Overland STORAGE®
ALWAYS THERE.

PECHANGA

California's Largest Casino Protects Vital Databases and Supports Dynamic Growth While Achieving Six-Month ROI on Tape Library Solution

CHALLENGES

▶ *50 percent data growth in two years overtaxed existing tape libraries*

▶ *Backup window grew enormously as backups expanded from 200-500 GB daily to more than 2 TB of storage*

▶ *Older AIT tape technology didn't have sufficient capacity, which required the team to swap out tapes frequently*

▶ *Slow throughput on backup operation made process time consuming and cumbersome, which impacted application performance*

THE SOLUTION

NEO 8000

BENEFITS

▶ *Simple installation and set-up enabled team to deploy system and perform full backup on the same day*

▶ *Increased throughput speeds enabled Pechanga to go from backing up 300-400 Mbps to 1.6-1.7 Gbps*

▶ *Seamless compatibility with Veritas Backup Exec requiring no software upgrades*

▶ *Backup window improved by 200 percent*

▶ *Achieved ROI in six months*

RESELLER

*Technology Integration Group
www.tig.com*

Pechanga Resort & Casino, located in the heart of Southern California's Temecula Valley, is the golden state's largest and first AAA Four Diamond-rated resort and casino. In the past few years, the bustling operation has nearly doubled in size while substantially increasing its services and amenities. Today, Pechanga supports nearly 200,000 square feet of casino space with 2,000 state-of-the-art slot machines, 154 table games and 54 poker tables. In addition, the resort encompasses a full-service, 522-room hotel with 40,000 square feet of meeting and convention space; a 1,200-seat performance theater; as well as eight restaurants and an expansive food court.

According to Rod Luck, director of information technology for Pechanga, zero downtime is a business imperative. "Pechanga never closes so we must guarantee 100 percent uptime for all hotel and casino systems," explains Luck. "Since it's very costly to have any system go down, we deploy full redundancy across all technology platforms. We also perform regular backups of mission-critical databases to protect vital information."

In safeguarding Pechanga's data, the IT team also relies on leading-edge technology for ensuring the highest levels of security. "We embrace new and innovative ways to boost security, efficiency and reliability," says Luck. "In building a compelling business case for technology upgrades or replacements, we look at how better to support our rapidly expanding business." To that end, dynamic growth drove Pechanga's technology team to evaluate the effectiveness of its backup operations.
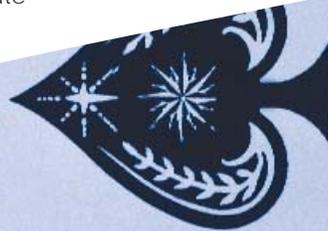
THE CHALLENGE

During the evaluation, it became apparent that a surge in data growth had overtaxed the existing tape libraries. Over a two-year period, Pechanga experienced more than 50 percent data growth, expanding its number of enterprise servers from 15 to more than 100. "Our backup window grew enormously as we went from backing up anywhere from 200 to 500 gigabytes daily to backing up nearly two terabytes in storage each day," recalls Richard Dominguez, applications system manager for Pechanga. "We'd start a backup in the early evening and it still would be running the next morning. "

At the time, Pechanga was using older AIT 30 tape drive technology. With backups encroaching into production time and affecting application performance, the team began to consider higher-speed alternatives to supporting vital Microsoft SQL databases that fueled the casino operation. Pechanga also needed to ensure the integrity of its data in order to comply with annual audits conducted by the Pechanga Internal Audit department as well as adhere to standards set forth by the National Indian Gaming Association. These Minimum Internal Control (MIC) standards examine how data is created, maintained and backed up. "Complying with two sets of audits reinforces the need for a bulletproof storage foundation and

❝ **We accelerated our SQL database backup by at least 60% while increasing the rate of overall throughput by four times** ❞

Richard Dominguez
Applications Systems Manager, Pechanga

comprehensive data protection," notes Luck. To achieve the highest integrity, Pechanga took snapshots of critical data on an hourly basis and then conducted back-ups from the snapshot. While this process avoided using production data for backups, which eliminated the strain on network performance, it didn't solve the constrained capacity and other problems involving the slower, smaller AIT libraries.

