



CASE STUDY

Leading Australian Broadcaster Finds Xsan Replacement in StorNext

Leading Australian TV broadcaster Foxtel sought to upgrade its existing storage environment to keep up with its growing production demands. The answer was StorNext, Quantum's high-performance collaborative shared storage and data management platform. The transition to StorNext was smooth with no disruptions to the company's existing applications, and the workflow is now faster and more reliable.



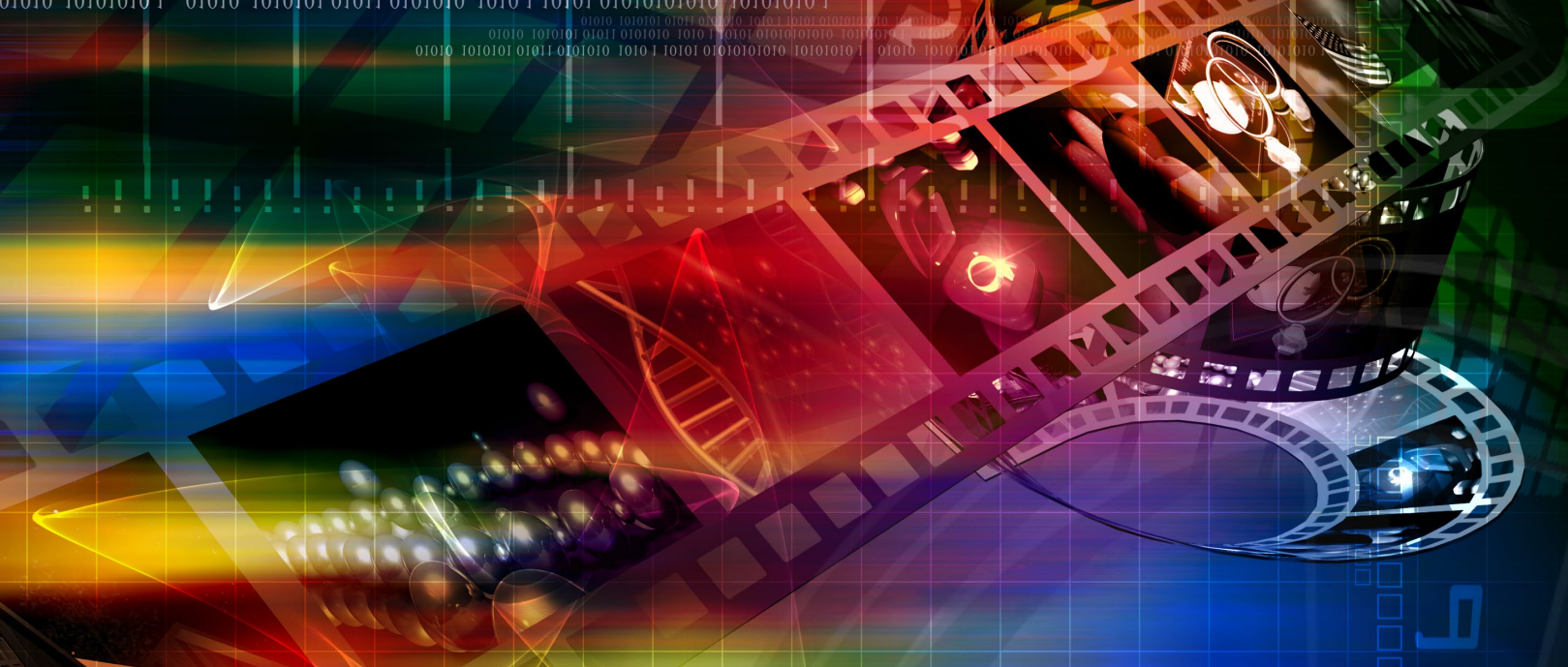
FEATURED PRODUCTS



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Paul de Heer

Contribution support manager, Foxtel



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Paul de Heer - Contribution support manager, Foxtel

to make a complete change, we put everything on the table,” says de Heer. “We spent a great deal of time doing research and talking to the team at our integrator, Digistor, for help in making the best choices for both technology and cost. Digistor has been critical to our program, and they know our needs and what is available in the industry incredibly well.”

NEEDS INCLUDE HIGH PERFORMANCE, CONTINUITY, AND LOW COST

The Foxtel team had several critical priorities for the new system. It would need to support all of its current tools and processes to preserve the company’s investment. It needed to have high enough performance to future proof that investment, while keeping costs under control by limiting the number of Fibre Channel-enabled workstations required. The team also wanted a single system from one vendor with a firm, long-term commitment to supporting the media and entertainment market. And it wanted to preserve its options for leveraging multiple storage tiers—including object storage and the cloud—in the future.

