

CUSTOMER PROFILE

# Qatar Islamic Bank



## EMC solutions help boost customer service levels

Established in 1982, Qatar Islamic Bank (QIB) is the leading Islamic Bank in Qatar, and the second largest Islamic bank in the world, with capital of QAR 2.1 billion (US \$575 million). QIB employs a staff of almost 800 professionals and serves its local and international customers through a network of 25 local branches. It offers a spectrum of financial services from deposit and term accounts to more sophisticated financial investment and treasury services.

The bank's global footprint is secured through a network of affiliates located in Beirut, Malaysia, and London. It also has established a solid reputation in Qatar's Financial Services Center. Short-term plans call for the establishment of affiliates in Paris and Turkey, and the development of additional local retail branches.

QIB's mission is for continued growth, and the bank is focused on developing a broader range of high-quality services and products to serve its many customers, while maximizing returns for shareholders and partners. It does this by constantly improving operational performance through the development of quality systems, the use of cutting-edge technologies, and the implementation of processes that offer even greater value to its customer base.

### Challenge

A large and complex storage infrastructure that required time-consuming maintenance and repairs

### Solution

EMC Symmetrix, EMC CLARiiON, EMC Celerra NS40G, EMC SRDF, EMC PowerPath, EMC NetWorker, EMC Disk Library 3D 3000, Scalar i500, and the EMC Ionix Suite

### Key benefits

- Faster batch backups from 1.5 hours to only 10 minutes
- A consolidated, standardized data solution that provides continuous data availability for increased performance
- Lower costs through reduced management and maintenance requirements
- Value-added services via EMC Global Services including: an EMC Strategic Account Manager, project management capabilities, data migration services, and secure remote support dial-home functionality for a seamless, integrated, and effective solution
- Redundancy and disaster recovery planning for exceptional data security
- Future-proof and scalable EMC Proven Solutions that provide a cost-effective approach for meeting growing data needs
- Dedicated EMC technical consultants who understand the business and help address its unique requirements

## Securing growth through a vision of data consolidation

QIB executives had long recognized that future growth could only be nurtured by continuously increasing the quality of customer service levels. In turn, that objective could only be achieved by harnessing the power of the bank's critical data resources. Its legacy IT and data storage infrastructure, holding over 10 terabytes of critical financial and customer service data, was composed of five different storage arrays provided by Sun Microsystems. Daily transaction batching, using legacy Hitachi storage and Symantec Backup solutions, took over one and a half hours. During backup routines, important data was not available to bank staff, which impacted customer service levels.

The number of data storage arrays also required high levels of ongoing maintenance and repairs—an expense that could be better spent fueling the company's growth. It was also recognized that the fragmented legacy infrastructure might be putting an unacceptable risk on the bank's current—and archived data—a risk that had to be minimized.

Recognizing the challenges of the future, plans were made to transition to a centralized IT and data storage solution designed to help better support the bank's future growth.

"We visualized a solution that was consolidated; that minimized risk to our data; that provided continuous and secure data availability; that offered high performance, accuracy, and reliability; that maximized the speed of data backups to deliver uninterrupted data availability; that offered data standardization; and that minimized maintenance requirements and their costs," says Hammad El Zamli, CIO.

Shortly thereafter, evaluations of vendors and their solutions began. Invitations were made to a number of IT and database solutions providers, including Sun, Hewlett-Packard, and EMC, to present their recommendations. After careful consideration, the competition was narrowed to the legacy solutions provider, Sun, and EMC.

“The bank had never used EMC prior to this, but we were familiar with the company’s capabilities,” says El Zamli. “Ultimately, we chose EMC for a few specific reasons: their people understood our business and applications, and they offered a future-proof solution that took into consideration the bank’s upcoming requirements and growth. Since its initial deployment two years ago, the EMC infrastructure has accommodated expansions and additions with minimal change and investment.”

**“What differentiates EMC from its competition is not only the company’s depth of technology offerings, but also the knowledge and ability of its people.”**

**Mr. Hammad El Zamli, CIO**

### **Staged data consolidation and migration for uninterrupted workflow**

Over the past two years, EMC has partnered with QIB to achieve a consolidated, high-speed, and integrated IT environment and database capability. EMC Global Services has supplied complete project management services, overseeing the development of a centralized data storage and backup solution for both a main data center site, as well as a new disaster recovery site. EMC also provided extensive hands-on, value-added services to support that solution, which included training administrators, premium 24x7 maintenance, and a resident engineer to help the QIB team adopt and effectively manage the new infrastructure.

