



Delivering Special Effects in Backup, Restore and Archiving

Remember the Honda advertisement where the rolling cog sets off a sequence of automotive-related events; or the Sony PlayStation 'Mountain' advertisement? Or the nail-biting sequences in Ridley Scott's film *Gladiator*? They're all the work of one of the world's leading special effects companies—The Mill. Following the recent implementation of a Quantum PX506 tape library, the company is achieving unprecedented reliability, availability and serviceability. In fact, the solution has been so successful, a similar backup, restore and archiving system will shortly be deployed at the company's U.S. headquarters.

MORE AWARDS FOR VISUAL EFFECTS THAN ANY OTHER FACILITY IN EUROPE

Visitors to The Mill's London headquarters are confronted with a real Oscar. It was awarded to this world-leading visual effects company for the work The Mill did on *Gladiator*. Much more success has followed. In fact, the company has won more awards for visual effects than any other facility in Europe, including awards for commercials like Sony PlayStation 'Mountain', 'Mental Wealth' and Honda's 'Cog'. But success comes at a price. Over time, more and more digital data was being accumulated, outstripping the capacity and performance of the existing data storage solution.

"We were experiencing more and more pressure on the backup environment," explains Paul Crisp, Senior UNIX Systems Administrator, The Mill. "The television special effects work in particular was absorbing massive amounts of space, including the 3-D visual effects work and the 2-D composite work. At the time, we were relying on a 220 slot HP LTO-1 tape library—and it was struggling to provide the capacity we needed. It was clearly time to replace it."

Step forward Cognitive Solutions. This leading UK data protection and storage management solutions specialist has considerable expertise in helping companies like The Mill tackle their most formidable backup and recovery challenges. Crisp says, "They really understood the problems we were experiencing and used their professional knowledge to find a solution which met our needs. Cognitive proposed a Quantum PX506 library, together with Veritas NetBackup Server Edition."

MORE THAN 70 NATIVE TERABYTES OF NATIVE CAPACITY

The Mill deployed a Quantum PX506 tape library running two LTO-3 drives, and it can accommodate up to 100 tapes. This highly reliable library offers The Mill more than 70 TB of native capacity in a single 10U frame. It is connected to a BlueArc Network Attached Storage (NAS) appliance with 17 TB of storage and supports The Mill's Microsoft Exchange, Windows and Linux Dell servers.

"We conduct a complete backup of all of our critical data weekly, and an incremental backup every night," says Crisp. "With our previous HP library, we used to have to split the backup over alternate weekends, due to the volume of data. With the Quantum solution, we have three times more capacity and can complete the full backup in one weekend. This ensures maximum uptime for uninterrupted data protection and data availability."

Productivity has also improved following the adoption of the Quantum environment. "The time it takes to restore data has dropped significantly. In the past, we used to devote up to one hour each day to the backup and restore administration—this has now been reduced to only two hours each week. This represents a considerable improvement in efficiency, allowing our teams to devote time to other pressing tasks," he adds.



"The implementation has been so successful in London that The Mill will also be deploying a similar Quantum/Symantec infrastructure in New York. This is probably the richest endorsement there is of the solution. It delivers the high performance data protection and security we need to ensure The Mill continues to be one of the leading visual effects companies—throughout the world."

Paul Crisp,
Senior UNIX Systems Administrator

KEY BENEFITS

- 🔗 Delivered unprecedented reliability, availability and serviceability
- 🔗 Provided three times more capacity and enabled company to complete the full backup in one week-end, compared with splitting the backup over alternate week-ends previously
- 🔗 Reduced the time devoted to backup and restore administration from up to one hour each day to only two hours each week
- 🔗 Provided centralized management of the end-to-end backup and recovery process—including real-time monitoring, historical reporting, alert management and troubleshooting
- 🔗 Enabled all backup and recovery operations from a single console, regardless of geographic location, and simultaneously protect environments spanning multiple platforms, databases, applications, devices and architectures
- 🔗 Capacity has made a big difference to backup routines and overall efficiency
- 🔗 UK deployment success has led customer to implement a similar backup, restore and archiving system at the company's U.S. headquarters

