

## CASE STUDY

## The NBA's Detroit Pistons Transforms its Data Infrastructure with Infinidat's Industry-Leading Enterprise Storage Solution

The Detroit Pistons of the National Basketball Association (NBA) had a game plan to improve its data infrastructure in support of the team's front office, administrative and basketball operations at the Henry Ford Detroit Pistons Performance Center. It is a \$90 million state-of-the-art corporate headquarters and training center in the New Center area of Detroit. The opening of this 185,000 square-foot facility in the state of Michigan was a trendsetter in the NBA at the time it opened in 2019. It has emerged as a hub with evolving needs to handle steadily increasing data from new and expanding applications.

The Detroit Pistons is a trendsetter once again – this time transforming its data capabilities, workloads, and applications into a state-of-the-art, automated enterprise storage infrastructure. Key points of the forward-thinking IT leadership plan for the Pistons included: enterprise storage consolidation, dramatically reduced complexity of ongoing storage management, and a path for easy, cost-effective expansion of storage capacity. To execute this dynamic plan of action, the Pistons chose Infinidat as their #1 pick for enterprise storage.

The results that have been generated, such as significant cost savings and a whole new level of efficiency, come from a winning combination of ease of use, high performance, expandability, and green IT. Infinidat and their channel partner Mainline Information Systems worked together to deliver a powerful solution that modernized the Pistons' storage infrastructure and implemented a set-it-and-forget-it approach with autonomous automation. This defines a new IT standard for sports enterprises.

"We didn't just want an incremental improvement to our storage capabilities; we wanted a leap forward in how we approach storage, as part of our broader vision for simpler, faster, more cost-effective, more sustainable, more flexible technologies," said Paul Rapier, Vice President of Information Technology for the Detroit Pistons. "Infinidat's enterprise storage solution has proven to be a perfect fit for our data infrastructure. Infinidat's InfiniBox® platform for primary storage manages itself. We don't have to touch storage anymore. Meanwhile, the cost savings and time savings from our pivot to Infinidat keep rolling in. Going forward, we can spend more of our time on other projects."

### THE CHALLENGE: COMPLEXITY, HIGH COSTS, AND LIMITATIONS

Having too many storage arrays created complexity for the Pistons. The money, resources, and personnel required to manage multiple arrays from three different vendors led to inefficiencies, waste, and rising costs. It was also becoming increasingly difficult for the Pistons to expand storage capacity without adding to the complexity or high costs. The IT team was stuck in a bind.

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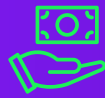


**Paul Rapier**  
Vice President of  
Information Technology,  
Detroit Pistons

# Solution Advantages for the Detroit Pistons



Storage management time is cut by 75%



Significant cost savings in CAPEX and OPEX



More than doubled efficiency and improved performance by 3X



Installation is 3x faster than the competition

“Our storage space was limited and as we explored solutions, we looked at additional space and the ease to grow as some of our biggest considerations in searching for and selecting a new storage solution,” said Rapier. “We wanted to migrate our data asset management system over to something that gives us more flexibility, provides easier upgrades, and has a longer lifespan. We needed a storage system that can grow with our asset management system.”

The team still needed high-performance enterprise storage for their workloads and applications in their massive ingests. At the same time, they needed expandability and a new level of ease of use. Simplifying the storage infrastructure had to be translated into a new form of business and technical value for the IT organization within the enterprise to advance. Just as important, they had to ensure cost controls to give them flexibility, yet within budget. Reducing the ongoing storage management burden became a high priority.

“Matching our storage capacity and capabilities with the evolving business requirements of the Detroit Pistons was a challenge that led us on a journey to discover an alternative system,” said Rapier. “Mainline Information Systems recommended Infinidat, so we looked very closely at the InfiniBox solution. We were amazed at the innovation of InfiniBox and how much it provides for primary storage in every way. We had to take a time-out and reassess our approach to storage.”

