NEXT Generation Films Eliminates $1 Million Risk for an Instant ROI

Datrium's Stability, RTO Keeps Fast-Moving Company on Schedule

NEXT GENERATION FILMS CASE STUDY

Manufacturing
www.nextgenfilms.com

Challenge

Latency and availability threatened on-time delivery and revenue..

Results

- Up to 15x faster ERP applications
- 95% less storage management
- 40x better RTO
- 99% RPO improvement
- Eliminated $1 million risk
- 75% less rack space required
- Power savings of 30%

"In the event of an ERP or WMS system loss, one million pounds or over $1 million worth of product would have to sit waiting for us to reprint labels. But because we can now recover in one minute to a point 10 minutes ago, that won't happen."

Jason Oblinger
Senior Systems Administrator

Company Challenge

Latency that Threatened On-Time Shipping

NEXT Generation Films, it's all about speed. As a major producer of food related plastics, the Ohio-based company aims to get products created and onto trucks as quickly as possible. Every day, they create nearly one million pounds of blown plastics film.

The company's growth, likewise, has maintained a similarly rapid pace. NEXT has opened a new plant on its 240-acre campus every year for the past five years. In the coming year, the company anticipates over 20 percent growth.

To deliver on its promises to customers, the IT team stays focused on system performance and stability, especially for its ERP system and Warehouse Management System.

"We're known for our customer service, for doing whatever it takes to satisfy the customer," explained Jason Oblinger, Senior Systems Administrator. "We rely on our systems to keep us on schedule and meeting customer expectations. If a system is failing, a product may not ship."

However, latency on the company's previous storage solutions, Dell EMC, threatened on-time delivery and demanded a significant number of man-hours managing storage.

Results

Up to 15x Faster Application Performance

Latency became such a challenge that the company was tempted to scrap the existing storage even before end of life, as well as forego the sizable investment in their Cisco UCS blade servers. They expected any storage or hyperconverged upgrade would be a significant investment.

In reality, Datrium's Automatrix platform, which converges primary storage, backup, DR, encryption, and mobility, offered a surprising business case: compatibility with any host and economics that eased the premature upgrade of their Dell EMC solution. To get more out of their existing infrastructure, they would have needed to add SSD storage anyway.

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"We upgraded sooner than planned, but the performance and capacity we got with Datrium far outweighed the cost," Oblinger said.

Next Generation Films ran a 30-day test with Datrium. In Insane Mode, the company saw the performance boost it had heard about from others. Reads and writes came in under one millisecond measured at the VM. "No matter what we threw at Datrium, it kept going," Oblinger said.

Now in its production environment, Datrium also delivered on its promise of low-latency performance across the company's virtual infrastructure. Where they saw spikes up over 100 millisecond latency during high loads previously, now they see less than one millisecond for the entire infrastructure. Compared to Dell EMC, applications on Datrium ran up to 15X faster.

The company also cut the rack space needed by 75 percent, and reduced power requirements by 30 percent.

95% Less Storage Management
The stretched IT team eliminated the many man hours of load rebalancing to keep performance as high as possible. In total, they cut at least 95 percent of the time they once spent on storage management.

Before, Oblinger would often monitor the system in the evenings from home in order to make sure the legacy array was still working. Not so anymore – with Datrium, NEXT can count on stability and autonomous data services.

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Oblinger also credits Datrium's support team for a timely response that keeps them up and running if there's ever an issue. "They responded in minutes to my last email," he said. "They are more of a partner than we've had with any other support team."

Eliminating the Risk of a 24-Hour RPO with 40x Better RTO
NEXT also began taking advantage of Datrium's built-in backup – a new addition to the company's DR strategy. With Datrium, recovery time objective (RTO) jumped from two hours to just one minute for a 40X improvement. Recovery point objectives (RPO) improved 99% from 24 hours to 10 minutes.

Those gains bolster the company's ability to stay on schedule. Previously, a 24-hour RPO had the potential to delay up to $1 million in shipments. Such an outage would demand about 240 man-hours to reprint shipping labels, plus the added cost of the truck drivers waiting for shipments to load.

"In the event of an ERP or WMS system loss, one million pounds and $1 million worth of product would have to sit waiting for us to reprint labels," Oblinger said. "Every single person would have to stop what they were doing and print labels for the last 24 hours. But because we can now recover in one minute to a point 10 minutes ago, that won't happen."

They are likewise more confident in completing backups midday now. With the previous solution and latency introduced by snapshots, that wasn't an option. The RPO and RTO improvements delivered by Datrium's autonomous data services eliminated the

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business risk to $1 million of revenue which enabled an instant ROI on the purchase price.

Saving 3 Years' Worth of Storage Budget
Overall stability boosted the confidence of the IT team that it can add workloads without stressing the system. And it has plenty of space to do so. With autonomous deduplication and compression, the company saw a 2-2.5X data reduction, saving about $40,000 a year.

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About NEXT Generation Films

Since 1994, NEXT has established itself as a leader in the custom flexible packaging market by investing in the most advanced, high-end technologies and continually expanding its manufacturing capabilities. Today, NEXT is America's largest custom blown film company, servicing and producing leading edge film structures that set new standards for quality across the country and around the world.

Learn more about Datrium at www.datrium.com.

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