



LFH

Challenge:

- Storage and Data Protection for a newly acquired remote office with a pure Apple MAC environment.
- Central Administration from a single location

Solution:

- Two Overland Snap Server 520 NAS devices with BakBone NetVault: Backup integrated for disk-to-disk-to-tape backup
- Snap Enterprise Data Replicator (Snap EDR) to maintain current copies of data at both sites.

Results:

- A full solution beyond simple RAID Storage that fits within the budget with "Enterprise-class" features.
- Quicker file retrievals when required for either company site.
- Ability to recover files from one site for the other in case of accidental deletion.
- Room for affordable growth as capacity needs expand.
- All easily administered.

LFH "snaps" into action with dual site backup from Overland

Introduction

LFH is an independently owned international branding and design group. Established in 1993, it combines original brand thinking with practical implementation to create and build commercially successful brands. The agency works for international companies including Unilever, William Grants, Coca Cola and Carlsberg across various European markets as well as local brands in their own countries – such as Nora smoothies in Norway, Ulenos Beer in Lithuania, Jacky Plus yoghurts in Finland and Nevskoe Beer in Russia.

As a design group, LFH often has large amounts of data sitting idle for long periods of time. However, standard archiving is not an option as the company's designers frequently need access to old files without prior warning.

Expansion conundrum

With the acquisition of a second office in Brussels and a pre-existing need for more storage in London, it was clear that LFH needed to invest in more disk space. The company also wanted a system that would offer the flexibility of managing data created and stored at both sites.

Darren Batchelor, IT manager at LFH, sets the scene: "I found myself in a situation where I was suddenly being asked to back up two systems, one of which is 200 miles from where I'm based. The old storage system needed to be re-assessed in order for me to effectively take on the added responsibility.

"We have five designers in Brussels who need access to centrally held data and it was important to take the stress of managing IT away from them and deal with it in one place. I wanted to get the designers there on the same system as the London office so the data across the two sites could be synchronised to maximise the efforts of both teams."

The search for the one

The company looked at three very different storage solutions before finding its perfect match.

"We began by looking at a traditional disk storage solution with RAID," explains Batchelor, "but we didn't see any additional benefits that would make the investment really worthwhile. So, we looked at an enterprise level solution which would offer us a lot more. We found that this was squarely aimed at more corporate businesses though and, to be honest, cost more than our budget would allow."

Batchelor decided to talk to data systems integrator NexStor about other options. The team at NexStor suggested he take a look at Snap Server NAS devices which would allow LFH to do more than just increase its storage space.

Testing, testing, 1, 2, 3

Snap Servers are designed for any business that needs high performance, cost effective storage that scales easily as needs change. However, LFH was initially wary of trying something new.

"As we work in a Mac environment, Snap Servers were something that we were a bit unsure of," comments Batchelor. "We knew that we wanted to look further than Apple to make certain we found the absolute best solution for the company so NexStor suggested we trial a Snap Server prior to purchasing one, to ensure that it would integrate smoothly with our environment.

"As they say, the proof's in the pudding and the trial proved that NexStor's suggestion wasn't too good to be true. It was a good way of looking at something new that we would have perhaps disregarded had we not been able to try it out on site."

Batchelor was also impressed with NexStor's service throughout the trial period. There was a small bug which meant the system didn't work with a particular version of Guardian OS but the team was able to write a patch in just three days and turn things around.

"The Snap Server 520 has given us byte level replication at an affordable cost which is exactly what we needed."

Darren Batchelor, IT manager at LFH



Snap's the solution

As a result of the successful trial, LFH decided to invest in two Overland Snap Server 520s with Snap Enterprise Data Replicator (Snap EDR). This system would allow Batchelor to see data at both the London and the Brussels sites and control backups at both locations from London.

The company now backs up both sites daily onto disk and tape using BakBone NetVault: Backup which comes as part of the Snap software suite, weekly on to tape and archives for added security. "It's made my life much easier," remarks Batchelor. "I can retrieve files for the designers more quickly than before; even if they are deleted from one site we can deliver them from the other.

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Future gazing

As the agency continues its international growth, LFH might look to increase its disk storage capacity in 2009 and Batchelor has confidence in the scalability of the device so he can grow the array without the hassle of re-building it.

"Other Apple Mac users should definitely consider a solution like this one as they are so often overlooked automatically. This was the best solution for our particular requirements and its proving to be very stable."

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Darren Batchelor, IT manager at LFH

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Overland's award-winning products include NEO SERIES® and ARCvault™ tape libraries, REO SERIES® disk-based appliances with Virtual Tape Library (VTL) capabilities, ULTAMUS® RAID SAN-based appliances and Snap Server® NAS-based appliances. www.overlandstorage.com

