

## “FlashDisk® OpenRAID Outperforms the Competition,” says Harte-Hanks



Ask Harte-Hanks what it is that drives its customer relationship management

(CRM) software business, and the answer will be data, data, and more data – about “50 terabytes and growing.” Exactly what this means to Harte-Hanks is the ability to collect data, store data, access data, present data, analyze data, and manipulate data.

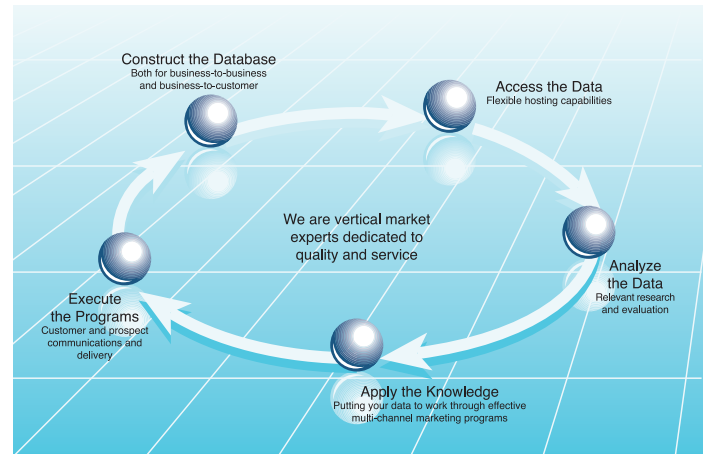
As a leading \$1-billion international company specializing in customer relationship management, Harte-Hanks claims, “No factor is more fundamental to effective Customer Relationship Management than the construction and management of your database. Your CRM succeeds or fails based on the quality, accessibility, and currency of your customer data.”

So how does a company that relies so heavily on the storage, access, and manipulation of data go about selecting a data storage system? Harte-Hanks has a dedicated staff within its Systems Engineering Division whose sole purpose is to continually test and evaluate new technologies and different vendors’ data storage systems. According to Scott Hopkins, vice president of IT Systems and Technology, “As a one-stop shop, we

are continually challenged with bringing the best technologies to our customers. Customers can come here and get everything they need to automate the marketing campaign management side of their business. They can get services from where we’ll actually do the analytics for them to where we’ll host the hardware and manage the database, and actually do the response management for them”.

### The Evaluation Process

One of the vendors that came under Harte-Hanks’ scrutiny was Winchester Systems, an enterprise storage solution provider in Burlington, Massachusetts. Using its own benchmark certification methodology, Harte-Hanks tested FlashDisk® RAID disk array against other manufacturers’ systems from EMC, Sun, IBM, Hitachi and Datacon over an 18-month evaluation period. The test took into consideration manageability, scalability, reliability, and overall performance. The three-phase certification process began with a low-level baseline to test stand-alone per-



### End-to-end customer relationship management solutions from Harte-Hanks

formance before adding applications that sit on top of the database. In the final phase, third-party applications were added. The performance of Winchester’s FlashDisk RAID was benchmarked at each stage against other disk subsystems. The test period also included using beta sites consisting of Harte-Hanks’ internal customers running on Oracle database applications.

At the end of this exhaustive testing period, Harte-Hanks chose Winchester Systems as its vendor of choice for primarily one reason: FlashDisk had nearly twice the price performance value of the competitors. Hopkins explained, “As with any IT organization, we are constrained financially, so we need to purchase wisely. Purchasing wisely means getting the best bang for your buck, the best performance you can

at the highest quality. Winchester Systems provides us with high performance, reliability, and an excellent price-performance solution." Based on its superior performance, FlashDisk was installed in what Harte-Hanks considers its two most critical areas: (1) the database build process, which is an extremely I/O intensive activity involving matching, cleansing, sorting, and rematching of data; and (2) customer database access.

## Benefits Realized

**Improved Performance and Cost Reduction.** As noted earlier, Harte-Hanks has seen an increase in performance using FlashDisk, as well as a reduction in cost compared with other vendors. Hopkins noted that in the past, the company used Sun's data storage, but after comparing the two, he concluded, "Winchester's storage system outperforms the Sun system significantly and is less expensive."

**Seamless Compatibility and Scalability.** FlashDisk RAID's unique open system makes it cross-platform compatible as well as scalable. According to Hopkins, "The beauty of FlashDisk is that it can go both ways. It can run on UNIX and on NT. This is important to us as we're 90% UNIX, but we also have customers that run on NT, so we

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Jim Neofotistos,  
Senior Systems Engineer  
for Oracle DBA, Harte-Hanks

want a system that can be moved easily from one platform to another." The open system architecture also allows users to unplug the connection from one platform and plug it into another, thereby making it easy to increase storage capacity.

### Easy Setup and Configuration.

Jim Neofotistos, a senior systems engineer for Oracle DBA, noted how easy the disks are to install and configure. According to Neofotistos, "The system can be installed in less than 2 1/2 hours and can be set up as a simple stand-alone without having to connect to a host. This means that once you connect to the host, you can configure whatever file systems you have to configure. And what's good about this is that you configure it in a simple way and maintain that standard configuration pretty easily." This is essential for Harte-Hanks because it moves storage quite frequently from box to box.

**Outstanding Service.** Winchester Systems' no-holds-barred service makes it a company that Hopkins

enjoys doing business with. Hopkins added, "Service includes having direct and immediate access to Winchester's engineers. Over the past two years, the relationship has grown to a point where we are willing to be a beta site for Winchester Systems' new products." For this reason, Hopkins emphasized that he looks forward to continuing this mutually beneficial relationship, especially as Harte-Hanks moves into the ASP (application service provider) arena.

## Meeting the Demands of the ASP Market

As Harte-Hanks ventures into the ASP business, FlashDisk is viewed as a key component in the company's ASP architecture for the data management piece – the building and refreshing of the databases. Hopkins emphasized that the data storage requirements for the ASP market are even more stringent than they are for the CRM market: "There are no down times in the ASP market. You have to be up 100% of the time, and you have to be available 100% of the time, or the ASP business fails." To this end, Harte-Hanks is confident that the company will meet its critical service agreements with the reliability of FlashDisk from Winchester Systems. ([www.hartehanks.com](http://www.hartehanks.com))

For more information on FlashDisk  
OpenRAID and  
Winchester Systems go to:

[www.winsys.com](http://www.winsys.com)

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