



GlassHouse Helps HIT Entertainment Become Digitally Animated

HIT Entertainment

In an ever more digital world, consumer demand for content over any device at any time is constantly growing. The rise of on-demand content, high-definition and online viewing capabilities has led to many of our favourite programmes, films and animations transferring from traditional hardcopy to digital.

HIT Entertainment, one of the world's leading independent children's entertainment producers and rights owners, is one organisation that has adapted to these changing consumer demands. As more and more of its content became digital, they realised that their data storage strategy would need to dramatically adapt to meet the growing needs of the business.

The Importance of Independence

HIT had estimated that its storage demands would increase up to 28% over the next 5 years. At this rate, the company would be increasing its spend on storage in the next five years. HIT realised it was important to accurately assess and analyse its current environment to determine where it could sweat assets and adjust strategy before undergoing any investment in new hardware.

To achieve the right strategy, HiT wanted to be sure it implemented the right strategy at the right costs. It was therefore reluctant to approach vendors who would offer a product-led approach that resulted in a considerable spend upfront with little long-term advantages and inevitable shelf-ware. Instead, HiT wanted a consultancy to help develop a future proof storage strategy that was right for the overall business plan, taking into account SLAs and business demands. This requirement for independent advice led Ryan Tunstall, VP Global IT Operations, to GlassHouse Technologies.

Tunstall explains: "I wanted to ensure I would have full buy-in from the key business stakeholders when suggesting a new storage strategy, so it needed to be in line with the overall business objectives and digital convergence goal. I knew I had to invest in comprehensive and independent analysis that we would have faith in and that would provide a strong strategic business case. GlassHouse's reputation for vendor intendance and tailored advice made the consultancy a clear winner."

Can we fix it? Yes, we can!

Over just 40 days, GlassHouse assessed and analysed HiT's current storage environment and was able to make recommendations that would save the business money immediately and in the long-term.

Initially, GlassHouse reviewed the business requirements determining exactly what would be required now and in the future and then built those requirements into a service management matrix. GlassHouse and HiT were then able to objectively assess the current infrastructure to identify where it could currently meet the business requirements and where it could not.

Following GlassHouse's analysis it was able to bring HIT's business needs into line and suggest how to utilise capacity correctly. This exposed areas where the IT department could introduce additional tiers of storage.

In reducing the required level of storage for less critical data, such as the email client, HiT was able to reclaim and reuse a considerable amount of storage space. The company was also able to improve efficiency by implementing a new archiving scheme, creating headroom for the primary infrastructure. These initiatives were carried out immediately so that HiT could benefit from improved efficiencies straight away, increasing longevity of the existing infrastructure without the need to buy in new products in the short-term.

"The speed and efficiency of GlassHouse's analysis was second to none," says Tunstall. "In assessing the business needs, the consultants were able to generate a comprehensive understanding of our requirements and map the storage infrastructure recommendations on to that.

"I wanted to be able to present internally a cost-effective strategy and GlassHouse was able to provide that. Not only that, we've already implemented strategies that save us money. I now have the tools to assure my key stakeholders that future investments in storage environments will be aligned with the overall needs of the business; making my life a lot easier and my department much more efficient."

The Future of Storage

GlassHouse also provided a long-term storage strategy advising HIT where and when to invest in new technologies. By implementing the processes suggested by GlassHouse, HIT has been able to free up storage which now means it does not need to invest in new storage until mid 2010.

GlassHouse has also predicted HIT could save money over the next five years and see financial return on investment in year two if they follow the recommendations suggested.