

# Data solutions leader accelerates expansion

*London-based data solutions company SoftIron has raised \$34 million in a Series B round led by its co-founder, Norman Fraser, with support from existing investors. The company creates task-specific appliances that optimise the performance of open-source software for hyper-scale and SMB data centers, addressing issues such as density, efficiency, capacity, speed and heat emission. The fresh funding will help SoftIron grow across North America, Europe, and the APAC region, with specific emphasis on its engineering team. The company also aims to expand its portfolio of data center appliances based on open-source software, as Jason Van der Schyff, COO at SoftIron, explains.*

SoftIron was founded in 2012 by a group of technologists including Phil Straw, Mark Chen and Norman Fraser, who set out to disrupt the storage sector and challenge legacy storage vendor solutions with their HyperDrive® software-defined storage portfolio, which was custom built to deliver optimal Ceph performance. In 2016 the company launched HyperDrive, and in March of this year, their HyperSwitch networking appliance made its debut.

Mr. Van der Schyff explains that their technology at the core revolves around helping data centers eliminate vendor lock in. “This is such a huge problem for virtually every industry because when

you are locked-in you can’t be nimble and react to the changing trends in the market without hugely disrupting your IT operation. It’s a real struggle that ultimately leads to inefficiency and waste in the IT operation. We believe that open source is inevitable because of these dynamics. We’ve abstracted away the complexities of these software platforms and in the end deliver powerful piece of hardware that performs like the highly-tuned machine that comes from task-specific design.”

In addition, SoftIron is focused on the need for opaque supply chains and eliminating hardware security risks. “The bedrock of data security is in

hardware “provenance”, yet we’ve all seen the headlines about the hacks that are a result of compromised hardware and software,” says Mr. Van der Schyff. “At SoftIron, we ensure that the appliance is true, that it is precisely as designed and specified, nothing more, nothing less. We verify that there are no additional or duplicitous components, nor any hidden code.”

He points out that as the global supply chain is so complex that it has massive security gaps, the threat is literally a national emergency. SoftIron’s solution to this is Secure Provenance, an appliance security guarantee; it is the only company in this space to offer this. “It’s safe to say that this aspect alone has brought us new customers from the likes of government departments, which we’re certainly looking to leverage moving forward,” says Mr. Van der Schyff.

In March 2020, the company secured a \$34-million-dollar round of Series B equity funding, bringing their funding total to \$41 million. “As you can guess, we’re rolling up our sleeves and getting ready to drive our vision around the globe with new sales, product marketing and engineering projects in the works,” Mr. Van der Schyff comments.



SoftIron

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