

CHALLENGE	SOLUTION	BENEFIT
Consolidate server and storage infrastructure to lower costs and simplify procurement and administration; expand storage to improve the performance of key customer-facing applications	Dell™ PowerEdge™ 6650 servers with four Intel® Pentium® III Xeon™ processors at 1.4 GHz and 2 GB memory, Microsoft® Windows® 2000 Server, and a scalable Dell   EMC storage area network (SAN) that includes a Dell   EMC FC4700-2 enterprise storage array	Improved performance and availability of mission-critical, customer-facing applications, with reduced costs and simplified administration

# A good night's sleep

## Select Comfort standardizes on Intel processor-based Dell servers and Dell | EMC storage for a more efficient infrastructure and improved customer support

Select Comfort has discovered that comfort is compelling. The company developed The Sleep Number Bed by Select Comfort™—a mattress featuring patented air chamber technology and a patented remote control that allows sleepers to individually adjust the firmness of the mattress. The popularity of the Select Comfort patented beds has made Select Comfort the top bedding retailer in the United States for the last three years. Since its founding in 1987, the company has sold more than one million beds and today posts annual sales of more than \$260 million.

More than 25,000 customers have sent in testimonials praising the bed's ability to improve their sleep, relieve back pain, and reduce stiffness. This kind of praise has generated a huge word-of-mouth following, which has helped Select Comfort grow by approximately 20 percent in 2002.

### Standardizing on Dell supports cost-cutting measures

As Select Comfort has expanded, so has its technology infrastructure. When the company topped 1,000 desktop computers and 40 Microsoft® Windows®-based servers, Rick Larson, director of technical services at Select Comfort, decided it was time to rein in technology costs, standardize on a single vendor, and streamline servers and storage.

“We were leasing everything, which was not cost-effective for a company of our size,” Larson explains. “Our server maintenance costs also were way out of line. We wanted to select a single technology vendor for everything from desktops to storage so we could leverage volume purchasing and service contracts.”

After comparing a number of vendors on such factors as performance, costs, inventory turns, support, and speed to market

with new products, Select Comfort chose Dell as its technology provider. “Dell shone in all these areas,” Larson says. “They gave us a three-year support contract, which is much more economical for us than repeatedly renewing one-year contracts. Dell™ service and support also are far superior to other vendors we’ve worked with,” Larson says.

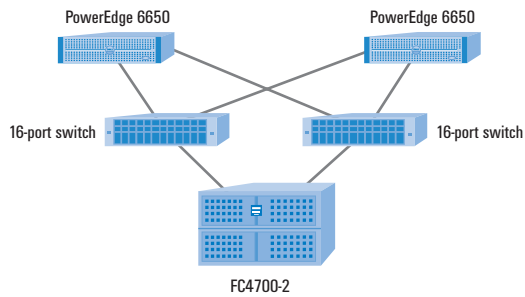
To manage the company’s current 20 percent annual growth rate, Select Comfort plans to gradually replace 40 servers with approximately 25 Intel® processor-based Dell PowerEdge™ servers running Microsoft Windows 2000 Server. The company expects that consolidating onto fewer, more powerful Dell PowerEdge servers will help save thousands of dollars, simplify administration, and conserve precious data center space.

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— Rick Larson  
Director of Technical Services  
Select Comfort

### Dell | EMC SAN awakens the power of customer-facing applications

Select Comfort used its first two Dell PowerEdge 6650 servers to implement a Dell | EMC storage area network (SAN). The SAN houses the company’s data warehouse and all customer-facing applications that run on Microsoft SQL Server, including customer relationship management (CRM), point-of-sale, and order-entry applications.



The Select Comfort SAN configuration consists of a Dell | EMC FC4700-2 enterprise storage platform with redundant storage through 16-port switches to two Dell PowerEdge 6650 servers

“These applications constitute the heartbeat of our company,” Larson says. “All customer-related information flows through these systems, necessitating exceptional performance and reliability. The Dell|EMC SAN gives us the performance we need to promptly deliver customer information to employees who are processing orders, answering customer questions, and delivering personalized service.”

