



COMPANY

Horizon Retail
Marketing Solutions

Andrew Moss
Managing Director

Richard Joyce
Design Manager

Andy Child
Technical Lead

SERVICE NICHE

Retail solutions,
including in-store
displays and
graphics for use
online and in print.

CHALLENGE

To increase efficiency
and responsiveness
by centralizing data
storage and providing
high-speed data
access to employees,
customers and
suppliers across EMEA.

SOLUTION

WD Sentinel™ DX4000
Small Office Storage
Server powered by
Intel® Atom™ Processor

Centralized Data Storage Helps U.K. Marketing Agency Deliver Higher Client Satisfaction

Horizon Retail Marketing Solutions helps high-tech brands and other clients across Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) by designing and building retail solutions that increase sales at the point of purchase. Based in Ely, U.K., the agency produces a wide variety of projects, from in-store displays to graphics for use online and in print.

It's a hectic business, with clients who need solutions delivered within tight deadlines. "In our industry, every hour can be critical," says Andrew Moss, Horizon's managing director.

Horizon's day-to-day operations require fast, efficient and secure access to project files—by employees within the office, contract designers working remotely, installation crews on the road and business partners in a variety of locales. However, the agency was finding this challenging, for several reasons.

Each project generates enormous amounts of data, including 3-D technical drawings and animations. Individual files can be as large as a gigabyte, with up to a dozen iterations created throughout the development process. Often, several Horizon specialists work on a project at different stages, with each person storing new project files on their computer or an external hard drive. "Because we didn't

have data stored centrally, everybody was working off their own drives," says Richard Joyce, Horizon's design manager. "To find the most up-to-date version of a file, designers might have to hunt across multiple external hard drives—with the potential for delays and the risk of not using the most current project information."

Presenting an additional challenge, Horizon needed to share these large project files with external suppliers and customers, as well as staff working offsite.

Horizon looked for an easy-to-use solution to provide secure, centralized, on-site data storage with high-performance remote access. They found a solution that met their needs: the WD Sentinel™ DX4000 Small Office Storage Server, a network-attached storage (NAS) device that provides up to 12 TB of data storage with easy and secure remote access.



WD Sentinel™ DX4000
Small Office Storage Server

WD Sentinel
is perfect
for us—an
off-the-shelf
solution that
meets our
requirements
and is easy
to install.

—Andrew Moss
Managing Director
Horizon RMS

Simplified, Secure On-site Storage

Now, Horizon's employees store all project-related data centrally on WD Sentinel, rather than scattered across individual drives. Everyone at the company knows exactly where to find information when they need it—and they can be sure that they're accessing the right version. "We can channel information into the right place, with everyone storing information in exactly the same way," says Joyce. "It's helped us become more efficient."

It is also extremely fast. WD Sentinel is powered by a dual-core Intel® Atom™ processor, which supports high-speed file storage and retrieval simultaneously across Horizon's network. When Horizon upgraded its network to match the performance of WD Sentinel, data transfer speeds accelerated to 50 times faster than previously.

Remote Access Helps Get the Job Done

WD Sentinel's administrative interface makes it easy for Horizon to provide selective access to external designers, suppliers and customers.

This capability recently enabled Horizon to successfully meet an urgent customer request. "At 3:00 p.m., we got a call from a client who needed us to print large-format graphic panels and deliver them to Germany for a presentation early the next morning," recalls managing director Moss. Transferring the huge files to Horizon's printing company previously took an hour or more—in this case, a delay that would have resulted in missing the overnight shipping deadline. But using WD Sentinel, Horizon provided the printing company with remote access to the files in mere seconds. "Within the span of two working hours we had panels printed and at the airport, for delivery the next morning," Moss says. Without WD Sentinel, "we would not have been able to service our customer's requirements. And ultimately, if we can't service their requirements they'll use another agency."

The remote access capabilities are also invaluable to teams working at retail sites. "It allows our installation teams to take part of the office with them," says Joyce. "If they unexpectedly find they need an installation guide, they can log in using their smart phones and get the files."

Easier to Use and Less Expensive

Before choosing WD Sentinel, Horizon looked at other options, such as creating its own server-based storage solution. They quickly realized that this would be more complex to set up and manage, with higher upfront and recurring expenses including hundreds of pounds for client backup software licenses. WD Sentinel was less expensive overall and came as an integrated package with drives and pre-installed OS, allowing simple plug-and-play configuration. "It was incredibly easy to set up," says Andy Child, Horizon technical lead.

With four drive bays, WD Sentinel can be easily upgraded to provide more capacity to meet Horizon's expanding business needs, and its RAID capabilities provide additional data protection. "If a drive fails, we're not losing the life blood of the business," says Joyce.

Return on Investment: Efficiency, Responsiveness and Client Satisfaction

Moss says that WD Sentinel paid for itself within weeks by enabling Horizon to work more efficiently, respond more quickly and collaborate more easily. "It's self-evident," he says. "Giving access to suppliers allows us to do things much faster. And if we didn't have WD Sentinel, we'd spend so much more time looking for files. It's a no-brainer—so much improvement in efficiency for so little investment."

To provide additional disaster recovery protection, Horizon is considering adding KeepVault™, a cloud-based backup service integrated with WD Sentinel. "Horizon already protects its business with several types of insurance, and cloud backup could provide another safeguard for our most valuable asset—our data," Child says.

Horizon continues to find new ways that WD Sentinel can help make its operations more efficient while requiring minimal administrative effort. "WD Sentinel is perfect for us—an off-the-shelf solution that meets our requirements and is easy to install," Moss says. "We've only just started to scratch the surface."

To learn more, visit:
» www.wdc.com/wdsentinel
» www.intel.com/go/storage



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