



Acceleration of Development Oracle Data Warehouse

“The time it takes to obtain responses to our test queries for analysis has been reduced by 95%. The resulting operational efficiencies have enabled us to do more with the same resources.”

Bruce Nelson, Shopzilla Director of Database Systems

Challenge

Match the responsiveness of the production database while utilizing a lower-end development system for query testing and optimization

Environment

- ▶ Three-node Oracle RAC 10i with ASM (26 TB database)
- ▶ Dell 2950 with 16GB DRAM
- ▶ 3PAR InServ T800 Storage with 126 TB raw storage

Solution

- ▶ One GridIron GT-1100A TurboCharger™ appliance

Benefits

- ▶ Significant cost savings from deferred investment in higher performance development and test systems
- ▶ More efficient workflow and increased development team productivity
- ▶ Greater competitive edge for Shopzilla as a leading online shopping service

Customer Background

Shopzilla, Inc. is an online price comparison service which enables shoppers to find, compare and buy anything, sold by virtually anyone, anywhere. The company manages a premier portfolio of online shopping brands in the US and Europe, consisting of Bizrate, Beso, Shopzilla, PrixMoinsCher and SparDeinGeld, that connects over 40 million shoppers each month with over 80 million products from tens of thousands of online retailers.

Customer Challenge

Shopzilla lives between search engines and online retailers. They have developed a massive data warehouse for back end analysis of their 24x7 business operations, which monitors key indicators such as click-throughs from search sites and click-throughs onto their online merchant customers. This data is used to increase the click-through rates and adjust the Cost Per Click (CPC) charges thereby maximizing the revenue for the company.

The back end data warehouse is divided into two distinct environments: The production environment which is the foundation for the external consumer facing storefront, and the development environment where queries are tested and optimized before they are entered into the production system. However, rarely is a development environment built to the same high-performance specifications as a production environment, and this was also the case with Shopzilla.

Using a three-node Oracle RAC 10i with ASM, developers attempted to replicate the characteristics of the production database, but with a much slower storage system which resulted in long delays for each query being tested. The extended wait not only proved frustrating in what is a fast-paced environment, it also impacted productivity of the development staff. To avoid long wait times, the development staff would often test new queries on the production system, running the risk of impacting the business by using mission critical resources for testing purposes.

GridIron Solution

Shopzilla installed a single GridIron TurboCharger in the development environment and experienced instant results, with query testing and response actually running faster than on the much higher-performance production systems!

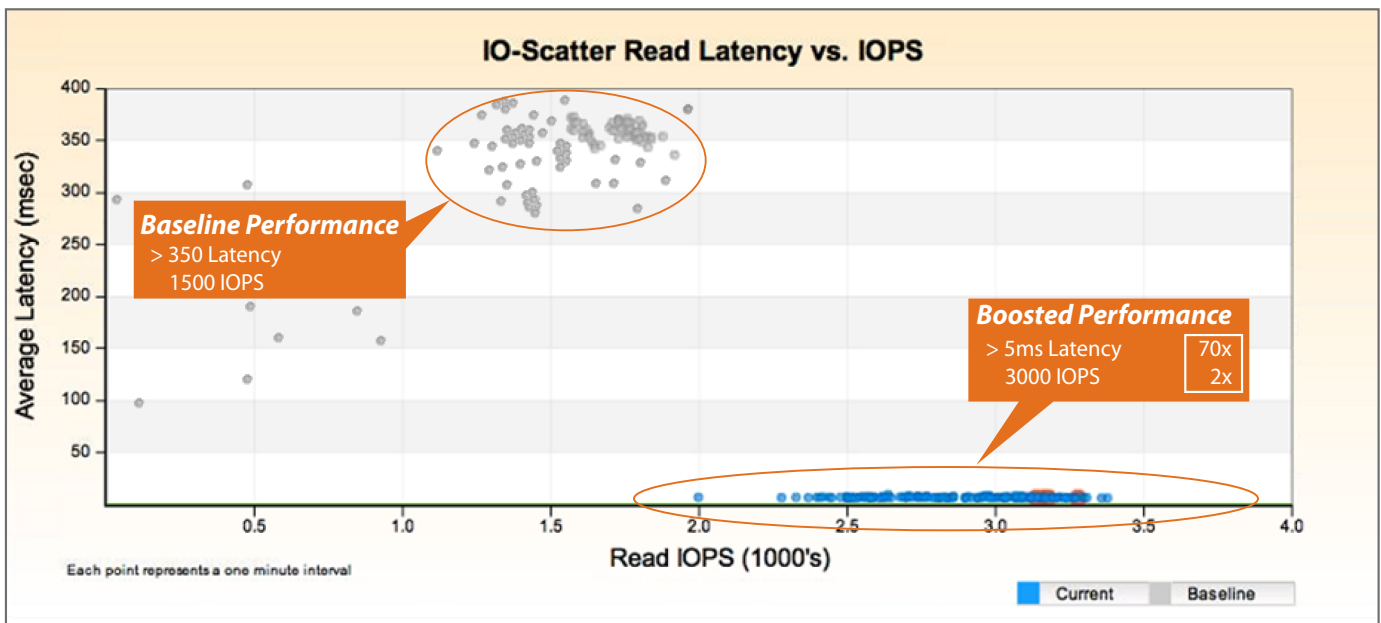
“By deploying the GridIron solution in our development environment, we were able to get Porsche-level performance from what was a Volkswagen-class system” said Shrikesh Karunakaran, Director of Data Warehouse at Shopzilla. “Plus, our users love it and want to extend to other apps as well.”

The GridIron TurboCharger boosts application performance up to 10 times by providing RAM-like access speeds to application data. The TurboCharger is a SAN-attached appliance deployed between the server and storage. It continuously records the data access behavior of applications using Bayesian net analytics and predictively caches the data that is critical to application performance. The I/O requests from applications are fulfilled from the TurboCharger’s fast RAM and flash caches thus boosting application performance.

Customer Business Impact

With the GridIron TurboCharger in place, the development environment at Shopzilla achieved multiple benefits:

- ▶ Significant cost savings from deferred investment in a higher performance development and test systems that matched the production systems. GridIron TurboCharger increased the performance of the existing system, eliminating the need for costly and disruptive upgrades.
- ▶ More efficient workflow and increased development team productivity. Test engineers no longer have to wait up to 20 minutes for test query results, so more frequent query optimization and analysis can take place.
- ▶ Greater competitive edge for Shopzilla as a leading online shopping service. Faster testing and analysis cycles in the development environment results in a more agile and responsive production environment to keep up with the ever changing flow of customer traffic.



Shopzilla Results Measurement—Before and After GridIron

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