



Global media services and content distribution leader leverages SwiftStack to consolidate and transform storage and workflows

Founded in 2008, Premiere Digital has grown from a small digital distribution specialty shop in Los Angeles to a global media services, distribution, and software solutions company. Premiere Digital aggregates and delivers digital film and television assets on behalf of major studios, broadcasters and streaming providers to more than 600 platforms around the world.

With over 15 petabytes of content consolidated at its Los Angeles headquarters, users in California and its Bangalore India office collaborate around the clock to drive their business. Storage is considered the most-demanding service the technology team provides to its users, as having content available in house and ready on short notice is vital as technicians move high volume content through workflows and deliver it to platforms.

Challenge

Like other shops operating at scale in a competitive market, Premiere Digital originally built its own Tier 2 storage system with open source technology on standard hardware. This large working archive sitting behind its media asset manager (MAM) was satisfactory in some regards, but required increasing effort to grow and maintain, did not have a large community nor documentation, and lacked several other features the Premiere tech and executive teams identified as being key to the business's storage transformation. This system was limited to Tier 2 use cases and lacked the file and cloud API interfaces, monitoring capabilities, and tunability required for continued success within their growing environment.

Premiere Digital's technical team is lean and mean, with 5 employees that have specialties but must also be able to

manage the business's entire tech stack, from desktop support to their 24-rack/2MW on-site datacenter. As they began looking into new solutions, they knew that ease of deployment and use with world-class support was required.

Requirements

Years of experience dealing with large, enterprise storage systems meant the Premiere team knew exactly what they were looking for in a new Tier 2 system. High performance, tunable erasure coding, open hardware, online expandability, REST/S3 API access, NAS/file access, and real-time monitoring were at the top of the list. While they considered appliance solutions that had everything included, the expense and lack of flexibility eliminated them from consideration. The company narrowed its search to a half dozen software solutions and evaluated each of them. Most proved slow and inflexible or could not leverage their existing hardware infrastructure.

"We had a dream list of features that 'The Ideal System' (we really started calling it that) would include and every project we tried fell short in multiple key areas – from performance to erasure coding to hardware flexibility. SwiftStack was the first solution that literally 'checked every box' for us and it honestly made the competition look poor by comparison", said Vince Auletta, Director of Technology for Premiere Digital. "With most other vendors the list of what we couldn't do was longer than what we could, whereas with SwiftStack it's the polar opposite.

"Especially on the performance side of the house. I can't emphasize enough how much better SwiftStack's performance is than the other systems. Performance isn't

USES

- Move workloads that don't require true low latency storage off Tier 1 devices to lower-cost Tier 2
- Burst compute workloads to cloud while maintaining control of data in on-premises storage
- Facilitate seamless workflow between corporate and overseas offices
- Repurpose 11 PB of raw capacity on old legacy hardware

RESULTS

- Presents opportunity to use SwiftStack for use cases that previously were restricted for Tier 1 storage
- Limited need for workflows to move between Tier 1 and Tier 2 storage for better resource utilization
- Consolidated multiple storage technologies to simplify processes and minimize complexity of maintaining systems for small IT staff; increased performance / decreased cost
- Dependable solution provides confidence for continued uptime for global users and customers

"It's one less thing I have to stress about because it's extremely solid, easy to use for the entire team, and the performance is outstanding."

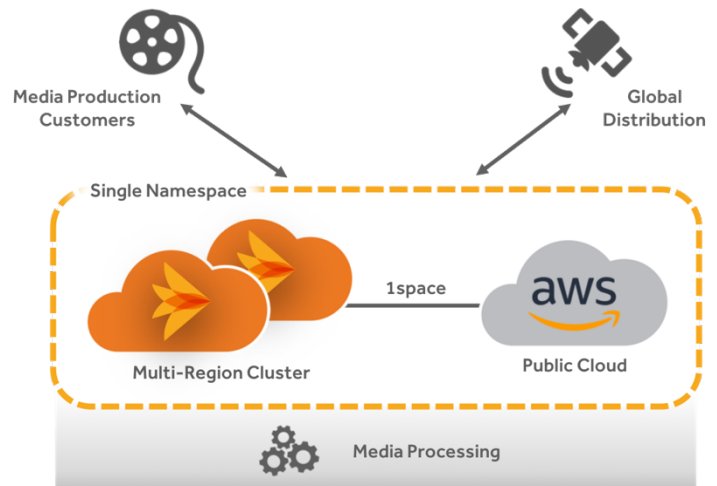
- Vince Auletta, Director of Technology for Premiere Digital

something that most people consider when evaluating object storage, but with SwiftStack you can get the best of both worlds as long as you're dealing with large files. With 4K/UHD/HDR finally becoming main stream, our archival assets have gone from ~120GB to ~1TB per file so it's extremely important that performance increase to compensate or our transfers between tiers will take forever!

"Lastly, and I don't say this lightly, the support experience has been outstanding. Support is often a serious pain point for us, especially with the larger technology vendors, so the SwiftStack support team is a breath of fresh air. Whether we have a simple best-practices question or need help troubleshooting a drive failure, we have been consistently impressed with their level of knowledge and professionalism."

Solution

SwiftStack is a multi-cloud storage system that independently scales access and capacity to store unstructured data behind Premiere Digital's MAM. The storage system allows scaling of capacity and performance on-premises with the addition of standard server hardware to meet user demands. There is no advanced configuration required and with only a few simple steps, software can be installed on a new node and deployed in the cluster. Load balancing capabilities are fully integrated allowing applications to automatically take advantage of the full bandwidth of the distributed system. SwiftStack is designed to remain available under device failure scenarios. Even in the case of major disasters, given nodes of the cluster can be globally distributed, and the single namespace can include capacity in public cloud buckets.



Premiere Digital had used a Tier 1 solution for all of its transcoding, users on workstations, and all of its ingress and egress workflows. Of these three, the only one that required true low-latency storage is for its workstation users who are doing playback of multiple files on their timelines. With API access to its MAM, SwiftStack thrived in testing, and offered additional value to developers across the company who could take direct advantage of all assets stored in the system. Premiere Digital was able to transition use cases that were less latency dependent to SwiftStack as a more cost-effective storage option without negatively impacting the end user experience.

"One of the things we recognized with our Tier 1 and Tier 2 storage is that there is a lot of time taken moving things back and forth between them for different projects," said Auletta. "This removes that limitation. If something can be done completely in object, it cuts down on that copy time, it cuts down on all the other factors that are involved there, and greatly simplifies things. It adds time to our day. It allows us to actually churn out a lot more work that we want to do. Media shops with small staff should have no fear of getting started with SwiftStack."

Premiere Digital has plans to also use the built-in native file access in SwiftStack, and to leverage multi-cloud management to burst compute workloads to the cloud while retaining all the data securely on premise using HTTPS, which is something that traditional NAS systems cannot do.

To try SwiftStack for free, go to swiftstack.com/test-drive.

For additional assistance or to learn more, always feel free to contact us. We're here to help.

Phone – (415) 625-0293 | **Email** – contact@swiftstack.com | **Chat** – Go to swiftstack.com and click chat