



Success Story

CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA DANSE (CND)

The French national dance centre chooses Overland's D2D2T to support growing needs in data backup

Challenges:

- Cumbersome, inaccurate backups limited ability to protect vital data
- Exponential storage growth made existing backup systems irrelevant
- Faulty backups created management headaches and strained production

Solution:

1 x Overland Storage REO 4000
1 x Overland Storage NEO 8000

Benefits:

- Backup windows reduced from 24 hours to less than four, with near-instantaneous restores of critical data
- Integrated D2D2T solution for the price of competing tape alone libraries
- Easy set up and operation
- Flexible, scalable system can handle expected rapid storage growth
- Compatible with very small staff resources

Reseller:

HiStor, a Paris-based Overland value-added reseller of data storage solutions

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In 2004 the Centre national de la danse (CND) opened to the public its exciting new facilities in Pantin, just North-East of Paris — 11 dance studios, classrooms, multimedia library, offices, conference rooms and cafeterias. This was the culmination of a huge prize-winning renovation project carried out by the French State over four years: the transformation of a 1960s six-storey public administration building into a 9,000 square metre space to house a contemporary institute dedicated to the art of professional dancing and choreographic work.

From the Centre's inception IT use had grown rapidly, and with it, inevitably, the resulting stored data. The creation of new departments, particularly those involved in multimedia activities such as film and picture archiving, training and editing, led to data being generated in amounts that were increasing exponentially. By 2003 the single 1.5 TB capacity 15-tape library could no longer support all the data. "That year, when we increased the number of servers from three to fifteen, we knew that the question of backup and recovery had become a question of urgency. We needed twenty-four hours to backup six servers and could only keep the last backup on the library," recalls Laurent Dassier, IT manager of the CND.

In January 2004 Dassier listed the CND's needs for backup facilities as a preliminary to procuring a new 'best-of-breed' solution comparable with all the other fine new facilities being developed. He wanted the new system to be ready to go into production starting September 2004. He proposed that the existing tape library could usefully be transferred to the CND's small secondary site in Lyon in due course. As part of his case he pointed out that much of the data increase was resulting from the activities of new staff recruits. Today, some 150 people work for the CND, 100 of them full time.

The Challenge

Nightly backups had become a real problem for employees who could not start

work in the morning because the servers were still backing up. The backups were also very often faulty.

Laurent Dassier is solely responsible for managing the information systems and network at the CND. Given that IT human resources are not planned to grow much, it was essential that the new backup and recovery solution should need as little human intervention as possible.

The new solution also had to be very flexible. Data volumes would increase inevitably as a result of centralizing all activities in the same building. But as Dassier explains, it was very difficult to predict accurately the rate of growth. Therefore, "We wanted a very cost-effective flexible solution such that, whenever we would need more backup space, it would only take adding a few more slots or more appliances or more drives".

Finally, whatever the solution, Dassier required the CND's Unix/Apple information system environment to be taken into account.

In his search for a new tape library system, he discovered a much more powerful, flexible and cost-effective configuration: a disk-to-disk-to-tape (D2D2T) solution.

The Solution

After comparing three separate detailed proposals, the CND chose the solution put forward by HiStor, an Overland value-added reseller. "HiStor was the only integrator among those we consulted with to present us with a mixed solution combining a tape library with a disk-based system" says Dassier. Moreover, "Overland's NEO and REO products surpassed all others in terms of performance and price. With the NEO and REO, we can afford all of the benefits of a D2D2T solution for less than the price charged by other integrators for tape libraries alone!"

The CND's new backup and recovery system consists of a REO 4000 disk-based backup and recovery appliance and a NEO 8000 library system, both Overland Storage products.



The configuration is managed by Netvault, Bakbone's backup management software.

"And Overland's products integrate well with our new MAC OSX and Unix environment," says Dassier. Last but not least, the REO 4000 was extremely easy to configure and install.

The Benefits

Slashed backup and recovery times, flexibility, autonomy and cost effectiveness were the main benefits the CND sought in September 2004. Concerning costs, "No question about it, Overland's solution was a lot cheaper," says Dassier. "Furthermore, its scalability makes it very cost effective". As for reducing backup time, "the REO 4000 system alone has dramatically accelerated the entire backup operation up to four times faster than before. Incremental backups take 10 minutes and full backups 2 hours, as compared to 24 hours before we had the REO 4000 and when we had fewer servers and less data to manage!"

The integrated REO/NEO solution has also brought flexibility to the CND. Firstly, the REO 4000 disk technology has helped deal with the short-term needs to continue running many small backups. Dassier explains: "With the REO 4000 in place, we can backup several servers simultaneously, backup plenty of small files at slow speed down to 5 MB per second while increasing the number of simultaneous backups. This way, we can multiply the backups to reach a total capacity of 60 MB per second. Besides, the job done by the REO helps release the pressure that would otherwise be put on the NEO 8000 drives, since the REO 4000 only sends big files to the NEO using high and constant speeds." (25 MB per second per drive.)

The flexibility of the REO/NEO solution to manage volumes on-the-fly will also enable the CND to deal with expected rapid volume storage growth in years to come. "The NEO 8000 with its 20 TB of native capacity – 40 TB if compressed – offers enormous capacity potential allowing the CND to store backups up to five weeks. In time, if necessary, we will increase the number of drives, add more slots and even make two tape libraries out of one". He is also open to the idea of adding more REO 4000 appliances in the future.

The REO/NEO solution is compatible with having only one person as far as system management issues are concerned. Human intervention is no longer necessary for emptying the tapes, and there is no need to start a full consolidated backup operation when removing them.

As it stands today, the REO/NEO solution is configured for backing up some 15 servers and 10 main user workstations. Very shortly, says Dassier, it will backup the 100 workstations connected to the LAN. "And it will continue to serve our backup needs accordingly, as the CND's activities expand, providing all of us with a very flexible and scalable storage foundation."

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About Overland Storage

Now in its 25th 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 ULTIMUS SERIES™ of protected primary storage appliances; the REO SERIES™ of disk-based backup and recovery appliances; and the NEO SERIES® of tape libraries. Overland sells its products through leading OEMs, commercial distributors, storage integrators and value-added resellers. For more information, visit Overland's web site at www.overlandstorage.com.

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