

Case Study

IMG Achieves Major Gains in Global Data Management with Worldwide Deployment of CommVault's Singular Simpana® Software Platform

QUICK FACTS

Industry/Solution:

- Diversified Sports, Entertainment and Media Company

Platform/File System:

- Microsoft Windows 2003 and 2008, UNIX

Applications:

- Microsoft Exchange, Active Directory, SharePoint and SQL Server
- VMware vSphere
- CRM and other business-specific applications

Partner Hardware:

- Compellent SANs
- Nexsan SATABeast

Challenges:

- Annual storage growth of 25 percent strained ability to meet burgeoning data management demands.
- Need for centralized management and reporting worldwide driven by variety of disparate backup solutions globally.
- Unreliable data recovery with Exchange backups running constantly.
- Inability to delegate data restores created risk and overburdened administration.
- Increasing annual storage costs associated with outsourced EMEA solution restricted data retention.

Solution:

- CommVault Simpana software Backup & Recovery, Deduplication, Replication and Archive modules.

Customer Profile

IMG is the world's premier and most diversified sports, entertainment and media company with a long list of partners, including many of the most famous brands, media outlets, sports governing bodies, national and local governments, athletes, entertainers, models and fashion designers. Founded in 1960 with a handshake between Mark McCormack and golf legend Arnold Palmer, IMG has grown into a global conglomerate managing world-class athletes, popular celebrities and major brand-building businesses.

Operating in 30 countries, IMG sports and entertainment businesses span product and brand licensing, consulting services, event ownership and management, collegiate marketing, media and licensing, fashion events, model representation and golf course design. The organization also represents clients in golf, tennis, broadcasting, European football, rugby, cricket, motorsports, coaching, the Olympics and action sports. IMG Academies are the world's largest, multi-sport training and educational facilities, assisting more than 12,000 junior, collegiate, adult and professional athletes each year.

According to Mark Connolly, senior network engineer at IMG, technology is vital to supporting the company's varied business lines, especially since communications of all kinds

play such an integral role. "The backbone of what we do relies on efficient, effective communications, regardless of whether it's relayed on a Blackberry or global corporate network," he says. "Our employees around the world rely on connections with others along with business-critical applications and a wealth of data to do their jobs." As part of a global network team, Connolly works with four other London-based network engineers and colleagues in other regions of the world, as well as a global infrastructure manager to ensure optimal communications and information availability.

The collective group supports more than 1,700 employees at 60 remote sites across four geographic regions from major hubs in London, New York, Cleveland, Bradenton, Florida, Sydney and Hong Kong. Most other satellite sites have resilient connection to the corporate network along with one file and print server. "We all work together to be as flexible as we can be in supporting IMG's global business goals," explains Connolly. "That's one of the main reasons we consolidated our data management requirements with CommVault® Simpana® software as it became clear we needed a singular platform that could scale easily in keeping pace with constant growth while protecting and preserving all our critical data."

QUICK FACTS (continued)

Benefits:

- Projected savings of more than \$1 million over three years by leveraging CommVault's singular platform with integrated data management while reducing remote tape management.
- Embedded deduplication has reduced storage footprint by up to 80 percent, reducing 216 TBs of data to 44 TBs of data, which then is replicated to regional hub sites for improved business continuity.
- Simplified recovery enables 95 percent of restores to be performed by help-desk personnel, freeing IT staff to focus on strategic initiatives.
- Archiving permits long-term data retention of more than a year to lower storage costs and facilitate fast, easy data recovery.

Data Management Environment

IMG's network engineers oversee approximately 300 file servers, primarily running Microsoft Windows 2003 and 2008 with a few UNIX servers for specialized applications. A global initiative to adopt server virtualization is following the example set in London, which supports about 70 virtual servers running VMware vSphere. Additionally, the team manages a variety of applications, including the typical Microsoft suite, including Office, Microsoft Exchange 2007, Active Directory, SharePoint and SQL Server. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software also is part of the mix, along with other core applications that support IMG's varied businesses.

Increased momentum in evolving areas, such as digital media and high-definition video, continues to impact IMG's storage requirements, which are growing by 25 percent each year. As a result, the team has deployed a Compellent Storage Area Network (SAN) and Nexsan SATABeast storage to support approximately 216 TBs of data. "As a media company, we deal with massive amounts of data, and it's important that employees have the convenience of sending or saving what they need to make their jobs easier," notes Connolly.

Fortifying & Simplifying Worldwide Data Protection

Historically, there were restrictions on the amount of data that employees could keep and for how long, as it proved difficult to meet burgeoning data demands. Throughout Europe, IMG had relied on two outsourced solutions, leveraging online data backup and recovery solutions from EVault and Asigra. While the solutions provided tape-free data protection, which removed the hassles of managing tape at 20 EMEA sites, increasing annual storage costs forced the team to

limit data retention. "We had to intervene manually with how long data could be kept, which became an administrative strain and wasn't something we wanted to do from a business perspective," Connolly adds.

Another cause of concern was the constant struggle to complete EMEA's Exchange backups as it often took several days, which posed recovery challenges. "It got to the point where Exchange backups were running constantly and we couldn't perform a restore if the backup was still running as the recovery point could be from a few days back," Connolly notes. Moreover, IMG wanted to add greater resiliency for application and virtual server protection.