STORNEXT MEETS ALL REQUIREMENTS

“We looked at all the commercial offerings and ultimately decided that the best choice for us was installing a new StorNext environment,” explains de Heer. Quantum’s StorNext shared storage and data management solutions provide

a complete workflow environment designed for high-performance, collaborative applications. The more de Heer and his team looked, the more it became obvious that StorNext was the right solution. “Its base technology is compatible with our legacy system Xsan—which we hoped would mean an easy transition—and its use is incredibly widespread in the media and entertainment market, so we know there is a long-term commitment. We also talked to a large number of people who had successfully made the transition to StorNext.” StorNext also provides automated support for managing data across multiple storage tiers—including the cloud, object storage and tape—to preserve future options for Foxtel.

The new solution is an end-to-end Quantum environment, including a controller running StorNext software, QXS RAID arrays with 320 TB of usable capacity, Scalar i500 LTO tape library, a Brocade 8-Gb Fibre Channel fabric, and gateways to provide Ethernet access. “One of the nice advances that the new StorNext system provided was the ability to provide very high-performance access for some of the workstations, while letting others that need less bandwidth access content over lower-cost Ethernet.” Today, Foxtel uses a Quantum LTO tape library to back up the data, but it can also serve as an active archive in the future.

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SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- StorNext® collaborative storage solution on an M440 controller
- QXSTM RAID arrays, 320 TB of usable capacity
- StorNext G300 Gateway appliance for fast Ethernet connectivity
- Scalar® i500 LTO tape library

KEY BENEFITS

- High-performance Fibre Channel connectivity provides high-bandwidth sharing for files needing maximum bandwidth.
- Content is shared between editors over both Fibre Channel and Ethernet connectivity for the best combination of speed and value.
- StorNext provides a complete solution—shared workflow, data management, controller, storage and connectivity—with a single point of support to keep system reliability high and administrative overhead low.
- Compatibility with the company’s existing Xsan environment ensures continuity across existing production and media asset management tools, keeping productivity high and ensuring a smooth transition.
- Support for multiple storage tiers—including the cloud, object storage, and tape—preserves flexibility for future growth.

Foxtel is the leading pay TV provider in Australia. The company operates in three primary broadcast centers to provide local and international news, entertainment, sports, children’s programming and documentaries. A major task for the company is aggregating content from its international providers, localizing it, formatting for different platforms, including video-on-demand and mobile applications, and producing its own promotional material and ad content.

“Over the last few years, the amount of material that we need to deal with has grown substantially as we have increased offerings and platforms,” explains Paul de Heer, Foxtel contribution support manager, “but the actual amount of data that we have to handle has increased even more since we are now doing more and more content in different formats, including SD and HD.”

HIGH-PERFORMANCE COLLABORATION IS CRITICAL

Each of Foxtel’s genre groupings—movies, sports, lifestyle, documentaries, and so on—has its own production team, which is responsible for creating the promotional material and localization for its content. “We have multiple non-linear editing suites and separate media asset management for each of the teams,” says de Heer, “and it is critical that they are able to access the content that comes from our suppliers, share it among themselves, and work collaboratively to produce high-quality promotional material on aggressive production schedules.”

KEEPING UP WITH FOXTEL’S GROWING NEEDS

To meet the needs for its increased offerings, platforms and delivery formats, Foxtel needed a solution that provides high-performance data sharing.

The team looked at a variety of options to upgrade its workflow, but ultimately decided that the best route was to start over from scratch with an entirely new system. “Once we decided





CAREFUL PLANNING MAKES TRANSITION SMOOTH

Foxtel moved carefully and deliberately in making the transition. “We have eight separate production groups involved, each with somewhere between five and 15 people, and wanted to make sure that we could make the changeover without slowing down work,” recalls de Heer. The company’s technical team put the new system in place, let it run in parallel with the old Xsan system, and then transitioned each of the production groups over to it one at a time. The new system lets the team use all of its existing production and media management tools, and preserves the collaborative workflow that Xsan provided. But now the performance is faster for critical workstations, and the overall system is much more robust and reliable.

“In the end, it took almost a year, from opening the search to having everything moved over for all of our groups,” recalls de Heer. “A major part of its success was due to the careful planning that the Digistor and Quantum teams helped us put in place. The only issues that we saw involved making sure that security and access were correctly aligned across the different work groups, and those were resolved quickly.

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ABOUT QUANTUM

Quantum is a leading expert in scale-out tiered storage, archive and data protection. The company’s StorNext® platform powers modern high-performance workflows, enabling seamless, real-time collaboration and keeping content readily accessible for future use and re-monetization. More than 100,000 customers have trusted Quantum to address their most demanding content workflow needs, including top studios, major broadcasters and cutting-edge content creators. With Quantum, customers have the end-to-end storage platform they need to manage assets from ingest through finishing and into delivery and long-term preservation. See how at www.quantum.com/customerstories.

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