

Save

Success Story

SEIZ PRINTING

Family Print Business Ensures Superior Customer Service with Disk- and Tape-Based Backup, Recovery and Archive

Challenges

- Finding backup files amid a growing stack of tapes required hours, if not days.
- Backup, recovery and archival solution needed to be easy to maintain and manage.
- With data storage steadily growing in double digits every year, additional primary storage was needed.

The Solution

REO 9000 and PowerLoader

Benefits

- Easy set-up meant the REO was up and running in just two hours.
- Versatile REO could be used for backup and recovery as well as primary storage.
- Ease of use enables non-technical staff to perform restores in minutes.
- Daily incremental backups on the REO 9000 are completed in less than one hour.

Reseller

Chi Corporation
www.chicorporation.com

Seiz Printing Inc., a family-owned business founded in 1972, offers a range of lithographic services, including offset and letterpress printing, computerized typesetting along with die cutting, embossing and a full-service bindery. Based in Acworth, Ga., the 100-person company relies on responsive customer service to remain competitive in the hotly contested printing arena while producing unique, top-quality marketing collateral, annual reports, books and product catalogs.

"The REO has become an 'invisible' device that blends into our environment and lets us grow our business without adding more resources. Not only can we do more with less, the productivity savings are priceless."

Mary Blankenship
Network Administrator, Seiz Printing

According to Mary Blankenship, network administrator, Seiz deploys the latest technology to improve productivity and efficiency throughout its operations. "Our mission is to stay at the upper end of technology," she explains. "To be at the forefront in our business, we have embraced the highest standards in digital technology." In late 2004, Seiz honed its "high-tech, low-stress" approach even further by redesigning its workspace with a reconfigured floor plan; upgrading its technology infrastructure with increased networking, computing and scanning capabilities as well as creating improved production workflow systems.

The pinnacle of proof for the company's continuing adoption of state-of-the-art technologies and business best practices is double-digit data growth annually for the past five years. As file sizes grew along with ever-increasing dependence on data-intensive digital photography and imaging, the task of safeguarding six terabytes of business-critical data became cumbersome and time consuming. The company's determination to keep all digital files for five years—an example of its above-and-beyond dedication to customer service—further burdened the process.

The Challenge

For nearly a decade, Seiz relied on two Overland tape libraries to hold daily incremental, weekly full and long-term archived data. Over time, the company amassed an enormous tape collection and sifting through the "wall of 300 tapes" to locate archived data was slow and arduous. "While we had a decent hierarchy for finding the needed data, it took a long time and required two people—one to find the tape, another to load it," says Blankenship. "Also, it could take up to two hours to load the backup software and locate the files. During the second or third shifts of our 24-hour operation, the delay was intolerable since it meant waiting until the next morning when an IT resource could search the archives."

As an IT veteran, Blankenship knew upgrading to disk-based backup and recovery would provide improvements in speed, reliability and file access. She also was aware that the emergence of SATA- and iSCSI-based storage technology brought down costs considerably.

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"Hard-drive technology continued to decrease dramatically while the costs of tapes rose steadily," she recalls. "As a result, we were predisposed to incorporating some type of disk-based solution into our backup and recovery strategy."

The Solution

In seeking newer, disk-based solutions to augment the company's tape-based platforms, Seiz evaluated Storage Area Networks (SANs) from HP and EMC while briefly considering a Network Attached Storage (NAS) filer from Network Appliance. After consulting with Brian Kennedy, a technology specialist at reseller Chi Corporation, Blankenship decided to assess Overland's REO 9000 disk-based backup and recovery appliance. "As an Overland customer for about 10 years, Seiz was well acquainted with the quality and dependability of their products," she says. "The REO delivered the capacity and functionality we wanted at a competitive price."

Before making a final decision, however, Blankenship performed a cost-per-terabyte analysis between the REO and the SAN products. Usability was another major selection criterion. "When our two-person IT department was cut in half, it became even more critical to pick a product that was ultra user friendly," she explains. In the long run, Overland's REO won in terms of cost and usability. Both the EMC and HP SANs were priced at least a third more and provided additional functionality that wasn't needed. "Overland's REO gave us the most straightforward, cost-effective way to store a lot of data for backup, recovery and archives," notes Blankenship. So in June 2005, Seiz purchased a REO 9000 with 9.6 TB of raw storage.

The Benefits

Upon getting the device up and running in just two hours, Seiz began reaping numerous benefits. Full backups now are completed in only nine hours with incremental backups taking less than an hour. For easy access, Seiz also maintains two years of data on the REO. Older project files, which generate fewer requests, are backed up using disk-to-disk-to-tape (D2D2T) with tapes kept on- and off-site.

Yet where the REO shines brightest is restoring files in a matter of minutes. Using a simple Microsoft Windows search mechanism, non-technical staff can perform near-instantaneous restores. "This is a huge advantage for Seiz since we sometimes get six to eight such requests a day," explains Blankenship. "The speed and ease with which we can respond around-the-clock has had a major impact on our customer service."

The REO also earns praise for its versatility. In September, Blankenship conducted an experiment to determine whether the REO could handle large point-to-point file transfers and discovered no discernible performance difference between the REO and server-based storage. In fact, transferring a 500 MB file from a Mac workstation to the REO took only seven minutes, whereas the same process on one of the company's legacy DEC servers could take four times longer.

As a result, Seiz converted the REO from secondary to primary storage, substantially lowering storage management burdens. "REO lets us create as large a storage area as possible while reducing the continual IT challenge of freeing storage space on the servers," adds Blankenship. "Our users don't care where their data resides. They just want to get to

it quickly—with REO's substantial capacity, we're assured they can." Since there's no end to the company's expanding data storage, Blankenship isn't hesitant about someday adding a second REO 9000 to keep pace with double-digit growth.

"The REO has become an 'invisible' device that blends into our environment and lets us grow our business without adding more resources," she concludes. "It's amazing that one device takes care of all the company's backup, recovery and archival needs while also operating as just another drive on our server. Not only can we do more with less, the productivity savings are priceless."

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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WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS

4820 Overland Avenue
San Diego, CA 92123 USA
TEL 1-800-729-8725
1-858-571-5555
FAX 1-858-571-3664

GERMANY OFFICE

Humboldtstr. 12
85609 Dornach Germany
TEL +49-89-94490-214
FAX +49-89-94490-414

UNITED KINGDOM (EMEA OFFICE)

Overland House, Ashville Way
Wokingham, Berkshire
RG41 2PL England
TEL +44 (0) 118-9898000
FAX +44 (0) 118-9891897

FRANCE OFFICE

126 Rue Gallieni
92643 Boulogne Cedex France
TEL +33 (0) 1 55 19 23 93
FAX +33 (0) 1 55 19 25 02

ASIA PACIFIC OFFICE

Level 44, Suntec Tower Three
8 Temasek Boulevard
Singapore 038988
TEL +65 6866 3848
FAX +65 6866 3838

www.overlandstorage.com