



CASE STUDY

Leading Advertising and Creative Agency Streamlines and Secures Workflow With StorNext

With growing demand for digital media production outpacing its existing storage systems, TBWA Australia, a leading agency in Australia, needed a solution that could ensure data protection while saving staff time. The answer was Quantum's StorNext Pro Foundation—a collaboration storage solution that streamlines content sharing, keeps content protected and available, and reduces administrative overhead by hundreds of hours a year.



FEATURED PRODUCTS



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Jaymz Hingert
Regional IT Manager, TBWA Australia



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TBWA

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- StorNext® Pro Foundation
 - Xcellis™ Workflow Director with StorNext 5
 - QXS™-1200 RAID 6 storage (48TB)
 - StorNext AEL500 LTO archive
- Q-Cloud™ Archive

KEY BENEFITS

- Direct sharing of files over SAN speeds up editing tasks and allows editors to collaborate directly
- End-to-end fully automated workflow reduces overhead time for editors and the IT team by hundreds of hours each year
- Automatic backup of files on tape for both work-in-progress and finished content improves protection of assets
- Direct access to finished work makes it faster and easier for editors to incorporate existing material into new content
- Integrated Q-Cloud Archive automatically stores copies of all work to reduce overhead and provide scalable, indefinite DR protection

TBWA is one of the largest and most innovative advertising agencies on the planet with major offices in Paris, London, New York, and Los Angeles—and a client list that includes Apple, Nissan, and Adidas, among many other leading global brands. TBWA Australia, the Australian arm of the agency, shares the company’s reputation for a distinctive creative approach, disruptive brand strategies, and highly effective campaigns. But unlike its larger corporate offices, TBWA Australia didn’t share state-of-the-art workflow storage for its digital media editors.

GROWING DEMAND FOR MEDIA CONTENT OUTPACES AGING STORAGE SYSTEMS

Until recently, video editors in TBWA Australia’s offices were still working on servers with direct-attach disk storage. The solution worked in the agency’s early days, but it later became unable to keep up with the rapidly increasing workload.

One major set of challenges for the agency was protecting data and reusing existing content.

The teams worked on disks until they were full, and then stored them on-site with rarely enough time for a real backup—and moving data off-site for disaster recovery (DR) protection just wasn’t possible. “We never lost any data, I’m happy to say,” explains Jaymz Hingert, TBWA Australia’s regional IT manager, “but we had long delays in getting it back sometimes. Once, the editors had to stop working for a couple of days while we sent a RAID system out to get data recovered.”

Frequently, teams need to reuse existing assets to create new content. With the old system, editors had to find the disk, mount it, locate the right files, and then find enough space to restore them back onto the local disk where the new project was being built. “It was a system that worked when we were small, but we really had outgrown it,” explains Hingert. “Not only was it slow, but it put a huge burden on both the editors and the IT team. The editors had to manually manage the files and their location—the IT team had to keep bringing resources in,

managing the disk, and making sure that data was there. There was way too much time spent by everybody—hours of overhead every week.”

The system also made it difficult for editors to collaborate, even when they were in the same office. Teams shared files by moving RAID systems between servers or using flash drives. If an editor in Melbourne or Sydney needed to use content developed in the other office, the fastest way was to physically move the disk from place to place. This workflow caused delays and discouraged collaboration.

THE SEARCH FOR A BETTER WORKFLOW SOLUTION

When the amount of data approached 40TB, the workload increased—and higher-resolution formats meant bigger and bigger files. The IT team decided to look for a better workflow alternative. “We brought in an integrator with lots of media experience to help us, CompNow, and we talked to the IT teams in some of the company’s larger offices to see what they were doing,” recalls Hingert. “The recommendation of both groups was Quantum StorNext, but we weren’t sure if it would work for a smaller office, one with one to four editors—we thought of it as something designed for a larger operation.”

After reviewing other options, the decision was clear. “Our main problems were data protection, productivity, and reducing the huge overhead that the old system required,” says Hingert. “None of the other products we looked at could do all that—every one of them would have meant lots of manual intervention. And we discovered that StorNext Pro Foundation, which was designed for smaller offices, would fit our budget once we looked at all the capabilities it offered.”

STORNEXT PRO SOLUTION PROVIDES END-TO-END COLLABORATION

TBWA Australia’s new Quantum StorNext Pro Foundation system provides a dedicated SAN fabric, 48TB of high-performance disk, an Xcellis Workflow Director powered by StorNext 5 software to manage data across different tiers, a StorNext AEL500 LTO archive, and Q-Cloud

cloud storage. All the components are part of an integrated solution designed to provide a fully automated end-to-end workflow—including collaboration between editors, data protection, and direct access to archived data.

With the new system, files can be stored on a shared array in the StorNext system—making them immediately available to any of the editors. Collaboration is easy because editors can see and work on the same files at the same time. LAN connections even make it possible to transmit files between offices directly, so it’s faster and easier to share content across the region. “I think StorNext Pro has just about completely eliminated editors having to move data around manually,” says Hingert. “It’s a much better workflow, and it makes them much more efficient—they get more work done in less time, mostly because they just work on content instead of having to manage all the storage.”

FULLY AUTOMATED DATA PROTECTION AND ARCHIVE

The Quantum solution has transformed data protection and archiving. In the new system, as soon as a file is saved on disk, StorNext automatically creates a copy in the tape archive based on policies established by the IT team. While work is in progress, it serves as a backup copy. But when a project is complete, the disk is cleared and the copy on tape becomes an active archive—keeping work available while minimizing the need for active disk space.

“Having all the data backed up automatically is a great relief for us,” says Hingert. “There are times when we have assets on that system that represent hundreds of thousands of dollars for TBWA and our customers.” The StorNext active archive allows editors to reuse existing assets easily and quickly, reducing production time. “StorNext lets the editors see everything through the same file system—both material on disk and the content that’s in the archive,” explains Hingert. “So they can see old projects quickly and get to data immediately. It’s made a huge difference in productivity.”

“There were two huge advantages from StorNext. We all sleep much better knowing that all the data is safe both on tape and in the cloud. And we had an immense gain in productivity from the automation—all the steps we used to have to do manually are now taken care of automatically, saving us hundreds of hours a year in overhead.”

Jaymz Hingert,
Regional IT Manager,
TBWA Australia

ABOUT TBWA AUSTRALIA

TBWA Australia is the Australian and New Zealand office of TBWA Global, one of the largest advertising and creative agencies in the world, with over 12,000 employees in 200 offices and a client list that includes many major global brands, including Apple, Adidas, and Nissan. TBWA Australia is one of Australia’s leading creative agencies, exemplifying the philosophy of its parent company by providing innovative, disruptive branding strategies for its customers. AdNews gave TBWA Australia the magazine’s *Advertising Network of the Year Award* in both 2013 and 2015.



INTEGRATED, AUTOMATED DR PROTECTION

The new StorNext system provides long-term DR protection seamlessly integrated into the workflow through Quantum Q-Cloud as off-site archive. “Whenever we make a copy on tape, we also set a policy to have StorNext create a second copy in Q-Cloud,” explains Hingert. “We use the tape for normal recovery and archive access, but Q-Cloud provides indefinite, automated DR protection. If the building burns down tomorrow, we’ve got a copy of everything—current projects and old material—safely on Q-Cloud.

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have to do manually are now taken care of automatically, saving us hundreds of hours a year in overhead.”

Two StorNext systems are installed in the Sydney and Melbourne offices, and the IT team is considering adding another one to the Auckland office in the future. The London media production team plans to use the experience as a case study to help other TBWA offices.

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