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Russell Ruggieri displaying one of ADS' new BlueStor units; (left) one of ADS' restoration suites (screenshot of *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly* credited to MGM)

Q&A: Russell Ruggieri, IT Specialist, ADS (Advanced Digital Services)

On finding a storage solution with room to grow

Jessica Clegg

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ADS (Advanced Digital Services) is a Hollywood-based post and editing house that specializes in restoration, and is also a recent Hot House subject. Russell Ruggieri, an engineer at ADS, discusses how he chose and implemented JMR BlueStor as an economic, flexible storage solution.

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Russell, what is your role at ADS?

I'm overall engineering for the entire building. I deal with the day-to-day operation, the design construction, implementation and maintenance of all the areas, and the technical design of the whole building.

How did you decide upon JMR?

I knew of JMR, from Chatsworth [CA], where I live. I was able to meet with the founders, high-level management; they said 'hey, we have some stuff you might have some use for.' We started out with a general overview of what we did. JMR gave us the opportunity to shake it down and see if it was a good fit. Lo and behold, we got 5 systems.

Exciting! What did you end up with?

I have a 32 TB PeSAN storage system that's attached to a Final Cut Pro editing system. Then I have a baby version of that, 16 TB tied to another Final Cut Pro System. Then I have two additional 16 TB systems attached to PCs and one 16TB that is a network attached storage system that everyone uses, basically as a big disc bucket. It's an aggregate of 96 TB of BlueStor technologies.

How were the price points?

Competitive and, if anything, less expensive than other offerings

What were you concerned about most for your project needs?

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Well, the #1 technological issue that I was looking to satisfy was the fact that one of the two storage area networks that we have in the building, the one that we predominantly use for editorial work, did not have the bandwidth to support some of the newer formats like 1080p and, most importantly for us, Sony SRW format. Their direct attached storage has the bandwidth to exceed all the existing formats that I need to support up to and including 4K. That's a big, big, big plus.

You do a lot of restoration projects. Do those take up the most space?

The restoration projects are light on bandwidth requirements, but heavy on total amount of storage, because some of the projects are protracted out. It's not as if the material comes in on a Monday and is gone on a Tuesday. Usually a feature takes weeks, and so if we're working on multiple features at once, then it does kind of hamper, well if we need a lot of high quality and high-capacity storage.

What are some particular advantages you've discovered using the BlueStor system?

I can have it implemented on Window and Mac computers. It's tough to build a facility and say I'm going to have only Macs. You have to play both sides of the coin, and PCIe was an easy, economic way for us to do that.

It's also given us the ability to take a Mac Pro system, which only has 4 slots and, using a host bus adaptor, expand it to 6 or more slots, which we can attach other peripherals to. Actually, the Bluestor is hosted in a Mac Pro system with a 16x PCIe slot. You can approach 1600 Mbps. That's sizzling.

Have you found the system to be backwards compatible with your other equipment?

Absolutely. In fact one of our systems was a bit behind, more of a legacy system and didn't have a PCIe slot. JMR has a PCIx interface card that we used to apply to that system. It was readily apparent that they could pretty much apply their technology to just about any platform and be able to accomplish it.

Is ADS planning to expand further?

We're just now on the home-run phase of building a whole new compression room, very high-end. And, part of the JMR technology, essentially half of what we purchased, has been earmarked for that area.

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A Case Against Color

By Scott Simmons

June 21, 2007 - 12:08 pm



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