

Armada Music Strikes the Right Cord

Media and Entertainment

Use Case

High availability, fast and effective disaster recovery (DR) for several critical applications

Requirement

High workload throughput, easy mgmt., ability to add capacity quickly, efficiently and inexpensively with multi data center failover

Solution

On-demand Capacity Expansion, Data Protection, Ease of Management

COMPANY OVERVIEW

Founded in 2003, Amsterdam-based Armada Music has released a host of quality electronic dance music titles over the course of its history. The Armada Music umbrella includes more than 25 sub-labels and the company also hosts its own worldwide events, Armada Nights, in places like Buenos Aires, London, Rome, New York, Jakarta and Mexico City.

The company's founders include world renowned DJ and trance music producer Armin van Buuren who has become top of the fan's poll in DJ Magazine five times and headlined the concert celebrating the recent crowning of King Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands.

CHALLENGES

While Armada Music carried a significant number of music tracks and HD videos on its network that are available to the employees, it had never evolved a recognised storage solution to support its activities. Instead, it had relied on an ad hoc arrangement based on HP ProLiant servers with direct attached storage. When some of the HP machines were coming to their end of life, the company decided it needed to look for a proper storage solution to handle its media that would also be able to meet its future growth requirements.

"We needed a proper storage solution to underpin our growth," explains Stefan van den Hurk, IT manager at Armada, "because our data was growing at around 25TB a year."

Armada had a local server room with two server racks at its head office and a second data centre to host its archive which van den Hurk describes as a "data storage spill over". An additional data centre in Haarlem hosted several of the company's web sites and back-up servers.

Given its reliance on providing music and video files over the network to its employees, Armada also needed to ensure it had a disaster recovery infrastructure in place. As van den Hurk freely admits: "If we lose our data, it would be a disaster for this company."

As an existing HP user, Armada looked at HP for a possible solution but the company's IT partner 2SOURCE4 suggested it might want to consider Nexenta as well. "At the end of the process, it was pretty obvious that for the features I was looking for and compared to the price, Nexenta was the best competitor," van den Hurk says.

NexentaStor™ + MetroHA™

- 10Gb backbone connects
- 2 x appliances
- 336TBs of storage on 2 x 60 bay JBODs
- 2 x data centers
- Disaster Recovery = 264TBs on 6 x 24 bay JBODs

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Stefan van den Hurk
IT Manager
Armada Music



SOLUTION

Armada, with help from 2SOURCE4, opted to deploy a cluster solution with Nexenta's High Availability (HA) Plug-in at its head office, with two appliances connected over a 10Gb backbone with 336TB of storage on two 60 bay JBODs. For disaster recovery purposes, it installed another NexentaStor appliance with 264TB of storage on six 24 bay JBODs at its second data centre. The next stage is to connect the office to the disaster recovery site data centre with 10GB fibre.

Van den Hurk describes the migration and implementation process as straightforward. He says it is much easier to add capacity with the Nexenta solution and performance has improved significantly. "We could last another five years before we need to add another JBOD. Speed, capacity, management and usability are all better than we had before."

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Installing a stable, high performance storage solution was the primary motivation for Armada's Nexenta implementation. However, as they got further into the project, it became apparent that NexentaStor's extensive feature list was opening up many other possibilities.

The HA licensed feature makes a NexentaStor implementation highly available while recovery in the event of disaster can be automatic or manual. A user-friendly graphical user interface (GUI) makes it easier for non-IT personnel to activate recovery.

NexentaStor's open source technology roots mean that users like Armada Music are not locked in to buying more expensive products from a particular vendor or paying unnecessary mark-ups for standard features. In addition, because it is based on ZFS, NexentaStor offers massively scalable storage environments with a virtually unlimited number of snapshots, free versioning and high granularity of data protection.

Stefan van den Hurk, IT Manager, Armada, said: "Speed, capacity, management and usability are all better than we had before."