based storage services. Both service providers and end-users recognise the significant functional and economic benefits of storage-as-a-service (STaaS). According to market research firm IT Brand Pulse, by the year 2020, STaaS will account for approximately 50% of the overall $50B enterprise storage market.

Zadara provides enterprise-class storage-as-a-service. It uniquely delivers enterprise-class STaaS to service providers, co-location centres and enterprises as a pay-as-you-go service, without leases, upfront costs or lengthy commitments - and yet with support for exceptional Quality of Service (QoS) storage capabilities such as clustering, NFS, CIFS and large volume sizes that are not available elsewhere in a cloud-delivered model. Zadara also offers the flexibility of deploying the solution in the cloud, on-premises or in a hybrid configuration.

The Zadara Storage Cloud can be deployed at any location, supporting any data type (block, file and object) and connecting to any protocol (FC, iSCSI, iSER, NFS, CIFS, S3, Swift). The VPSA Storage Array service provides enterprise SAN and NAS while the VPSA Object Storage service delivers private object storage. Zadara provides resource isolation, exceptional data security, and management control. It is available via On-Premises-as-a-Service (OPaaS) and through a variety of partners including AWS, Azure, Google Cloud Platform and others.

OPaaS installs physical storage onsite in customer data centres-just like traditional storage-but delivers enterprise STaaS that eliminates up-front costs. With built-in customer metering and billing features, OPaaS is designed for Service Providers that want to deliver a true enterprise-grade solution, on-demand.

Powered by Zadara's patented VPSA architecture, customers create their own SAN (block) and NAS (file) storage arrays in the cloud or on-premises, on the fly, and scale the storage endlessly from a dedicated management interface online. With Zadara's software-defined storage approach, customers own their own SSDs and/or disks - they are not shared and there is absolute separation amongst tenants - while accessing virtual controllers and individual management capabilities. This approach allows customers to gain the advanced capabilities of single-tenant, on-premises data centre storage, coupled with high QoS that meets the most stringent Service Level Agreements

(SLAs). The Zadara approach also allows an unprecedented degree of remote provisioning, deployment and management of entire, multi-petabyte storage systems, without physically traveling on site to a customer's location.

The VPSA can be leveraged at any Zadara Storage Cloud - whether it's the company's own data centre or the operated public storage clouds across the globe, which include Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud Platform, and more. Because the Zadara solution is the same technology across all service locations, users can seamlessly replicate from their data centre to the cloud, and vice versa, at a click of a button.

Through its unique approach of co-locating Zadara's storage resources adjacent to compute resources and then delivering them as a service, Zadara provides customers with the flexibility of on-premises private, hybrid or public cloud storage for SMBs and large Enterprises while addressing the infrastructure needs of any data type and any application including primary storage (for applications) and secondary (disaster recovery or backup for repository) applications.

Zadara is the only provider of "enterprise-grade" SAN and NAS as a service supporting AWS. To a customer, this means that they don't have to give up enterprise functionality as they move from traditional CapEx storage to OpEx cloud-based storage. Prior to Zadara, if they wanted to move to the cloud, they had to give up functionality that they had come to rely on with enterprise-grade EMC and NetApp-class products. Now, they can procure on-demand storage that behaves just like traditional on-premises storage. This is a "best of all worlds" situation because customers get the storage they are used to, with flexibility, elasticity, and without any of the headaches usually associated with owning a SAN or NAS. That, in turn, means quickly migrating applications to the cloud, without compromising functionality, reliability, or performance.

Additionally, Zadara has introduced functionality that gives greater capabilities than traditional CapEx-based storage. With Zadara Multi-Zone HA, customers can create metropolitan failover to protect against physical site disasters. With Zadara Backup to Object Storage (B2OS), they can backup their Zadara resources to AWS S3-compatible storage. With Zadara Container Services (ZCS), they can run Docker Containers within their Zadara instances. These are all very powerful capabilities that they did not have with previous CapEx-based storage.

Zadara has taken a leadership position in offering advanced capabilities to their core VPSA architecture. Other cloud services offerings are very basic - this might be fine for entry-level or even mid-range customers. However, for companies who have come to rely on the standard features of traditional enterprise-class storage, moving to the cloud to enjoy the flexibility and

economic benefits of cloud-based storage meant giving up key functionality, particularly in data protection, high-availability and business continuity. For example, some cloud providers only provide the ability to select volume size. In contrast, Zadara offers a broad range of control, from RAID levels, through drive types, to snapshots and replication. Everything is under the customer's direct control, and they can turn features on and off as they see fit. Better yet, any change made by the customer is non-disruptive, meaning they can experiment without risk, until they find the optimal configuration for their specific projects and can react quickly if application requirements change. It allows the customer's teams to spend more time managing the business, rather than managing the storage.

Zadara has set a strong reputation for customer service. As a smaller vendor, the team appreciates that they need to work harder to maintain customer satisfaction. Furthermore, with an as-a-service solution, customers can leave anytime, therefore the team also recognises that the company needs to earn its customers trust and loyalty every day. It's the reason Zadara offers a 100% data availability Service Level Agreement (SLA) backed up by 24x7 live support, as part of the standard offering. This means it doesn't add to costs to get this level of support and peace of mind, it only makes Zadara's customers' lives easier.

Why nominee should win