The data warehouse, based on Microsoft SQL Server 7.0, contains 65 GB of customer and order data and is used to generate all reports across the enterprise. Windows 2000 and Cognos® business intelligence products running on desktop clients help Select Comfort business users perform analyses and generate reports. “The Dell | EMC SAN gives us more power for churning through data-intensive calculations in the warehouse and delivering fast answers to business users who need to make decisions about everything from marketing to manufacturing,” Larson says.

#### FC4700-2 storage platform eases IT management

The scalable Dell | EMC SAN includes one Dell | EMC FC4700-2 enterprise storage array with 1.4 TB of raw storage and 750 GB of usable storage. Select Comfort projects a need for an additional 2 TB of raw storage for 2003. The FC4700-2 provides redundant storage through 16-port switches to two Dell PowerEdge 6650 4U servers. The Dell PowerEdge 6650 servers each contain four Intel Pentium® III Xeon™ processors at 1.4 GHz with 2 GB memory. Both run the Windows 2000 operating system and the Microsoft SQL Server 7.0 database.

The Dell | EMC SAN also is connected to two RISC-based servers that run an Oracle® database and the company’s materials requirement planning (MRP), enterprise resource planning (ERP), finance, and manufacturing systems.

The Dell | EMC FC4700-2, which replaces two SCSI direct-attach storage units that were going off lease, lowers costs and simplifies management. “The FC4700 gives us more control,” Larson says. “We can make configuration changes ourselves that we used to have EMC perform. The Dell | EMC SAN requires less attention from our IT staff, freeing us to focus on other things.”

#### Select Comfort rests assured of Dell expertise and support

Select Comfort brought in Dell consultants to install the SAN. “The installation required two Dell representatives for two days. It would

have taken us much longer,” says Mark Baumgartner, manager of systems administration at Select Comfort. “It makes sense for us to focus on what we do best and leave the rollout of specialized devices to the experts. During the two days, Dell trained our staff, leaving us well qualified to make configuration changes ourselves so we do not need outside help for routine operations.”

Select Comfort has also purchased Dell Premier Enterprise Gold Support with around-the-clock support coverage and two-hour on-site response. “We have used this service infrequently, but we have been quite impressed with the results,” Larson says. “The parts are here very quickly, which minimizes server downtime.”

Dell servers also feature fast deployment for virtually instant productivity. “We have them out of the box and running in a couple of hours versus a full day, as with competitors’ servers,” Baumgartner says. “The rails snap, rather than screw, into the racks, and the servers are fully assembled with software preloaded to our specifications. Other vendors delivered servers in pieces, requiring us to assemble them. With Dell, we slide the server in the rack, boot it up, and we’re done.”

#### Select Comfort looks forward to a secure future with Dell

Dell servers have not only improved the performance, but also the availability of Select Comfort’s mission-critical customer application systems. “In our experience, we’ve had Dell servers for about 18 months without a single outage,” Larson says. “That’s pretty impressive.” The company enjoys the comfort of knowing that its most valuable assets—customer goodwill and exceptional customer service—rest securely on dependable Dell servers.

The Dell | EMC SAN also protects Select Comfort’s resources by providing the company with a way to enhance its backup and disaster recovery procedures. Moving data backup and disaster recovery to the Dell | EMC Fibre Channel SAN is likely to help reduce backup times dramatically and enable Larson’s staff to easily and economically replicate data.

In fact, Select Comfort estimates that it will realize substantial savings per year by streamlining its server and storage infrastructure on Dell products. “We’re investing significant resources with Dell,” Larson says. “If you spread that money across 10 vendors, you just don’t have the same purchasing power. We’re saving money both on server purchases and support by sourcing everything through Dell.”

Select Comfort hopes to continue its steady growth rate into the foreseeable future. The Dell server and storage infrastructure should not only absorb this growth, but it also will help enable Select Comfort to improve its customer service and responsiveness—an issue of great importance for a company whose fame stems from its capacity to provide support. ☺