One of the initial requirements of the solution was that day-to-day workflows would not be interrupted during the solution’s rollout. This was achieved through a staged implementation process. EMC technical consultants worked closely with QIB to migrate data and applications from the legacy Sun system to the new EMC solution on a staged basis, often throughout the night.

“The local EMC team was on standby, day and night, to implement staged rollouts as we were ready for them,” explains El Zamli. “We would telephone the EMC team on short notice and they were always there when we needed them. They would drop everything to ensure our satisfaction. While it was hard work for all of us, the new solution has significantly benefited the bank, as well as our customers.”

### **EMC consolidated solutions for speed and data reliability**

EMC expedited a fully integrated, consolidated solution that fully met QIB’s IT needs. The bank’s SAN requirements are now delivered through EMC Symmetrix® DMX-4 and EMC CLARiiON® system capabilities. NAS requirements are fulfilled with EMC Celerra® NS40G storage systems, providing advanced failover and fully automated storage tiering to meet the requirements of multi-protocol environments.

Critical financial, customer, and operating data is now available instantly to remote branch, administrative, and affiliate operations through VPN data access to the Symmetrix infrastructure. Lower-level and non-critical data is stored on cost-effective CLARiiON arrays.

Data replication is provided through EMC SRDF® synchronous and asynchronous capabilities and other technologies. I/O multipathing and load balancing is managed by EMC PowerPath®. Backup capabilities have been enhanced and accelerated through the use of an integrated EMC NetWorker® solution, and backup disk and tape libraries are expedited and managed by EMC Disk Library 3D 3000 and Scalar i500 respectively.

“The benefits of data consolidation and the EMC integrated solution have become instantly apparent,” says El Zamli. “Our daily transaction batching operation—about 100 gigabytes of data— takes only 10 minutes, where before it took over an hour and a half. This maximizes data availability, which enables us to serve our customers even better. Our new data center and DR capability ensures data



redundancy, minimizing risk to our valuable data resources, and due to consolidation, maintenance requirements and costs have been substantially reduced.”

Today QIB’s data is now standardized and is instantly available to a large number of applications. Approximately 11 terabytes of data is now stored on the EMC data storage infrastructure, but in the future QIB plans to roll out additional applications which will require even more storage capacity.

“We anticipate that our data storage requirements will soon grow to 25 terabytes,” says El Zamli. “With EMC’s scalable integrated configuration, we only have to bolt-on additional EMC storage devices to meet our needs. This means that the solution is also future-proof, and will help us to meet anticipated growth requirements, yielding even greater productivity and cost-effectiveness.”

### **EMC Global Services: adding value, efficiency, and performance**

In addition to being satisfied with EMC’s IT infrastructure capabilities, QIB also values the capabilities provided by EMC Global Services and its local people.

“What differentiates EMC from its competition is not only the company’s depth of technology offerings, but also the knowledge and ability of its people,” says El Zamli. “The local EMC technical consultants have always provided us with a great deal of time and knowledge. They understood how their IT recommendation could deliver results to help meet QIB’s needs. We were impressed by that knowledge and it was a definite consideration in our decision to contract them.”

As part of the EMC solution, a Strategic Accounts Manager (SAM) was assigned to the account to provide personalized support, including management of support issues or escalations. EMC residents have also been subcontracted to help manage the solution. Adding to the benefits, EMC also offered a contract that locked in the future cost of components.

“This contract provides us with transparency regarding future parts or additional hardware costs—information that assists us in budget planning,” explains El Zamli. “On the support side, the SAM fully understands our requirements, and with our two EMC residents to support us we are able to get the most from the solution’s considerable capabilities.”

EMC Secure Remote Support (ESRS) also offers 24x7 support via dial-home capabilities, which enable EMC staff to monitor EMC systems and proactively address issues before they become a problem.

“The results of this hands-on management capability have been remarkable,” says El Zamli. “Recently, through the dial-home feature, EMC was automatically notified of a potential problem before we knew about it. An EMC customer support engineer walked into our office holding a part in his hand to replace the faulty part before a system failure could occur. That level of personal dedication and initiative is difficult to find.”

### **An ongoing partnership**

Today, EMC works as a true strategic partner with Qatar Islamic Bank, demonstrating a dedication to service that reflects the bank’s mission.

“EMC provides such a broad range of products and solutions; we know that we can work with this single vendor for our present and future needs,” says El Zamli. “EMC competitors simply don’t have such deep capabilities. In addition, the local EMC staff has always gone above and beyond our expectations. They consistently get work done on time and within the agreed budget. They show a consistent passion and level of interest in what we are striving to achieve, and work with us to help achieve that vision. Their know-how and attention to detail has reinforced what I have always believed about businesses: ‘people really do make the difference’.”



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