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Bonnier Corporation

Consumer Publishing Case Study

CUSTOMER QUOTE:

“It was a night and day difference. We put it to the test as soon as it was installed. We started editing for a TV show called Florida Travel Life. It was great in terms of getting the show done. At the time we had two and a half editors getting the show done. We easily saved 5 days of editorial because I was not scrambling around trying to make sure everything was on track. We increased our workflow productivity by at least 25% to 30%. It was tremendous. There were also little things like the ease of editing on a Fibre Channel shared system was eye-opening.”

ERIC LIVENGOOD

Director of Post Production

Bonnier Corp.

BACKGROUND

Bonnier Corporation is one of the largest consumer publishing groups in America, and with nearly 50 special-interest magazines and related multimedia projects and events, it is the leading media company serving passionate, highly engaged audiences. With over 1,000 employees and more than \$350 million in annual revenue, Bonnier Corp. ranks in the top 10 nationally among publishing companies. Bonnier Corp. is known throughout the industry for its quality writing, design, photography and editorial excellence. The company is also known for producing quality custom publications, television programs, websites, events and marketing programs. The focus of this Case Study is with the TV post production group in Winter Park, Florida. Key in the Bonnier corporate strategy is to increase the delivery of video content to support the continued growth of action oriented published material.

Eric Livengood, as Director of Post Production, has been challenged with management of IT infrastructure and architecture required to accommodate the significant growth in TV post production activity. Seeing growth in the number of TV shows, video clips, and other forms of multimedia produced increase at a 2-3X rate over the past 24 months, Livengood saw a clear need for data storage consolidation. Another growing need was shared access to storage, since the Winter Park post production team had recently expanded, adding three new editors and several free lancers, who were needed to take on the growing workload.

The previous storage approach was to use external FireWire® hard disk drive products and simply pass them around as needed to share content and common production elements. Where just a handful of projects are being worked this method was effective. However, with the



Bonnier Case Study

demand growth this process created a bottleneck and the need to develop shared storage solutions surfaced as critical to meeting schedules.

A sister division had encountered similar challenges and recommended that Bonnier look into deployment of a SAN storage solution from Dot Hill Systems as a way to improve productivity and consolidate storage.

Seeking expert systems, service, and solutions, Eric enlisted GW Hannaway & Associates to consult and supply the needed IT advancements. For over 30 years, GWH&A has been providing solutions for the imaging and multi-media marketplace. Whether it's creating professional imaging systems, custom integration, film and video services, or product development, GWH&A has consistently been at the forefront of emerging technologies.

Original Environment

All systems in the video post production department were Mac-based. Before Dot Hill, Bonnier was working with standalone systems. Firewire drives were being shared among different people. One system had a G Technology RAID that was SCSI connected for speed. The post production group would digitize a media to a FireWire drive and then start duplicating that media. When there was a single professional in the group this was not really a problem. As the content demand grew from one TV show to three TV shows, plus an amazing number of web videos, Bonnier brought in two more dedicated staff members to work on web content, as well as TV elements. Because of duplication and the stand-alone systems, the post production group housed over 50TB of storage on individual firewire drives (1TB and 500GB drives).

Eric summarized the environment, "We digitized it all, and started copying drives. It was always a pain trying to make sure everyone was on the same page with media, especially when there were common elements that needed to be added to every show such as lower thirds, show open bumpers, and things like that. Just the project management on top of that which was also horrendous. We had three different editors working on three different projects and all of that had to be condensed at the very end to one single system, having to relink media every single time. It was quite a chore."

Justifying the Change

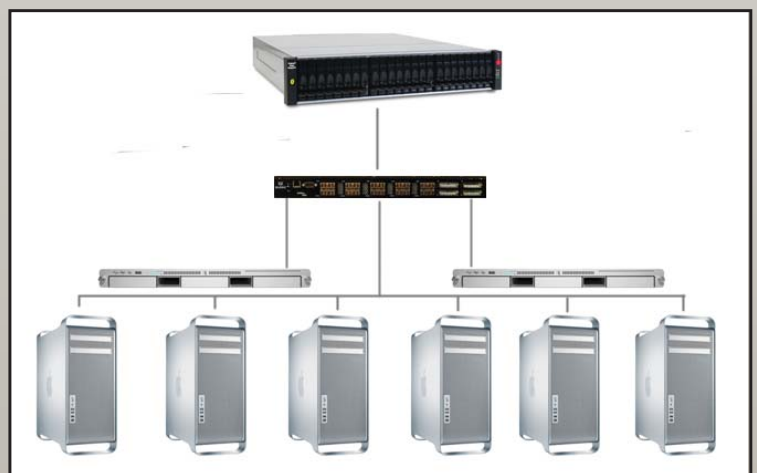
Shared storage did not exist within the Winter Park operations, so making this change required Livengood to justify the changes and investments required.

- Volume of work and efficiency of work. The volume of work quite literally exploded over the past 24 months. Increases in multimedia projects mandated a different approach to post production.
- The sales division of Bonnier decided that video was a huge asset to developing more revenue for the company.

"We got really busy really fast and we all knew we would have a problem working on independent systems, especially when we would have more than one person working on an individual show," said Eric Livengood.

New Environment

- All systems in the video post production remained Mac-based.
- On all of the video systems, Bonnier has two network feeds: the public network which is the corporate network and a private network which is the Dot Hill SAN network.
- The Post Production group has a six seat shared storage solution all running Final Cut Pro software suite. All users are sharing the Dot Hill SAN storage.
- There are two Xserve servers all running the Xsan file system over a 4Gb Fibre SAN.
- Now in place is a 24 TB system, formatted as one 16TB volume that is currently only half full.
- Bonnier Post Production group wanted a high bandwidth Fibre Channel SAN which could easily accommodate various forms of HD video.



Bonnier Case Study

Results

Bonnier was able to replace 50TB of external firewire HDD's with 24TB shared storage. Of this 24TB of storage 8TB was still available for new projects. This demonstrates the clear advantage in terms of storage efficiency when going to a shared SAN because common elements and sharing of digital content resulted in much more efficient use of storage capacity. In addition, the sharing of files has dramatically increased the number of projects that can be worked on simultaneously, resulting in more projects being completed on time. Bonnier Post-Production Group has also made a successful migration of all the necessary TV digital content to Dot Hill storage.

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CUSTOMER BENEFITS AND OUTCOMES

Consolidated 50TB down to 24TB of content, with 8TB still available for future products

Reduced project management needs

Improved productivity and ability to meet schedules

AssuredSAN™ 3000

The AssuredSAN arrays are equipped with 2.5-inch drives or 3.5-inch drives, supporting mixed drive configurations of SAS, SATA, and SSDs. AssuredSAN arrays also features a number of eco-friendly enhancements such as energy saving drive-spin-down and Dot Hill's patented EcoStor™ battery-free alternative for cache memory, which leverages a combination of super capacitors and flash memory that outlasts traditional batteries nearly fivefold.

Dot Hill's AssuredSAN 3000 Series arrays are easy to configure and manage via the RAIDar 2.0 intuitive web-based interface which provides storage setup and monitoring without the need for host-based software. AssuredSAN users gain configuration and installation efficiencies via wizards and schedulers for snapshots and replication.

Optional AssuredSnap™, AssuredCopy™, and AssuredRemote™ data protection software is available offering necessary protection for business-critical applications. AssuredSnap and AssuredCopy data protection software can be easily added at the point of sale or afterwards, through the Try & Buy menu in the management interface.

