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With ever growing volumes of data in typical organizations and increasing scrutiny around management and retention of that data, companies are beginning to seek more cost-effective ways to scale their storage environments. In particular, with email and file server growth, IT administrators are struggling with the challenges of providing high levels of service to users while staying within realistic IT budgets.

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Genetic Research Center Taps IBM for Supercomputer

March 25, 2004

By [Pedro Hernandez](#)

Ironically, figuring out the interactions of tiny genes requires massive processing power. So research centers are increasingly investing in off-the-shelf server hardware to create supercomputers capable of the compute-intensive work that these endeavors require.

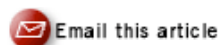
Fortunately, the [Center of Excellence in Bioinformatics](#), nestled at the University at Buffalo's campus will soon have over 1.32 TeraFlops at its disposal. The aim is harness that power and apply it to the genetic research that one day might lead to cures for the diseases that have been befuddling researchers, such as Alzheimer's, MS and AIDS.

To generate 1.32 TeraFlops, IBM is crafting for the university a supercomputer comprised of 266 Bladcenter HS20s powered by Red Hat Advance Server 2.1. Each two-way HS20 will be outfitted with Intel Xeons rated at 2.8 GHz and a full gigabyte of RAM.

For storage, seven xSeries 345 systems will connect to a mid-range FASTT700 Storage Server decked out with 5 Terabytes of capacity. If the specs look familiar, it is because the aforementioned systems are components in the firm's eServer Cluster 1350 line of pre-configured, Linux clusters.

The system replaces a cluster/storage setup from Dell and EMC. Dr. Jeffrey Skolnick, the Center's director, said in a release that "The switch to IBM technology will be more three times faster than our current cluster, shaving critical time off achieving tangible results in our research."

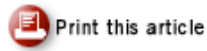
Hardware alone, however, won't fuel the discovery of protein data patterns and correlations, data necessary for combating illness and developing new drugs. To help speed those discoveries, IBM researchers will also be lending their talents, and their knowledge of algorithms to detect such patterns, to the cause while collaborating with the Center's scientists.



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