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- 🔗 **Application:** Creating secure, high performance backup and restore environment for digital advertising and production materials
- 🔗 **Quantum PX506 tape library**
- 🔗 **Tape Technology:** LTO-3
- 🔗 **Key Software:** Veritas NetBackup Server Edition software from Symantec, Microsoft Exchange
- 🔗 **Storage Infrastructure:** BlueArc Network Attached Storage (NAS) appliance with 17 TB of storage, Microsoft Exchange, Windows and Linux Dell servers
- 🔗 **Integrator:** Cognitive Network Solutions Ltd (www.thesolution.co.uk)

MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE FROM QUANTUM LTO-3 DRIVES

There are no concerns regarding the performance of the LTO-3 drives either. Quantum LTO-3 delivers 800GB (with 2:1 compression) of compressed capacity and up to 324GB/hr transfer rates. There's no need for a traditional verify pass during the backup, which helps to reduce the backup window and increase data integrity. "The LTO-3 drives are rock-solid," Crisp explains. "They're really fast, even when you push them to the limit. We have had no faults whatsoever with these drives and the capacity they provide has made a big difference to our backup routines and overall efficiency."

Veritas NetBackup Server Edition is the ideal complement to this reliable, high performance Quantum backup, restore and archive system. This single solution for backup and recovery operations on the company's Windows, Exchange and Linux environments provides centralized management of the end-to-end backup and recovery process—including real-time monitoring, historical reporting, alert management and troubleshooting. Crisp and his team can view and enable all backup and recovery operations from a single console, regardless of geographic location, and simultaneously protect environments spanning multiple platforms, databases, applications, devices and architectures. "The reporting functionality is excellent with NetBackup. We now benefit from a daily report, for example, on the number of tapes we have available in the library, the outcome of the nightly backup, capacity and much more."

NEXT STOP NEW YORK


Having opened its doors in 2002, the New York headquarters of The Mill has collaborated on hundreds of high-profile domestic and international advertising campaigns, such as Nike, Levi's, Mercedes and Hummer, as well as videos for artists like The White Stripes and Kanye West. It comes as no surprise to find that the U.S. operations will be adopting a similar backup and restore infrastructure to London very soon. Crisp concludes, "The implementation has been so successful in London that The Mill will also be deploying a similar Quantum/Symantec infrastructure in New York. This is probably the richest endorsement there is of the solution. It delivers the high performance data protection and security we need to ensure The Mill continues to be one of the leading visual effects companies—throughout the world."

ABOUT THE MILL

The Mill is a world-leading visual effects company with bases in the globe's most important advertising centres – London and New York. We also have a network of in-house agency-based facilities, called Mini-Mill's, which deliver Mill expertise with in-house convenience. The Mill compliments these services with BEAM.TV – an internationally-acclaimed, high-bandwidth, internet management service for content storing and sharing of all advertising and production materials. All four elements work together to fulfil every possible post production requirement to the utmost standard. The Mill provides pioneering effects solutions to the advertising, music and entertainment industries. We have worked on some of the most memorable visual effects projects in the world, including Ridley Scott's epic film, *Gladiator*, for which we were rewarded with Europe's only visual effects Oscar. In 2004 The Mill was voted the UK's top facility by Creative Review readers. Its work for Playstation 'Mountain' and Honda 'Cog' received many UK and international awards, including the BTAA Craft Award for visual effects and a Cannes Lion Grand Prix.

ABOUT COGNITIVE

Cognitive Network Solutions Limited specializes in the provision of data protection and storage management solutions. The company works with leading manufacturers in these fields to provide a solution that utilizes the leading software and hardware available in today's market place. This is backed up with high quality professional Consultancy and Training services. Cognitive is one of only a selected few companies who have achieved Symantec Elite Partner status in the UK and as a result are able to supply the entire software product portfolio.

 For contact and product information, visit quantum.com or call +44 (0)1344 353500

Quantum®

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About Quantum

Quantum Corp. (NYSE:QTM) is the leading global storage company specialising in backup, recovery and archive. Combining focused expertise, customer-driven innovation, and platform independence, Quantum provides a comprehensive range of disk, tape, media and software solutions supported by a world-class sales and service organisation. As a long-standing and trusted partner, the company works closely with a broad network of resellers, OEMs and other suppliers to meet customers' evolving data protection needs.