

Objective

Eliminate storage bottlenecks and latency issues that were impeding business growth and causing long delays in core processes.

Approach

Replace a highly virtualized, tiered legacy storage environment with all-flash storage arrays for processing mission-critical applications and heavy workloads

IT Matters

- Dramatically reduce processing times to ensure timely distribution of royalties
- Rapidly scale storage to handle explosive growth in music rights data
- Simplify management and maintenance so IT staff can focus on value-adding tasks

Business Matters

- Enables increased processing for new revenue streams and royalty payments for rights holders, especially from digital sources.
- Return a higher share of annual revenue to SOCAN members

SOCAN extends its leadership in music-rights management

HPE 3PAR all-flash storage opens new opportunities



SOCAN (the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada) is a not-for-profit organization that represents the performing rights of millions of Canadian and international music creators and publishers worldwide. Whether music is being played by a marching band, piped into a mall, or accessed via a streaming service, SOCAN helps

ensure that those who hold the rights to the music are fairly compensated. In turn, SOCAN allows businesses, performers and consumers to use their preferred music legally and ethically.

With roots that trace back to the 1920s, SOCAN's vision is to be a global leader in music rights for today's digital age. "Traditionally, we tracked and managed the rights for music performances on radio stations and later on television," says Trevor Jackson, Senior Director of Information Technology. "It was pretty straightforward. Outlets would send us their performance information, and we would calculate and

“Acquisitions are creating new opportunities for us to grow SOCAN’s revenue and increase royalty payments to our members. By recently adding a second all-flash array to our storage environment, we’re positioned to handle very rapid growth without disruption to our core business processes.”

– Trevor Jackson, Senior Director – Information Technology, Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada

distribute royalties. But needless to say, the music industry and our field has been transformed by the rise of digital content, new media platforms and new business models.”

The challenges of big data

This trend has driven explosive growth in the volume, diversity and varied formats of the performance information SOCAN receives from licensees. “We currently process billions of rows of data every quarter, and that will continue to grow,” Jackson explains. “Each row has to be analyzed to identify the music that was played, who owns the rights, and what the splits are. Based on that, we calculate royalty payments.”

A few years back, SOCAN had transitioned from traditional flat SAN storage to a virtualized, tiered solution from a well-known vendor. However the tiered solution couldn’t keep pace with rapid data growth. Load balancing was ineffective. If one of two nodes went down, processing came to a virtual standstill. Trying to find a maintenance window “was like trying to land the Space Shuttle” says Jackson. Some applications were running slowly, indicating a need for more IOP¹.

Seeing is believing

Jackson had intended to refresh his primary storage in 2015 but changed plans after seeing the HPE 3PAR StoreServ platform in action at an HPE Discover event. Impressed with its speed, he was also thrilled to learn that deduplication ratios for the 3PAR StoreServ all-flash system made the solution cost comparable to a tiered solution with spinning media. In addition, a live demo and consultation with HPE’s Center of Excellence convinced him it would actually be faster and less disruptive to migrate legacy storage to 3PAR StoreServ than to upgrade with the existing vendor. Working with SOCAN’s partner Acrodex to architect the new storage solution and with HPE handling installation and implementation, Jackson’s team deployed the 3PAR StoreServ all-flash system for production and another HPE 3PAR StoreServ system for nearline storage of dormant files.

From the outset, the new environment met its most urgent test: delivering greatly improved processing speeds. “When we put some of our heaviest workloads on all-flash, we saw a 93% reduction in processing times,” Jackson says. It also positioned us to handle a much higher volume of incoming music performance data.”

¹ Input/Output Operations per Second

Customer at a glance

Application

Initial deployment of one all-flash system to run mission-critical storage along with a second array for nearline storage of dormant files. Subsequently, SOCAN deployed a second all-flash array.

Hardware

- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7450
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 7200
- HPE 3PAR StoreServ 8450

Software

- HPE 3PAR Peer Motion Software
- VMware

HPE Services

- Installation Pack
- 5-Year Care Pack
- Storage Consulting
- Big Data Consulting

Peer Motion enables data mobility

Equally important, HPE 3PAR Peer Motion software provides data mobility, allowing system administrators to easily shift data between and among 3PAR systems. With the subsequent deployment of a second 3PAR StoreServ all-flash array, SOCAN gained additional capacity to run critical production loads.

“In addition to providing robust load balancing, HPE 3PAR Peer Motion software gives us the ability to perform on-demand data mobility between all of our 3PAR storage systems. This allows us to take a do-it-yourself approach to data migration.”

– Trevor Jackson, Senior Director –
Information Technology, Society of
Composers, Authors and Music Publishers
of Canada

Automatic load balancing allows staff to do maintenance and upgrades during business hours, thus reducing night and weekend hours and overtime costs. SOCAN benefits from the reduced footprint and lower power consumption of all-flash arrays. Furthermore, HPE 3PAR StoreServ’s ease of management frees staff to work on value-adding projects, such as new business opportunities.

Positioned for growth

“With its unified architecture and consistent interface across the whole product family, we knew that HPE 3PAR would allow us to scale up quickly in response to growth.” Jackson says. This proved to be the case when SOCAN added the second all-flash array to support growth opportunities.

Jackson offers high praise for HPE’s senior technical experts and service team. “Throughout the process, from pre-sales, to the solution architecture, installation and startup, the expertise and support we received from HPE was outstanding. They’ve made a big contribution to our success.”

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