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Using SANs And NAS

Help for Storage Administrators

Using

SANs
and NAS

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W. Curtis Preston
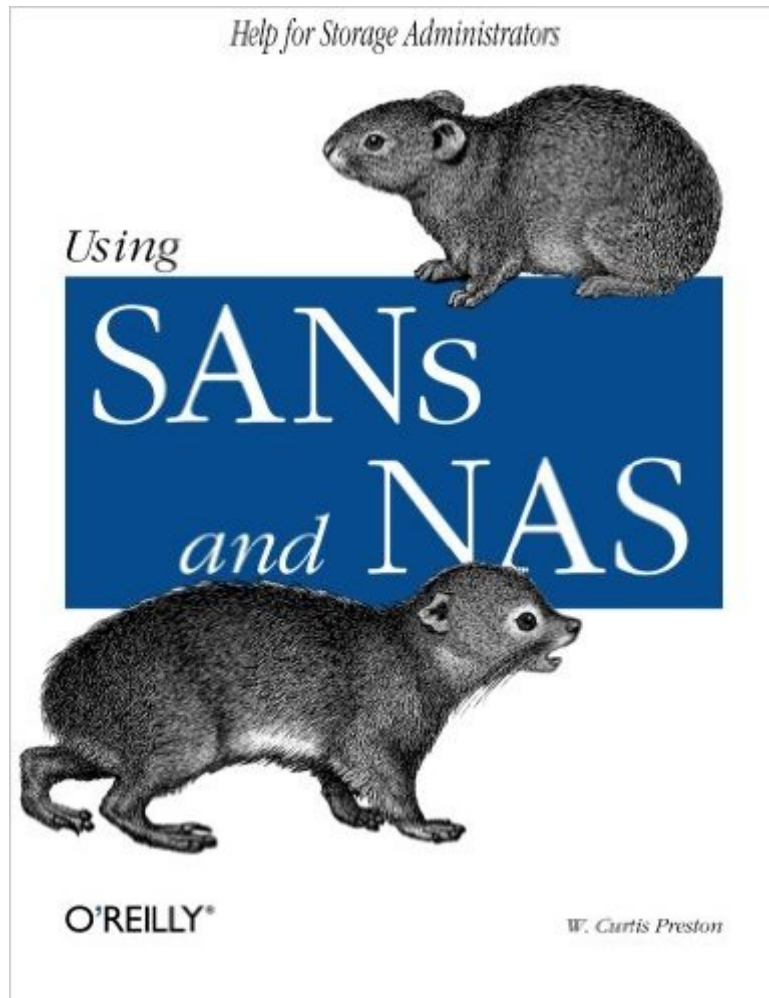
Synopsis

Data is the lifeblood of modern business, and modern data centers have extremely demanding requirements for size, speed, and reliability. Storage Area Networks (SANs) and Network Attached Storage (NAS) allow organizations to manage and back up huge file systems quickly, thereby keeping their lifeblood flowing. W. Curtis Preston's insightful book takes you through the ins and outs of building and managing large data centers using SANs and NAS.As a network administrator you're aware that multi-terabyte data stores are common and petabyte data stores are starting to appear. Given this much data, how do you ensure that it is available all the time, that access times and throughput are reasonable, and that the data can be backed up and restored in a timely manner? SANs and NAS provide solutions that help you work through these problems, with special attention to the difficulty of backing up huge data stores. This book explains the similarities and differences of SANs and NAS to help you determine which, or both, of these complementing technologies are appropriate for your network. Using SANs, for instance, is a way to share multiple devices (tape drives and disk drives) for storage, while NAS is a means for centrally storing files so they can be shared. Preston exams each technology with a vendor neutral approach, starting with the building blocks of a SAN and how they can be assembled for effective storage solutions. He covers day-to-day management and backup and recovery for both SANs and NAS in detail. Whether you're a seasoned storage administrator or a network administrator charged with taking on this role, you'll find all the information you need to make informed architecture and data management decisions. The book fans out to explore technologies such as RAID and other forms of monitoring that will help complement your data center. With an eye on the future, other technologies that might affect the architecture and management of the data center are explored. This is sure to be an essential volume in any network administrator's or storage administrator's library.

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Customer Reviews

While the publication date for this book is listed as 2009, I couldn't help but be severely disappointed in the age of the content of most of this book. The non-Unix Operating System examples are primarily Windows NT(!) and a few Windows 2000 references. Some of the explanations reached as far back as NT3.5.The book also primarily focuses on Fibre-Channel and Network Attached Storage as these were the only available option in its space in 2002. Time has moved on, of course, but for the 2009 update a mere addendum with a few pages of coverage for iSCSI was included.Note carefully the dates of the reviews praising this title. I'm sure it was in fact an excellent book in its day, but the 2009 publication date is more than a little deceptive.

If you are looking for an overview of SAN and NAS that is both technically informative and equitable, this is the book for you. I bought it to better understand NAS-SAN convergence trends and it was invaluable for that purpose.As with most O'Reilly books, it doesn't underestimate the reader, yet still manages to cover all the bases from basic to bread-and-butter, and beyond. The prose style is casual but very precise and always clear.I want to stress what an earlier reviewer pointed out: it is especially strong on real world backup and restore issues...which is MUCH more important and complex than is initially apparent.If you are tasked with building a real-world storage infrastructure: read this book first. BTW, because my local B&N was out-of-stock, I paid extra to have [.com] expedite this slim volume, (grumbling all the way), and ended up happy as a clam about it. Best IT book investment I ever made.

This book is really good at bringing together a lot of different details together having it make sense. It has been a couple of years since I worked on SANs and reading this book really refreshed the concepts for me. W. Curtis Preston's writing style is very easy to follow as he usually adds in insightful side items to break up the book a bit. I was expecting a very well written book as I also read his backup & recovery book which I really enjoyed too. I reccomend this book to anyone who is starting to investigate san or nas solutions or wants to get a good solid starting point with those technologies.

This volume is a bit outdated but it still serves as an excellent introduction to what is the Storage Area Network (SAN) and what is the Network Attached Storage (NAS). Expect this book to be no more than that introduction. If you wish to learn more or focus on the latest in these constantly evolving technologies then you will definitely need to look elsewhere.

If you are looking for a very concise examination of SAN and NAS technologies, this is the right book. While it is a fraction of the size of some other books on the topic, it is a to-the-point treatment of the major architectural components of each.There is a lot of foundation info that is somewhat assumed and reviewed briefly, but the killer chapters are on backup and restore methodologies around these technologies.This is not a disk array or fibre-channel switch product guide nor does it explain every last detail of SCSI commands. But if the need is to understand these technologies and their place in your infrastructure, this is a good work.Well worth the purchase price.

This book provides an excellent insight into the technologies utilized within the realm of the storage world. However, there are more than just a few technically incorrect facts concerning cousin technologies when they are brought up by the author in attempts to help explain a few topics. So, 3/5 stars for the errors, but the book is overall very informative and spot-on when it comes to the subject matter at hand.

This book focuses on general concept and structure. No vendor specified information is included. It is a good entry-level book. But serious SAN/NAS users will need more detailed information.

This is a good overal review of SAN/NAS for the administrator. It does not go into speific products so much and while it's very specific about technology it leave a lot open with respect to managing a SAN. For what it is it is excellent, but not quite what I was looking for.

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