With this partner-led solution underscoring the strength of Infinidat’s relationship with the channel partner community, Infinidat knocked the outdated, traditional way of thinking about enterprise storage off the court. Working together, Infinidat and their collaborative partner Mainline saw a clear lane to drive innovation into this NBA team’s IT infrastructure.

## THE SOLUTION: TIP OFF FOR SUPERIOR ENTERPRISE STORAGE

The Detroit Pistons chose to install InfiniBox, an award-winning platform that provides 100% availability, high performance, ease of use, autonomous automation, flexible consumption models, and green IT advantages. The InfiniBox is also accompanied by Infinidat’s white glove service, which is the #1 service and support in the enterprise storage industry.

Installation of the InfiniBox in a single rack in their main data facility at the Pistons Performance Center was 3x faster than the implementation of the Pistons’ previous storage arrays by the traditional incumbent vendors. InfiniBox, which was installed in only a single day, went live on February 27, 2023.

The team was able to consolidate the applications and workloads from three different storage vendors onto their InfiniBox platform, which now provides the storage capacity, performance, and advanced capabilities for VMware environments, SQL environments, and various file applications and workloads, including data stores, video, and file archives. The new solution eliminated the complexity of having multiple storage boxes with different user interfaces and different operating systems, as well as multiple service plans.



“InfiniBox is easy to use, and we love how it’s easy to expand when we need more storage capacity,” Rapier said.

“Infinidat took a heavy weight off our shoulders for us in the tech department. We don’t have the performance issues looming over our head like we did with the previous storage system. Now, there are no issues doing the data ingest. As a senior IT leader, I sleep better at night, thanks to Infinidat.

### THE BENEFITS: MORE EFFICIENCY, FLEXIBILITY, AND COST SAVINGS

By moving to InfiniBox, the Detroit Pistons has cut ongoing storage management time by 75% – a stunning benefit that frees up resources for the enterprise. Infinidat enabled the Pistons to evolve their IT implementation into a state-of-the-art, automated storage infrastructure. An admin can run it, utilizing the simple-to-use tools, while the built-in autonomous automation does the heavy-lifting for the workloads and applications with machine learning-powered intelligence.

Economically, the Pistons has been able to save significantly on capital expenditure (CAPEX) and operational expenditures (OPEX). This also ties into the green IT advantages that include less energy usage, less cooling, less waste, less floorspace, fewer man-hours, and less to recycle. This greater efficiency translates into less carbon emissions, which is better for the environment. Infinidat’s E<sup>2</sup> value proposition – economics and environment – contributes mightily to the overall technical and business value that Infinidat delivers for its customers. As a result, the Detroit Pistons is able to get a faster return on investment (ROI) in enterprise storage.

This NBA team has a win-win scenario. With InfiniBox, they only have to pay for the storage capacity they use. There is no waste and no over-charges. Because Infinidat offers flexible consumption models, the Pistons has greater control of perfectly matching the capacity they need, when they need it, and they have gained 3X performance improvement with Infinidat’s InfiniBox. The team also eliminated the complexity of dealing with previous storage vendors’ switches inside of the configuration independent of regular storage area network (SAN) switches to go from host side to the storage.

Because of the autonomous automation, the team only needs to set it and then, essentially, they “forget it.” The set-it-and-forget-it approach, which distinguishes Infinidat’s solutions, provides an ideal mode of operation to improve efficiency, remove complex human intervention, and reduce IT costs. The Pistons’ VP of IT concluded, “We have a small team, so anything we can do to make the team run more efficiently is not only a priority but significantly advantageous as well. A set-it-and-forget-it approach is the way to go.”

### LOOKING AHEAD

The Detroit Pistons are confident in their ability to expand capacity on the InfiniBox platform, when it’s needed in the future, yet without compromising performance or availability – and without a hefty budget spend. They are sticking to their IT game plan, and with the cost savings and the ROI of InfiniBox, the team will be able to deploy extra resources to other areas of IT in a noble effort to do more with less.

**To learn more about how Infinidat can help your organization scale to win, visit [Infinidat.com](https://www.infinidat.com).**