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[LeftHand Launches a Cheap Storage Area Network for SMBs](#)

A SAN designed to run with the VMware servers

The small and medium business market for the computer industry is a very lucrative one, at least for the hardware manufacturing companies that managed to get their products at an affordable level. While the order of the day for most enterprises and big companies is composed of words and expressions like "hardware consolidation" and "virtualization", the smaller companies are left behind mainly because most of the hardware needed in such applications is quite costly. LeftHand Networks is trying to address these issues with its latest product, a shared storage appliance, which is designed to work with the next generation of VMware virtualization servers and which also comes with a low enough price tag to make it affordable for the small and medium business market. As the virtualization company announced the imminent release of another generation of products, the LeftHand Networks company announced the launch of the Virtual SAN Appliance for VMware ESX or VSA for short. The virtual storage area network appliance from LeftHand Networks is going to operate alongside virtual server applications, but it does not need the otherwise dedicated hardware layer. The main advantage of the VSA is that it can form clusters that act as a networked storage for several x86 compatible servers running an ESX virtualization system. The total storage area network that results from there can then be used by both virtual and non virtual applications, allowing users to enjoy the advantages of management platform like the VMware Infrastructure 3 which offers thin provisioning, snapshots and remote copy options as well as synchronous and asynchronous replication, automatic failover and failback. "We've been working with VMware quite closely about solving a problem they have," said Ben Bolles, LeftHand product manager who was cited by the news site [theregister](#). "Because of a shared storage requirement, VMware didn't see virtualization penetrating in markets that don't have it." Apart from the physical level of the storage system which is compatible with the iSCSI standard, the manufacturing company also offers a patented software platform named SAN/iQ, that runs inside a VMware virtual machine. SAN/iQ comes with a full range of features and capabilities and it is comparable with dedicated systems which are typically found around HP ProLiant DL320s and IBM x3650 servers.