THE SOLUTION

In exploring alternatives, Pechanga sought the expertise of Technology Integration Group (TIG), a San Diego-based information technology consultancy. During the fourth quarter of 2004, TIG recommended a competitively-priced, high-capacity Overland NEO Series™ 8000 tape library as a best-of-class solution with a solid upgrade path.

"We really liked the expandability of the NEO 8000 library," says Dominguez. "We could start out with two tape drives to meet our immediate demands, and add up to 10 more drives as growth dictated." The team was also impressed with the rate of throughput demonstrated by Overland. "The library was fast, gave us the scalability we required and was backed by a company with a strong storage reputation, an impressive history and industry track record," comments Luck.

Installation and initial set-up were straight-forward and trouble-free. No upgrades were needed to Pechanga's Veritas Backup Exec software since the new system found all the existing drivers right away. "We installed the system, ran a test backup and then a complete backup of SQL database files all on the same day," says Dominguez. "Immediately,

we experienced significant improvements over our previous backup operations.

THE BENEFITS

During the NEO 8000's first day of operation, the Pechanga team was impressed with increased throughput speed. "Previously, we could backup 300-to-400 Mbps and now we can burst up to 1.6-to-1.7 Gbps with the NEO," says Dominguez. "We accelerated our SQL database backup by at least 60 percent while increasing the rate of overall throughput by four times when compared to our previous libraries."

"We reduced our backup window by 200 percent with the Overland NEO library," adds Luck. "By shrinking our backup window substantially, we are much better positioned to keep up with rapid growth without compromising the validity of any critical information, which is a huge benefit in the long run." Restores are also impressively fast. To date, the team has restored in minutes user email boxes that were inadvertently deleted.

Overland's NEO also receives high marks for reliability and efficiency, with flawless performance since deployment in late 2004. Moreover, much less time now is required to oversee the company's backup operations. "We went from a half-day of watching the backups and waiting for them to complete successfully to two hours of intermittent management of the NEO library," says Luck. "By freeing valuable time that was wasted previously on babysitting backups, we now can add hours to focusing on more strategic technology priorities."

Overland's non-stop operation provides Pechanga's IT team with an extra measure

of data protection. Redundant robotics, drives, controller cards and interfaces reinforce system availability while aligning well with Pechanga's overall philosophy of boosting system resiliency. In the event that a NEO drive needs to be swapped out, the team can take advantage of Overland's LiveSwap™ technology, which lets a service technician to remove and replace tape drives without interrupting operations. "Overland's non-stop operation complements our evolving disaster recovery strategies," notes Luck. "With this system in place, everyone is a lot more confident in the way our core data is backed up."

Finally, the extended capacity on the LT0-2 tapes allows the team to keep tapes on-hand longer, decreasing media costs and management time. Pechanga is still exploring ways to fine-tune its overall backup and recovery strategies, including adding a disk-to-disk capability for even faster restores. Still, the team is completely satisfied with its NEO 8000 tape library. In fact, the team calculated that the NEO 8000 produced a return on investment in six months or less, based on measuring cost savings in both manpower and media, efficiency gains across the board as well as the ability to ensure data integrity. "As a progressive organization, Pechanga will continue to grow and diversify," concludes Luck. "Thanks to the NEO library, we are much better prepared to support the company's growing business while protecting our critical data-faster, more reliably and with greater levels of efficiency than ever before."

About Overland Storage

For almost 25 years, Overland Storage has delivered world-class data protection solutions designed to ensure business continuity. Focused on backup and recovery, Overland's data protection solutions include the REO™ family of disk-based backup and recovery appliances and the award-winning NEO SERIES® of tape libraries. Overland sells its products worldwide through leading OEMs, commercial distributors, storage integrators and value-added resellers. For more information, visit Overland's Web site at www.overlandstorage.com.