Throughout the rest of the world, IMG relied on a blend of CA's ARCserve and Symantec NetBackup software, which provided tape-based data protection. "In London, we'd been backing up without tape for six years while other EMEA sites had been performing WAN-based backups for four years, so we're all big fans of tape-free backups," Connolly recalls. "Elsewhere, getting tapes from remote offices and struggling with restores had become a full-time job. We wanted to simplify things for everyone else as well as delegate data restores for increased operational efficiencies."

In order to ease remote data protection, IMG decided to centralize backup operations while strengthening business continuity by replicating data to a regional data center in a hub-and-spoke configuration. Additionally, IMG needed a solution to better control storage-related costs as ongoing data growth would cause more problems if the size of active primary data stores and backup windows were not reduced. Deduplication and archiving technologies both came into play as the team researched different ways to protect, monitor, maintain and recover ever-increasing data volumes.

Singular Platform with Global Reach

IMG was intent on increasing data retention while also improving business continuity. "We wanted to give users longer periods for restores, so they could go back a year or more and make it just as convenient to find whatever they needed," Connolly explains. Both archiving and deduplication would play major roles in helping fulfill that objective. Additionally, IMG wanted to replicate data between regional hubs for resilient disaster recovery. In comparing different solutions, the team looked at a variety of products, including Symantec Enterprise Vault, which could handle e-mail archiving. However, only CommVault® Simpana® software included backup, archiving, deduplication and replication capabilities all managed from within the same singular platform.

"With CommVault Simpana software, IMG saves costs and reduces complexity as we purchased a complete data management foundation," says Connolly. "We could have pieced together a solution with separate products, but it was clear we'd get so much more with Simpana software, which would be so much easier to manage too." The team also appreciated that Simpana software could be expanded over time to meet ever-evolving global demands. "One of the best things about CommVault technology is how easily you can add and update components," notes Connolly. "When we need to address another aspect of our data management, we'll just add the appropriate Simpana software agent to address that need for everyone at once. Moreover, all updates can be deployed from a central location, leading to fewer person hours spent on performing maintenance tasks."

Before switching to Simpana software, the team took into consideration the costs of replacing its current outsourced solution in EMEA, as well as switching out its existing backup and recovery software in other regions. The overall savings of doing away with tapes and tape management at remote sites in favor of replicating data to the regional hubs also was assessed. According to Connolly, the team felt the long-term benefits and operational efficiencies would offset the upfront expense of adding hardware and software to support the new platform.

"We projected IMG could save more than \$1 million over three years by replacing our existing solutions with Simpana software while also decreasing our reliance on tape at remote sites worldwide," he says.

"With Simpana software, we could put the global building blocks in place that could be easily and economically added to over time."

Replicating Deduplicated Data Boosts DR & Storage Utilization

IMG enlisted the assistance of CommVault's professional services group for deployment recommendations. "Simpana software is very flexible, so there are many ways to do things," says Connolly. "Ross Humphryes from CommVault's UK team was brilliant in helping us devise an effective solution for deduplicating remote office data and then replicating the deduped backups to regional hubs for centralized data protection."

While IMG has continued to tweak deduplication through changes in storage policies, the team has been able to reduce its backup storage footprint by up to 80 percent. As a result, the team has been

able to reduce 216 TBs of backup footprint to 44 TBs of backup footprint on disk, which is then backed up and replicated to a regional hub where it resides on a shared disk library. "We've been able to reduce the backend storage requirements by 172 TBs of storage capacity thanks to deduplication, so we can move to a completely tape-free environment without compromising on our data retention needs," Connolly notes. "This reduces storage requirements at both our remote and hub sites while assuring less consumption of WAN bandwidth between each location."

At single-server sites, synthetic full backups are performed over IMG's WAN, which has ample capacity now that deduplication is in place. The company also has achieved multi-site data protection by replicating deduplicated hub-site data to a disaster recovery site. "We always have two copies of data by replicating information between regional hubs," Connolly adds. "This gives us a higher level of protection than we've ever had before."

IMG simplifies replication between sites by assigning global rights, enabling local teams to use CommVault's web-based management capabilities to choose which data gets replicated. "We give remote offices the flexibility to manage their own environment within reason," Connolly adds. "CommVault's centralized management console and intuitive GUI make it easy to provide a better level of service and faster restores."

When it comes to data recovery, IMG also takes advantage of CommVault's front-end GUI to lower administrative overhead as help-desk personnel can handle basic recovery requests. "Probably

95 percent of our restores are handled by our service desk, which really frees IT resources to focus on more strategic initiatives," explains Connolly. "Additionally, we can recover data from disk in minutes, whereas it used to take up to two days for some offices to restore files from tape."

Expanding on Simpana® Software Building Blocks

IMG now is expanding its CommVault data management foundation with the deployment of Simpana software's Archive module. To that end, the team is rolling out archiving for e-mail and file archiving to keep pace with data growth and retention requirements.

According to Connolly, the goal is to give users longer periods for restores. "With Simpana software's Archive module, employees will be able to go back a year and recover important data just as easily quickly and conveniently as they do now," he explains. Additionally, the team wants to stay ahead of continual storage and data growth while being prepared for whatever might come next in the company's evolution. From that standpoint, IMG will be able to leverage its archiving capabilities to address compliance and/or discovery requirements should the need arise.

The scalability of CommVault Simpana software ensures that IMG has an extensible platform for accommodating worldwide data management demands without breaking the bank. "Increasing IMG's data by 25 percent won't raise costs by 25 percent as we'll simply add more agents and servers," concludes Connolly. "CommVault's singular platform will grow with us, helping us to respond efficiently and effectively to whatever the business brings."



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