

Igniter Media Boosts Performance Moving Off Legacy SAN to Qumulo

Igniter Media and Qumulo transform content workflow to speed production and ensure creative deadlines are met.

Business Results

“Before we moved to Qumulo – hardware, limited capacity, and poor workflow – consumed time and energy. Qumulo just took those issues off my plate, and simplified workflow for our content creators.”

Igniter Media is a complete media resource for churches. Founded in 2003, the company provides ready-made videos and graphics for Christian ministries.

Based in Richardson, Texas, Igniter Media delivers media for more than 80,000 churches and ministries of all sizes and budgets. The company stores more than 43,000 media files on its servers, including mini movies, title graphics, worship backgrounds, sermon bumpers, lyrics, graphics, and themed collections. Online views of their mini movies alone number more than 55.5 million and counting.

Running Out of Room

Igniter Media's challenge was that its legacy SAN-based workflow was difficult to manage and at capacity. Video assets alone for a single project can easily total more than 1TB. Graphic design assets are smaller files, but there are more of them. As the SAN hit its capacity thresholds, the content was archived to tape.

When content creators needed to retrieve an asset, they had to notify IT. IT would then search for the assets, clear other content off the SAN, then restore the requested data. And when creators started a new project, they had to meet again with IT to create space in the SAN for the new files.

Clint Miller, CTO of Igniter Media, remembers that time well. “We managed the SAN on an ad-hoc basis. We had to work with artists and producers to identify data they could live without and immediately offload or archive it. When they needed to retrieve those assets, IT had to search and retrieve them. This process was a distraction and a waste of resources, but we had to do it.”

Qumulo: The Clear Choice

Igniter Media needed a new system that would improve digital asset workflows, enable creative teams to work efficiently, and would be simple to use.

Qumulo was at the top of Igniter Media's shortlist, along with another vendor's scale-out NAS solution. Initially, they were both strong contenders, but Qumulo's hybrid file software could do everything Igniter Media needed with a simpler architecture than the competition. Miller said, “Qumulo's simple and straightforward system architecture makes it very well suited for us. We have a small team, so ease of use is important and saves valuable time. We much prefer to keep our operations smooth and simple.”



Use Case

- Video and graphics creation
- Active archive

Requirements

- Extreme capacity with simple scalability
- Storage analytics
- Proactive support

Igniter Media purchased Qumulo to build an active archive storage solution with extremely high capacity, performance, ease of management, scalability, and accessibility. Qumulo's hybrid storage platform provides SSD cache for high performance active projects coupled with high capacity disk storage for long-term content retention.

Deployment day went flawlessly, and IT was able to easily migrate the data themselves. An expert Qumulo engineer was on-site to answer any questions and to help optimize the new workflow process for speed and simplicity.

Qumulo in Action

Qumulo solved Igniter Media's serious capacity issues and transformed its workflows.

Instead of taking emergency meetings with IT to decide what to archive and what to retrieve, artists and producers now use a simple, file-based interface to retrieve assets. "Improved workflow was a big win for us after moving to Qumulo," Miller said. "It doesn't block the artists and producers. Instead of working with us to create room or retrieve assets, they can go back to doing what they're great at – creating digital assets."

IT enjoys the real-time visibility of the management dashboards within the Qumulo file system. The company's previous SAN had analytics tools, but they were time-consuming and complex. Today, IT uses Qumulo's simplified analytics, such as the capacity explorer that analyzes capacity totals and usage, and the throughput analytics that display IOPs hotspots.

"The system breaks it down so clearly: where all the storage is being used and who is using it at any given time. And frankly, for a small team like ours, that answers 95% of the questions we get on a regular basis."

— Clint Miller
CTO of Igniter Media

Miller was also pleasantly surprised to see the performance improvements with Qumulo. He has been thrilled to have users report how much better it performs over the legacy SAN storage."

Igniter Media rarely needs Qumulo support. But when it does, Qumulo provides responsive, prompt, and transparent service via Slack. Miller said, "It's unique for an enterprise-level vendor to use Slack to provide real-time and near-real-time support for IT systems. It's been a great experience."