

S U C C E S S S T O R Y

Hitachi Storage Solutions at Work

Visy

INDUSTRY Manufacturing

SOLUTIONS **Capacity Management/Consolidation/Disaster Recovery**
Hardware — Hitachi Network Storage Controller; Hitachi High-performance NAS Platform, powered by BlueArc®
Software — Hitachi Data Protection Suite, powered by CommVault®; Hitachi TrueCopy® Synchronous/Asynchronous remote replication software and Hitachi ShadowImage® Heterogeneous Replication software
Services — Provided by Hitachi TrueNorth Channel Partner Acer and Hitachi Data Systems Credit Corporation



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*Michael Krull
Manager of IT Infrastructure
Visy*



Visy Enables Growth with Hitachi Storage and Acer Services, Maximises ROI with Hitachi Data Systems Credit Corporation

Visy is an Australian company that has grown to become the world's largest privately owned packaging and recycling business. The company's acquisition strategy caused it to double in size every four or five years, which in turn made for an overextended infrastructure. Hitachi Data Systems and Acer answered Visy's storage challenges with a solution based on Hitachi Network Storage Controller, Hitachi software technologies and Acer services.

Established in 1948, the company first focused on the manufacturing of corrugated cardboard boxes. Thirty years later, Visy built its first paper recycling mill and has since become one of the world's largest producers of recycled packaging paper, producing more than 1.2 million tons of 100 percent recycled paper annually. In 2001, Visy acquired Southcorp Packaging, adding new products such as PET (plastic) bottles and jars, aluminium and tinplate cans, paperboard cartons and rigid plastic packaging to its core packaging business.

Visy strives to maintain its standing as the world leader in packaging by consistently growing its operations. Currently, the business comprises seven divisions with over 5,000 employees. The company now operates more than 140 packaging factories

and recycling sites across Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Sizing up Growth Issues

Four and a half years ago, Michael Krull joined Visy as the manager of IT infrastructure. Based in Melbourne, Krull is part of a 70 person IT team, reporting to Roland Spitty, the then Chief Information Officer. In his current role, Krull is tasked with supporting storage services and networks for the company and its 3,500 computer users across Australia and New Zealand.

During his time at Visy, Krull has seen all divisions of the company expand rapidly. This expansion has put significant stress on Visy's IT infrastructure. In fact, Visy's storage capacity was nearing its technical limits, putting

restraints on business growth, which was integral to the company's future acquisitions.

Visy was faced with the problem of having no room for growth on its existing SAN (storage area network) infrastructure. As the company continued its acquisition strategy, applications like enterprise resource planning were growing at a rate of 50 gigabytes per month. In addition, e-mail data was spiralling out of control.

"The existing infrastructure was overextended and we were not in a position to grow. There was not an option to provide more capacity on our existing SAN infrastructure," says Krull.

Compounding Visy's storage capacity issues were data management and backup challenges. Data management was handled by several different groups, including inhouse resources, an external vendor and an IT outsourcer. As such, there was no central repository for applications like e-mail, with business critical data being stored on each employee's personal computer.

Data backup was also a challenge. This was managed at each of Visy's 140 sites across Australia and New Zealand. As part of the process, a non-IT employee, often a receptionist, was tasked with rotating or filing backup tapes on a daily or weekly basis. This introduced unacceptable levels of risk in relation to data integrity. Also, as the data was being backed up to tape, it meant that accessing archived data involved a waiting period of five to six days.

Adding to Visy's storage challenges, there was no disaster recovery plan in place should the company need to access data quickly in the event of a power outage or natural disaster.

Implementation and Value Add

Recognising that its current IT infrastructure was under pressure, Visy went in search of a new storage system. Hitachi Data Systems was chosen as the preferred company, winning out over four competitive bids, and signed to a five year contract. Hitachi was selected for its best-in-class technology platform and strong reputation for partnerships in the storage industry.

"Hitachi won out against our detailed selection process because they had a platform that we see as leading edge and able to handle our capacity requirements over the next five

years,” said Roland Spitty, Visy’s then CIO. “We also rated the account team very highly because they were easy to work with and knowledgeable. They were open and honest and didn’t try to hide any facts.”

