OVERLAND BACKUP/RESTORE CUTS SEARCH TIME FOR BUSY CREATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Few tasks frustrate a designer or production artist more than frequent, lengthy searches through archives to find the right photos or illustrations to incorporate in an ad, brochure or web site. Difficult searches are not a sometime thing; surveys show that the typical designer searches for a media file 83 times a week, and fails to locate it 35% of the time. A lengthy or unsuccessful search wastes time and energy. It also boosts costs, and reduces productivity. In a particularly busy department, slow or unproductive searches can create a horrible bottleneck that can bring the creative process to a halt.

Thanks to San Diego, Calif.-based Overland Data, storing, organizing and accessing media file searches is remarkably easy for the designers, production artists and other creatives in the Marketing Communications Department of American Power Conversion Corporation (APC). The department uses two Overland DLT MinilibraryXpress 4115 libraries, a Dell 6450 with quad 700 Xeon processors running NT, software from Legato for backup and archiving, and MediaBank asset management software from Wave Corporation. The Overland libraries provide redundant backup and digital asset library access that saves time and effort for the creative staff who develop ads, brochures and other marketing materials for APC, a leader in the UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) industry.

The system has had a significant effect on productivity, according to Joel Young, Prepress Administrator for Creative Services at APC. "Our department is very, very busy," said Young. "We generate – in-house – all media for 27 worldwide markets in 40 languages. We handle about 8,000 creative projects a year, including print ads, brochures, web content and TV spots. The 35 people in the department need fast, easy access to images in order to meet deadlines."

It was necessary to increase storage capacity, but the department also needed to institute a digital asset management system to speed up access to files. All Systems Integration, APC's systems integrator, suggested a combination of Overland DLT libraries and MediaBank digital asset management.

The department installed two Overland DLT MinilibraryXpress units to provide 24/7 access to digital files. One of the libraries is used primarily for backup, the other for archive purposes.

Easy Access to a Massive Archive

The archive that APC's creative team accesses is quite substantial, consisting of 20,000 to 25,000 files, a collection compiled over the last six years. All files are archived in a MediaBank database. A thumbnail of the image remains on the Dell server for preview and is viewable through the MediaBank client. The thumbnail is linked to the database, and this allows the user to restore and archive images through the client.

"Through the MediaBank application, we can control the Overland library," Young explains. "From the client, Mac G3s or G4s, a creative can restore archived images as needed. For example, a designer can view a thumbnail of a photo, or of a particular ad layout, and find out if it is on tape, or on the server. If it is on tape, it only takes a simple click on the Media Bank client, and the Overland DLT MinilibraryXpress restores the image in minutes."

Speeding up the Creation of Print Advertising

Young says, "We use the Overland/MediaBank solution to access images for print advertising, specifically, for high-resolution PhotoShop or Illustrator images, or EPS files. Not many creative departments use digital asset management, but with the volume we have, using this type of system is a must."

Without the Overland/MediaBank solution, images would have to be catalogued by hand. In fact, in most MarComm or art departments, a creative must flip through a book to find the desired image. A digital asset management system not only speeds up workflow and increases efficiency but also makes it easier to reuse assets from previous projects and can help track various versions of a project, including edits. With the fast, easy access made possible by the MinilibraryXpress, the challenges faced by APC's MarComm department become manageable.

Overland's MinilibraryXpress provides the performance and reliability of Overland's award-winning robotics design with a breakthrough in price/performance to offer unparalleled value to IS managers for network server backup. The MinilibraryXpress is designed to meet the needs of organizations with servers or networks of servers with disk capacity in the range of 50 to 200GB in an affordable, upgradeable dual-drive-capable library. The MinilibraryXpress is the next-generation of Overland's highly-successful single-drive 15-cartridge LoaderXpress, designed for similar capacity requirements, but providing an affordable dual-drive-ready solution for customers who need performance beyond single-drive loaders, and do not require the scalability of a more expensive DLTtape library. MinilibraryXpress can be ordered in a minimum configuration with a single DLT4000, DLT7000 or DLT8000 drive to meet current storage needs and then expanded and upgraded as requirements change by adding a second drive to double native throughput to up to 36GB/hour. It is available in tabletop or rackmount enclosures, with single-ended or differential SCSI. Like all Overland products, MinilibraryXpress is backed by the company's Guaranteed Up Time Service (GUTS) program, which warrants that the MinilibraryXpress will deliver a minimum of 99% uptime reliability with 100% restore functionality for the first three years of ownership.

APC's designers and production artists are not the only ones who appreciate the easy access provided by the Overland solution. It is a hit with Joel Young, as well. "It is one of the easiest systems I've worked with," he says. "And it greatly simplifies asset management and work flow."