greentechmedia:

GREENTECH MEDIA: FIRST AMERICAN CORPORATION VIRTUALIZATION BRIEFING NOTES

In order to better understand the benefits of virtualization, sometimes it's best to look at how real-world enterprises are deploying the technology.

Greentech Media recently spoke with Jake Seitz, a member of the Enterprise Architecture Group at First American Corporation. First American is Fortune 350 business-to-business data information company that packages and sells financial data to organizations worldwide, including the top 20 financial institutions across the globe.

First American has annual revenues at roughly $8B and employs 40,000+ employees worldwide. They have two primary data centers, which they refer to as "tech centers". Across these two data centers they house roughly 4000 servers, of which 1500 of those servers are virtualized today. For the virtualization underway thus far, they have experienced an increase in utilization from <10% to 60%. A side benefit that First American experienced is a 60% reduction in networking gear. All of these benefits have a significant impact on operational efficiency and power reductions, thus leading to a lower carbon footprint.

Going forward, First American's goal is to achieve 80/20 relative to virtualization, meaning that 80% of their data center servers will be virtualized.

First American has approximately 300 Business Units (BUs) within the company. In 2007, the BUs had to opt-in to virtualization. Interestingly, in 2008, as virtualization technology matured and the benefits were realized, BUs now have to opt-out of virtualization.

Another interesting initiative that First American is taking advantage of is a rebate incentive program in conjunction with Southern California Edison. The benefits from the rebate incentive program include:

- A significantly lower utility bill
- A rebate check on the order of low six figures

Until now, First American has been primarily focused on server virtualization but as 2008 progresses, they are also investigating desktop virtualization.