Visy started a phased implementation rolled out over a 12 month period. At the heart of the infrastructure was the Hitachi Network Storage Controller. This virtualisation platform was used to replace their decentralised storage environment — the cause of Visy’s data management headaches — with a centralised tiered storage solution.

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Michael Krull
Manager of IT Infrastructure
Visy

Next, Hitachi and Acer worked with Visy to replace the old infrastructure supporting its Microsoft® Windows and NAS environment, including 700 Citrix users located throughout the country. This is a high-profile environment within the organisation. Visy migrated off a previous solution to the Hitachi High-performance NAS Platform, powered by BlueArc®, to streamline the complex migration. This platform’s seamless integration into the Hitachi virtualisation environment as well as its powerful file server consolidation, data protection and general purpose NAS workload capabilities, enabled Visy to streamline its environment and enhance productivity.

The third and final stage of the migration was the replacement and amalgamation of backup technologies leveraging the Hitachi Data Protection Suite (powered by CommVault®), Hitachi TrueCopy® Synchronous/Asynchronous remote replication software and Hitachi ShadowImage® Heterogeneous Replication software.

“Backup consolidation was not one of our initial requirements,” says Krull. “Hitachi Data Systems came to us with the capability to not only replace our existing storage, but also provide the ability to consolidate backups from multiple technologies back to a single technology. That is the Hitachi value-add.”

Stability, Security and Bottom Line Business Benefits

The deployment of the new storage infrastructure has alleviated previous IT growing pains and backup issues for Visy. Leveraging tiered storage, Visy can increase the performance of tier one data while keeping archived data on a lower, more cost-effective tier. This has also eliminated storage management challenges as the data is controlled virtually through one simple interface.

Another benefit for Visy is the use of the Hitachi Data Protection Suite as a single backup solu-

tion. This has consolidated preceding backup solutions to a single architecture and eliminated the problems associated with backing up to tape. This fairly unique technique protects data by placing it on disk instead of tape. This means that the IT department does not have to worry about maintaining the same technology in the future in order to play backup tapes; they can simply use disks to access archived information.

Leveraging Hitachi Data Protection Suite, TrueCopy and ShadowImage software, Visy has also implemented a disaster recovery strategy whereby they can replicate data in real time from their head office to a disaster recovery site located in regional Victoria to ensure that business critical data has an extra level of protection.

“We’ve done data recovery tests and the system works very well,” says Krull. “It used to take five or six days to recover data from tape. With Hitachi, complete data recovery can now be achieved within hours. I know that the company’s data is safe and secure in the event of an emergency.”

In addition, the new Hitachi infrastructure has had a direct benefit on end users. It has allowed them the freedom to access their e-mails online, moving responsibility away from individual users to IT management. According to

Krull, the new system has elicited a very positive response from users and has resulted in a significant drop in calls to the IT helpline.

“With Hitachi, we can provide better levels of service and manage business growth without storage as the bottleneck,” says Krull. “The dynamics of the business are unaffected by storage, and Visy can now grow and move forward seamlessly.”

About Hitachi Data Systems Credit Corporation

Not only did Visy gain from its technology implementation, it also benefited from a financial assistance opportunity. Through Hitachi Data Systems Credit Corporation, Visy was able to simplify its entire storage financial lifecycle process. This tailor-made, flexible financial solution encompassed hardware, software, professional services and managed services and enabled the company to achieve maximum return on investment results without the hassle of dealing with an external party. This solution has clearly worked well for Visy, which has financed three upgrades since implementation.

About Acer

Hitachi Data Systems worked closely with strategic partner Acer as well as Visy’s own IT team to plan and implement the company’s IT upgrade. As a provider of leading storage solutions, Acer front-ended the technology implementation and was involved in the day-to-day processes. The company allowed Visy the freedom to work directly with Hitachi Data Systems when necessary and eased the implementation process by supplying onsite training to familiarise the team with the new solution. Hitachi Data Systems and Acer both supported the IT changes from the planning to the implementation stages with minimal impact on existing operations for a successful result.

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