


**COMPANY:**

Broadcaster

INDUSTRY:

Media & Entertainment

PLATFORM:

Microsoft® Windows Server™ 2000 and 2003, VMware® Virtual Infrastructure 3

APPLICATIONS:

Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft Office, Digitised media

CHALLENGES:

Achieve a scalable and cost-effective storage infrastructure to provide robust disaster recovery for digital media files and data

SOLUTION:

Four EqualLogic PS400E storage arrays that offer high performance and redundancy

LEARN MORE

Visit www.five.tv

FIVE WATCHES ITS DIGITAL CONTENT GROW WITH EQUALLOGIC

Five is one of the UK's national broadcasters, providing television programming that covers a modern, mainstream audience. Five runs three television channels in total as well as a successful TV-on-demand service called Five Download.

THE CHALLENGE: SCALABLE AND REDUNDANT STORAGE

To meet the increasing demand for easily accessible digital media content, Five needed a scalable storage and server infrastructure. In addition, Five was launching two new channels at the time when CIO Ken Davis was evaluating storage solutions, making the deployment of a scalable storage infrastructure even more urgent.

Due to the "always-on" nature of the media & entertainment industry, Five's data had to be highly available for viewers to access at any time. From an internal point of view, the company's data needed to be protected and easy to recover in a disaster recovery situation.

Five was working with direct attached storage (DAS), which made it difficult to share data between servers or to back up data efficiently, since each machine had its own dedicated disk storage. Five also had network attached storage (NAS), but expanding this would not provide the centralised management capabilities and flexibility for disaster recovery that Five required. As its data continued to grow rapidly, the broadcaster needed a more advanced storage solution to meet its business requirements; however, it also needed to be conscious of the company's IT resources and skill sets.

"Our IT department does not have the resources available to dedicate staff solely to supporting our storage infrastructure. Therefore, when considering suitable storage solutions, we focussed on products that were simple to implement and operate, as well as ones that were highly scalable to support our growth in the coming months and years," said Davis.

THE SOLUTION: ENTERPRISE-CLASS ISCSI SAN

Following a comprehensive review of SAN products, Five implemented an enterprise-class iSCSI-based SAN solution from EqualLogic. This consists of four EqualLogic PS400E storage arrays, providing more than 30 terabytes of storage capacity.

“Being able to trust the automatic management and performance optimisation of our PS Series SAN allows my IT team to focus on other priorities, including the continual enhancement of content and applications. This is critical for our success as a business in the digital world.”

*– Five, CIO,
Ken Davis*

One of these arrays is used for general content management of both internal and consumer-facing data, and the second manages a data warehousing project which required high performance and redundancy. The other two PS400E arrays are used for disaster recovery purposes at Five's two back-up sites.

Five is taking advantage of EqualLogic's virtualised storage architecture, which allows for automatic load balancing of all application demands throughout one centralised pool of storage; this improved data availability and response times throughout the company's IT infrastructure. “Being able to trust the automatic management and performance optimisation of our PS Series SAN allows my IT team to focus on other priorities, including the continual enhancement of content and applications. This is critical for our success as a business in the digital world.”

GROWING IN A DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

The shift in user demand to larger, digital files caused an explosion in the volume of data that Five needed to house and have available. An example of this is the large repository of still shots of the latest programmes hosted on Five, which are used on a daily basis by journalists for inclusion in TV listings. To meet publication deadlines, it is essential that journalists receive these digital media files at any given time.

Due to their critical nature, these stills are hosted on the EqualLogic SAN, which ensures that they are highly available. As the number of stills increases with the addition of new channels and TV programmes, Davis can easily add more PS Series arrays to the SAN as needed to meet this demand.

“In the past, we've had issues regarding capacity and disk space when storing our still shots, which affects how quickly users can retrieve this rich data,” said Davis. “By basing our storage strategy on EqualLogic PS Series arrays, we have a scalable infrastructure in place that is extremely

cost-effective and easy to manage. As the amount of digital content that we need to store grows, we can literally connect additional arrays overnight, saving us significant time and money.”

VIRTUALISED SERVERS AND STORAGE KEEP FIVE ON THE AIR

Five has combined EqualLogic's virtual storage with server virtualisation from VMware to improve server deployment, data availability and business continuity throughout the company's IT infrastructure. The combination of storage and server virtualisation allows the broadcaster to prioritise activities based on business needs.

“The flexibility offered by server and storage virtualisation is essential as Five continues to deliver content to viewers. IT is central to keeping Five on air and the ability of my team to replicate data and server images in real-time to our disaster recovery sites allows us to ensure business continuity and eradicate downtime. EqualLogic and VMware help keep us on the air,” said Davis.

The PS400E's auto-replication capability provides Five with point-in-time periodic replication to its remote site for restore points and application-consistent copies of data. In the event of any issue, critical data can be restored within minutes. “EqualLogic was the most cost-effective option on the market. The cost of storage per terabyte for an EqualLogic SAN compared to the cost of tape backup was incredible. There were no hidden costs involved in the purchase, which further solidified our decision to implement the PS Series,” continued Davis.

SIMPLIFYING NETWORKED STORAGE

EqualLogic PS Series solutions deliver the benefits of storage consolidation in an intelligent, enterprise-class storage system that is easy to install, manage and grow. Let us show you what simplifying networked storage can mean for your business, visit our web site at www.equallogic.com.



75 Cannon Street, London EC4N 5BN
Tel +44 (0)20 7556 7878 / Fax +44 (0)20 7556 7001 / www.equallogic.com