

Graphic Business Solutions Speeds Up Customer-Facing Processes While Saving 1 FTE



GRAPHIC BUSINESS SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY



Graphic Design Services
gogbs.com

Challenge

Performance issues frequently stalled critical processes at Graphic Business Solutions (GBS) and demanded a disproportionate share of the small IT team's attention.

Results

- Improved performance without costly code updates
- 25% faster fulfillment process
- Savings of 1 FTE
- 5x reduction in capacity used

“I could not be more impressed with Datrium’s commitment to my company’s success. They sat beside us as a partner and worked as hard as we did to create something long-lasting. We now have a technology stack that will support our growth, and Datrium made it happen for us.”

Matthew Miller
Systems Engineer

Company Challenge

Performance Hang-Ups That Detract from Growth Initiatives

As the systems administrator for a small, rapidly growing promotional products business, Matthew Miller does a little bit of everything. Storage, however, is not something he wants to manage day in, day out. “I honestly don’t want to think about storage at all,” said Miller, Systems Administrator at Graphic Business Solutions.

When frequent storage demands began taking him away from growth-oriented objectives and consumed as much as 30% of help desk resources, Miller started to search for an alternative to the Dell MD3000. It held the company’s large store of legacy, static art, and growing data from automated print-to-web systems. At the time, the system supporting order fulfillment ran slowly, while other processes timed out. “We have an orchestration of jobs in succession – if one job gets held up, they all back up,” Miller said.

At the same time, the company had been looking at expanding its VMware infrastructure. With a fast-growing team of developers, the demand grew to provision new servers rapidly. Additionally, they worked on a single virtual host with a limited backup and recovery plan. As the team grew, it was apparent that a virtual infrastructure would become the core of the company’s computing network.

“My goal was to find a solution that would be affordable and also allow for rapid growth,” Miller said.

Results

Datrium DVX: Realizing Multiple Business Goals

While in the market for new storage, Miller attended an event hosted by Datrium. Soon after, he met with members of the Datrium team to learn more about the solution. “Datrium’s DVX was obviously the next iteration of technology,” Miller said. “The brains behind it were proven, and the architecture was impressive. With DVX, I liked that I could scale performance as my compute nodes increased, instead of the other way around.”

For comparison, GBS also evaluated solutions from Nimble, Reduxio, and Dell, but Datrium would go beyond solving just Miller’s storage needs. Compared to what GBS would pay for a storage solution from other vendors, the company could move to a purely virtualized server environment with DVX, which would simplify backup initiatives. Additionally, Datrium would support the development team with a robust compute design and the ability to deploy test environments rapidly.

It also helped that Datrium simplifies the business case for management. When Miller needs to add compute resources, he only has to pitch his boss on a server upgrade because storage scales with it – a much easier sell.

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25% Faster Fulfillment

With DVX, Miller immediately noticed an uptick in performance. While Miller had not initially planned on virtualizing his core SQL Server, the speed of DVX convinced him to make the move.

Gains were most noticeable on the company’s fulfillment process, in which orders from the website go through a series of steps on their way to printing. The move to DVX reduced errors and sped up that process by 25%, which at times means getting an order out the door the same day. The expedited process also helps GBS meet its internal fulfillment timelines more often. This boost happened despite running legacy code that would have required a hefty investment to update.

Gaining Back 1 FTE

Faster processing also took the burden off of Miller and the help desk by eliminating the errors associated with timeouts. In fact, the company’s three help desk staffers previously spent approximately 30% of their time troubleshooting timeouts. Now, errors dropped to zero. “Two weeks after we brought in Datrium, I got an email from programmers asking if something was wrong with our error alerts because we weren’t getting any,” Miller said. “In fact, there were no errors.”

Miller himself saved 15-30% of his week by eliminating storage headaches and reducing time on other tasks such as provisioning. In a “total shift of focus,” rather than troubleshooting, he now spins up growth-oriented systems – expediting time to market of new products, services and features.

“The ability to spend more time on revenue-generating initiatives helps us release new capabilities to customers sooner and achieve our goal of 20% year-over-year growth,” Miller says.

Lower TCO with Capacity and Manpower Efficiencies

While the price of DVX was comparable to other solutions, Datrium delivers a much lower total cost of ownership when GBS factors in the advantages with the solution:

- Workforce savings of approximately one FTE
- The ability to gain processing power by leveraging existing hosts and the Data Node instead of buying another storage box
- 1.5x reduction in capacity used
- Higher performance on legacy SQL code instead of having to invest heavily in development

A Partner Committed to GBS’ Success

From install to ongoing support, Miller has found Datrium is committed to GBS’ success. That was clear as soon as the installation team arrived. While GBS had not planned on reconfiguring its network, the Datrium team noticed an opportunity to optimize the infrastructure before installing DVX. “I appreciated the years of IT experience standing in my office,” Miller said. “They pointed out the opportunity to design our network for better performance, scalability, and security. I now had a brand-new environment, with a 10Gbps trunked network backbone, VLAN and subnet segregation, 20Gbps link aggregations (LAGs) between data and the VM network, and the most cutting-edge storage solution on the market.”

“I could not be more impressed with Datrium’s commitment to my company’s success,” Miller added. They sat beside us as a partner and worked as hard as we did to create something long-lasting. We now have a technology stack that will support our growth, and Datrium made it happen for us.”

About Graphic Business Solutions

For over 20 years, the Graphic Business Solutions family of brands has been committed to bringing value to products and value to people. We develop highly customized web-to-print solutions and produce business essentials to help our clients make a stellar first impression and grow their business. Our products include business cards, name badges, calendars, apparel, signage, greeting cards, wrapping paper, and more.

Learn more about Datrium at www.datrium.com.