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# Key3Media Events, Inc.

*The world's #1 events agency uses Compaq N2400 NAS to share data worldwide – more cost-effectively*

## Customer: Key3Media

Business: Producer of technology events, expositions, and conferences

Locations: United States, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, Sweden

www.key3media.com

## Business-IT Opportunity

Reduce time and costs associated with sharing and updating multiple redundant data files required by their worldwide offices.

## PC Connection Solution

Move from a local server-attached storage model to a network-attached (NAS) model using Compaq TaskSmart N2400 NAS appliances.

## Key Products

- Compaq TaskSmart N2400 NAS configured with (14) 36.4GB hot-swap SCSI hard drives
- PC Connection in-house configuration
- 24x7x4 on-site service protection

## Benefits Summary

Key3Media is now able to maintain a centrally located data repository while providing simultaneous, real-time access to users at its sites worldwide. Users can open, share, and modify files without having to request or send redundant e-mail copies. This increases the productivity of team members and eliminates the possibility of creating conflicting versions of files. Significantly less time is spent finding and moving files. Costs are greatly reduced because a single set of storage hardware serves Key3Media's entire global network.

Like most companies, Key3Media Events, Inc., wants to receive the highest possible return from its technology investments. But to achieve that return, Key3Media has something most companies don't: a unique perspective from which to assess technology. Key3Media is the world's number one producer of technology events. Those include COMDEX, NetWorld+Interop, Seybold Seminars, JavaOne, as well as many other major expositions, conferences and customized events. Altogether, these events attract more than 5,300 exhibiting companies, 1.3 million attendees and 11,000 media representatives each year.

When Key3Media needs a scalable, reliable, and cost-effective storage solution, the world's leading exhibitor of computer technology turned to PC Connection and the Compaq N2400 NAS file-server. Key3Media has purchase three N2400s from PC Connection over the past three years to ensure that users in its various locations are able to easily share the data needed to produce events. In addition to supporting event production, one of the servers also runs the company's payroll system.

## NAS is better than simply adding more servers

The N2400 is a member of Compaq's TaskSmart family of NAS devices. NAS, or Network Attached Storage, is a storage architecture in which disk arrays are each connected directly to an organization's network where any server on the network can access it. In a conventional architecture, a disk array would be dedicated to a specific server. The downside of that approach is that servers are often purchased exclusively to provide additional storage. Another disadvantage is that a server's compute cycles would be wasted processing data requests from other servers. Although, theoretically, almost

any server can be configured as an NAS server, TaskSmart servers have been specifically built to operate as NAS "appliances." Their operating systems are optimized for higher data throughput and they are easily attached to a user's network with minimal configuration time or effort.

## Sharing data worldwide more cost-effectively

"We chose this solution for three reasons," states Dave Lee, Key3Media's Director of Engineering and Operations. "It is affordable, performs admirably and it is reliable. We evaluated a number of products on price, performance, and reliability and it came down to the N2400 being a great solution."

***"With the N2400, users are able to confidently share data regardless of location without feeling like they also have to store that data redundantly 'just to be safe'"***

*– David Lee, IT Manager*

Reliability was also a major concern. "Users want to know that their file shares are reliable and they have the space available to share files across groups located in different sites," states Lee. "Key3Media has three primary locations in North America — Southern California, Northern California and Massachusetts. With the N2400, users are able to confidently share data regardless of location without feeling like they also have to store that data redundantly just 'to be safe.'"

## Case Study #415: Compaq N2400 NAS

Lee explains the importance of file sharing to Key3Media: "Currently, the company produces over 60 events held in 17 countries around the world. Various groups within the company produce these events. But even though they are in different groups they still have to share a lot of the same information — such as event information or images that go on our Web sites and into our publications or e-mails. Previously, this sharing was done by maintaining standalone file servers with different operating systems at each location. Users would have to e-mail files between sites or else maintain multiple copies of files in different sites. As a result, we would actually end up spending more money on mail server disk space than we would on file sharing disk space. Of course, there was also the issue of people spending time e-mailing files back and forth, as well as the issue of making sure that each location currently had the most up-to-date version of a particular file."

***In addition to supporting event production, one of the N2400s also runs Key3Media's payroll system.***

### **"Reliability has been great"**

Lee has had two years to see if Key3Media has made the right technology decision. "The reliability has been great," Lee states. "I also think users have noticed an improvement in their productivity in terms of their ability to more easily share information, the reliability of that information and also the ease of use for traveling between sites. To access a file, they can just click on an icon on their desktops or search via the active directory. They don't have to e-mail a colleague at another location to help them find the file. They also don't have to have the file e-mailed back to them. And they don't have to worry about whether they have the correct version. From the point of view of the user, it is as if each file is stored locally; but of course, it is stored centrally which also conserves disk space and therefore costs."

### **"An IT partner who understands our business"**

Lee recommends PC Connection as an IT solutions provider. He has been at Key3Media for two years and has done business with PC Connection the entire time. One reason: he prefers a vendor who already knows his needs before he even picks up the phone. "Having someone who knows our environment — that is such a major timesaver. If you talk to our sales manager from PC Connection he already knows what our standard server configuration is. Last year we brought many new applications online, and this

required purchasing many new servers. Whenever we needed to buy one all we had to do was call him and say, 'We need to configure a new standard server' and he would just send the configuration right down to us. They also provided Key3Media with the best prices"

*For storage and data-sharing solutions that help you run your critical business information more cost-effectively, call your PC Connection Account Manager today.*

### **Custom storage solutions from PC Connection**

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