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by **imation**

NEXSAN NST HYBRID STORAGE APPLIANCE PROVIDES LARGE UNIVERSITY WITH RELIABILE, EFFICIENT, SCALABLE STORAGE

Needing new storage that was highly reliable, available and able to support its users' cross-platform preferences, Drexel University sought out Imation's Nexsan NST Hybrid Storage Appliance and has since increased uptime and efficiency.

SUMMARY

Drexel University's Westphal College of Media Arts & Design needed a storage infrastructure that could run reliably, support its users' cross-platform preferences and more efficiently use existing capacity. Since the deployment of an Imation NST Hybrid Storage Appliance in early 2013, the College has eliminated the problems it had with legacy storage and realized value-adds it didn't initially expect. Recently, due to the seamless integration, improved uptime, and increased efficiency, the College purchased another NST5000 to further scale its IT infrastructure.

ABOUT DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Located in Philadelphia, Drexel University is a comprehensive global research university regularly ranked among the top 100 in the nation. With approximately 26,000 students, Drexel is one of America's 15-largest private universities. Drexel has built its global reputation on core achievements that include a history of academic technology firsts and recognition as a model of best practices in translational research. Drexel is one of Philadelphia's top 10 employers, and a major engine for economic development in the region. Drexel has committed to being the nation's most civically engaged university, with community partnerships integrated into every aspect of service and academics.

THE IT INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGE

The Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts & Design at Drexel University has about 2,200 unique users at any given time – 2,000 full-time students and about 200 faculty and staff across eight different campus buildings. They needed high availability storage to support collaboration of digital images, video, and animation. Their IT infrastructure had to support various platforms as 85% of the users are Mac with the remainder Windows based users.

The College's legacy storage systems were unreliable at best. They would drop or lose active directory support on a regular basis. Rebooting the system wouldn't always work, or it would cause other problems that needed to be fixed. Their legacy storage system was highly sensitive to data center temperature fluctuations and would consistently have hardware failures when the data center temperature reached 82 degrees Fahrenheit. In addition, anytime the data center temperature reached 82 degrees Fahrenheit, drives would blow on a consistent basis – and in the same position within the array. The college was needing additional storage capacity and their current system could not expand. Only thick provisioning was supported, so significant amounts of usable capacity weren't being fully leveraged.

After a while, the College decided it would source and purchase new storage. It required a solution that could:

- Run at superior levels of uptime
- Offer data efficiency technologies such as thin provisioning, so that storage volumes could take full advantage of the system's usable capacity and storage space wouldn't be wasted
- Provide full service for active directory systems and applications
- Operate seamlessly within the College's cross-platform environment, to ensure high availability collaboration for all users
- Deliver all of the above features and capabilities at a low total cost of ownership

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The support that Imation has provided has been really phenomenal. They helped us solve problems that have nothing to do with Nexsan; we didn't know where else to go, but their support team helped us anyway. It was really terrific."

JAY RAPPAPORT
DREXEL UNIVERSITY

PROBLEM

- Drexel University needed storage that could run at superior levels of uptime, offer thin provisioning, provide full service for active directory systems and applications, operate seamlessly within the College's cross-platform environment and deliver all of this at a minimal cost.

SOLUTION

- Nexsan NST5000
- 32TB storage capacity
- Quad core processor with 12GB of DRAM
- FASTier™ caching with 100GB SSD Dual controllers Turnkey deployment; went from delivery to in production in just 10 business days

RESULTS

- Zero active directory issues while the system has been in production. This has eliminated all related maintenance and recovery work that the College used to have to do – and even better, it has eliminated the worry that IT employees and end users had previously about the operation of their IT system
- Stable, uptime operations
- Thin provisioning has accommodated users better
- Imation support team has exceeded expectations
- Snapshot capabilities have recovered valuable user data

THE IMATION SOLUTION

The Westphal College, after a year-long process of research and testing with partner Cambridge Computing, selected and purchased a Nexsan NST5000 hybrid storage appliance from Imation. Specifically, the solution contains 32TB storage capacitywhich supports block-level NAS and file-level NAS workloads within one system per controller. FASTierTM caching increases performance by leveraging DRAM, SSD's, and intelligent caching algorithms to boost performance where you need it. Deployment was turnkey, and the system went from delivery to in production in just 10 business days (including an initial migration of 2TB of data).

RESULTS AND BENEFITS

The Nexsan NST Hybrid Storage Appliance system has been everything the College wanted and more since its deployment in February 2013.

- There have been zero active directory issues while the system has been in production. This has eliminated all related maintenance and recovery work that the College used to have to do – and even better, it has eliminated the worry that IT employees and end users had previously about the operation of their IT system.

- The system has been stable, and provided superior uptime.

- Thin provisioning has resulted in greater storage utilization and efficiency. It has also enabled the College to accommodate it's users better by adapting to their changing storage needs.

- By all accounts, the Imation support team has exceeded expectations, going above and beyond several times to solve issues and answer questions that it wasn't required to assist with.

- Additional system features have delivered value-adds not previously expected. For example, snapshot capabilities have been used to recover valuable user data on several occasions.

Recently, the College purchased another NST Hybrid Storage Appliance system to help it scale its infrastructure to accommodate more users. As the College's IT environment continues to grow, it fully intends to expand using Nexsan storage systems from Imation.

ABOUT **IMATION**

Imation is a global data storage and information security company. Imation's Nexsan portfolio features solid-state optimized unified hybrid storage systems, secure automated archive solutions and high-density enterprise storage arrays. Nexsan solutions deliver high performance for mission-critical IT applications such as virtualization, cloud, databases, and collaboration; and energy efficient, high-density storage for backup and archiving. For more information, visit www.imation.com/nexsan.