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Success Story

CLEVELAND INDIANS

Major League Baseball Team Keeps an Eye on the Ball with Disk and Tape Solutions from Overland Storage

Challenges

- Exponential data growth caused by in-house video system deployment.
- Outgrew limited backup and recovery foundation.
- Administrative team became overburdened trouble shooting the problem-prone process.

The Solution

REO™ 9000, NEO™ 4000

Benefits

- Highly scalable data protection quickly accommodates unpredictable storage surges.
- Now can backup twice as much data in half the time; restore times have been slashed from 75 to 5 minutes.
- Administrative overhead substantially lowered.

The Cleveland Indians are a Major League Baseball team with a rich history of accomplishments, both on and off the field. In addition to winning six American League Central Division championships, five American League crowns and two World Series titles, the team has earned a reputation as one of the top five most technically advanced major league clubs.

In 2004, the Indians became one of the first teams to deploy a state-of-the-art video system to capture every at-bat at home games. All images then are cataloged in a data asset management system for advanced scouting and training purposes. Thanks to a top-notch, in-house development team, they also produce a wide variety of custom reports to assist in viewing and analyzing vital video data.

“Overland’s REO and NEO enable us to back up two-thirds more data in half the time, while reducing our daily administrative overhead from 45 minutes to nearly nothing.”

Whitney Kuszmaul
Network Manager, Cleveland Indians

According to Whitney Kuszmaul, network manager for the Cleveland Indians, the video system caused an immediate, exponential jump in storage requirements. "Once we began storing video and image stills online, capacity needs surged by more than a terabyte a year," he explains. "Since each video clip can be upwards of 10 MBs, it's easy to see how data storage quickly grew to nearly 9 TBs.

The Challenge

Faced with ever-increasing technology requirements, the IT team added more file servers and a Fibre Channel storage area network (SAN) to hold up to three years of video online while supporting custom and off-the-shelf financial, retail and back-office applications. Still, performing nightly differentials and weekly full backups became a daunting task, especially when it became apparent the team had outgrown its existing data protection foundation.

"Timing was always an issue as our backup software didn't handle Microsoft Exchange that well and backups over the network were extremely slow," recalls Kuszmaul. "Backups became 'hit or miss,' while taking up to 45 minutes of hand-holding each day." Keeping pace with escalating storage surges was another growing concern. "We needed a much more reliable, expandable backup and recovery platform that could scale to meet both our existing and future requirements," Kuszmaul adds.

To ensure greater availability of ever-increasing data storage, the IT team decided to replace a 20-tape Dell library with complementary disk- and tape-based backup and recovery solutions. "We felt a complete disk-to-disk-to-tape (D2D2T) approach would solve our existing problems while providing the most expandability to grow with us," says Kuszmaul.

The Solution

In upgrading its backup and recovery capabilities, the Indians embarked on an evaluation of leading software as well as best-of-class disk- and tape-based data protection solutions. After examining different software alternatives, the team

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Success Story



selected CommVault's Galaxy before researching a flexible, scalable D2D2T solution.

Since selecting one vendor for both disk and tape backup was preferred, the IT squad reviewed leading D2D2T products from ADIC, Quantum, Spectra Logic and Overland Storage. They also looked at tape libraries from Qualstar as well as disk offerings from EMC and Nexsan Technologies.

In assessing tape libraries, the Cleveland Indians wanted a highly expandable platform that could support at least two drives as well as more than 30 LTO-3 tapes. In reviewing disk-based appliances, they wanted a flexible, easy-to-use solution. Cost was a major consideration for both categories along with native Fibre Channel support, dependability and vendor reputation.

Chi Corp., a Cleveland-based specialist in storage networking solutions, was enlisted for insight and installation support. During the review process, Chi Corp. loaned the Cleveland Indians an Overland REO 9000 disk-based virtual tape library (VTL) backup appliance for interim storage of its mounting video data backups. "Within 10 minutes, the REO was up and running," says Kuszmaul. "Operation was a cakewalk. We quickly realized the product was a great fit while beating EMC and Nexsan on price."

With Overland's REO now a permanent fixture, the focus turned to tape libraries. ADIC, Quantum and Spectra Logic all had been eliminated, leaving Overland and Qualstar as finalists. Overland's NEO 4000 tape library was selected over Qualstar's competing product because it supported LTO-3 technology, was more attractively priced, offered greater expansion capabilities and integrated seamlessly with REO for optimal D2D2T data protection. "We also were impressed by Overland's responsive tech support as well as the company's product

roadmap and overall corporate direction," adds Kuszmaul.

The Benefits

In late 2005, the Cleveland Indians implemented its NEO 4000 tape library alongside the REO disk appliance for greatly improved data protection. "With REO, disk-based backup is a no-brainer," says Kuszmaul. "REO and NEO scalability is another big plus, especially in dealing with unpredictable storage growth." Initially populated with 3 TBs, the REO is being expanded to 9 TBs with room to grow to 44 TBs of raw capacity.

The team has created two LUNs on the REO for multiple streaming of utility server data as well as critical operational information. This data, which is kept on the REO for 21 days, also is archived on the NEO along with monthly full and weekly incremental video backups. The team retains data on the NEO for up to 60 days before offloading it to tape for long-term safekeeping.

With its REO/NEO combination, the Cleveland Indians have reduced its overall backup window by more than 50 percent, from nine to four hours. "We now backup two-thirds more data in half the time while our daily administrative overhead went from 45 minutes to nearly nothing," explains Kuszmaul. File recovery is equally fast; less than five minutes to restore a video clip that once took up to 75 minutes to locate and retrieve. Having the REO also eliminates inventorying tapes, another well-received time savings.

An overarching benefit is "future proof" data protection, as the Cleveland Indians have ample room to expand both REO and NEO platforms. To that end, the team is considering two additional NEO drives or possibly another chassis to keep video online for every game from all 32 major

league teams, which would total 2,600 games. They also are considering using the REO as a VTL to support a planned remote disaster recovery application.

The Indians also are testing Overland's new high-capacity, cost-effective ARCvault 48 tape library for storing video at a state-of-the-art spring training facility currently under construction in Arizona. Additionally, the team is considering Overland's ULTAMUS RAID storage array for holding up to five years of online video for expedited access. Plans also are underway to increase the team's SAN storage to accommodate up to 21 TBs through the 2008 baseball season.

"With Overland's highly flexible and scalable REO and NEO D2D2T solutions, we can continue to embrace the latest video and other technologies without worrying about protecting massive amounts of storage," concludes Kuszmaul. "Our next data protection purchase will be an Overland product. In terms of lowering administrative overhead while increasing our confidence in the integrity of our data, Overland's REO and NEO paid for themselves right out of the box."

About Overland Storage

Now in its 26th year, Overland Storage is a market leader and innovative provider of simply protected storage solutions – smart data protection appliances and software modules designed to work together, affordably, to ensure that information is automatically safe, readily available and always there. Overland's award-winning data protection solutions include the ULTAMUS SERIES™ of protected primary storage appliances; the REO SERIES™ of disk-based backup and recovery appliances; and the NEO SERIES® of tape libraries. For more information, visit Overland's web site at www.overlandstorage.com.



Simply Protected

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