

DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS EUROPE SECURES ITS CUSTOMERS' KEY VIDEO ASSETS ON TAPE WITH STORSENTRY

StorSentry™ fulfils three main operational objectives for the Discovery Communications Europe Network Services Engineering team: pre-emptive risk management, optimization of tape storage operations costs and high quality service through global visibility on the tape infrastructure.

We met with David Roulson, Head of Engineering and Darrin S. Mackie, Support Specialist, collectively responsible for managing and operating the complex broadcast hardware and software infrastructure which supports the broadcasting activity of their key customers in London.

A key component of the facility is the tape storage infrastructure used for long term information archiving; it currently manages close to 9000 video cartridges (currently LTO-2 ultimately moving to LTO-4 to better cope with volume growth) through a Sun STK SL8500 tape automation library with 12 drives. Storage needs grow rapidly with about 150 new tapes per month.

To date this implies roughly 1 Petabyte of vital customer data. Indeed, the tapes contain long form programming and short form programming & commercials broadcast since 2005; with 2 copies for each program, one for reuse and re-editing and one for transmission. This is a very active tape archiving environment due to the high reuse rate of media for broadcasting (some cartridges may be mounted up to 1000 times) and also the reediting of programs for new broadcasting (for example language, cultural or broadcasting time adaptations).

Consequently, due to the importance of content for customers and the need for high reusability, it is critical for the broadcast engineering team at Discovery Communications to ensure the highest quality of the tape storage infrastructure.

David Roulson explained to us the business drivers for selecting the StorSentry™ solution:

“When searching for a solution to manage the quality and performance of our tape infrastructure we wanted to solve three main operational issues:

Reduce the risk of losing data through proactively controlling the quality of media and drives.



Discovery Communications Europe

Discovery Communications is the world's number one nonfiction media company reaching more than 1.5 billion cumulative subscribers in over 180 countries. Discovery empowers people to explore their world and satisfy their curiosity through 100-plus worldwide networks, as well as leading consumer and educational products and services, and a diversified portfolio of digital media services.

Key Figures

Sun STK SL8500 library
12 drives
9000 video cartridges
library increases by 150 drives per month
more than 1Tb critical data

Optimize operational costs by replacing only defective media and drives at the right time. Rebuilding the content on a tape can be very expensive and reach several thousand Euros of labour and technical costs, while tape media support cost is only about 100 Euros.

Improved discrimination of problems in the broadcast operation through the ability to run pre-emptive maintenance actions on drives or media (replacement or data migration) before they fail. For example, we have been able to produce reports with StorSentry™ that were



accepted by the supplier. This enables us to have earlier replacement of hardware components prior to a failure, avoiding last minute reactions and panic mode for all."

The Quotium's StorSentry™ solution and the Quotium team was introduced to Discovery Communications by Imation at the end of 2006. The software was installed in Q1 2007 and was carefully tested by the engineering team who confirmed their choice and purchased the solution in the fall 2007. StorSentry™ has been up and running for more than three years and monitors the day-to-day operational quality of the tape storage infrastructure.

Darrin S. Mackie confirmed the operational benefit of using StorSentry™ for broadcast tape storage operations:

"StorSentry™ is a very good product which met our expectations and definitely brings high quality to our tape storage management processes. The Quotium technical and support team is available to help us take full advantage of all the product's features. We are looking to take advantage of the SNMP feature (integration with Hypervisor) and of the emailing alert capability to the engineering team. We may also extend use of the ad hoc reporting feature (Reporter) to produce specific analysis reports for our customers."

The product training will be extended to the full engineering team David Roulson added:

"We would recommend StorSentry™ for its pre-emptive control information on tape media and drive quality, thus minimizing the risk of losing key information stored on tape; but also for its rich and powerful statistics and reporting features which enable us to perform in-depth quality analysis. The reports that StorSentry™ provides give us detailed information that can be shared amongst other Discovery Communications sites."

About Quotium

Quotium Technologies is a software vendor that develops innovative solutions to address the security, availability, and performance of applications from the development phase through to production as well as the data security and availability needs of corporate archives.

Quotium's software products, including Seeker, Qtest and AppliManager, provide a complete solution to clients, guaranteeing the continued operation of user applications which are at the heart of many companies' activities. With StorSentry, Quotium Technologies addresses the data security and availability needs of corporate archives.

The company utilizes its highly potent technologies to address the needs of a highly international client base, comprising medium sized and multi-national enterprises across all business sectors.