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INgrooves
Case Study

Keep the Music Coming: INgrooves, a Fast-Growing Digital Music Company, Scales Up with Nexenta

San Francisco, CA
www.ingrooves.com
Media / Entertainment

Summary

Challenge: Cost-effective scalability and disaster recovery
Solution: NexentaStor High Availability (HA) Cluster
Platform: Intel, Silicon Mechanics' zStax
Use Case: High Performance and Availability

Benefits:
• Scalable, efficient, and cost-effective storage with zStax
• 3X the amount of storage in the same physical space
• Reduced power requirements
• Easy-to-use web-based management
• Reduced acquisition and installation costs by 70%

Business Overview

INgrooves is a leading provider of digital distribution, marketing, and promotion to global music and video clients, working with more than 600 digital and physical retail partners around the globe. It handles distribution for hundreds of independent labels and thousands of artists, and has distribution partnerships with retailers including iTunes, Rhapsody, Amazon, and Spotify. The company offers its ONE Digital platform, an end-to-end digital asset management platform that automates distribution and administrative functions, and serves as a content hub that connects directly to leading online and mobile stores worldwide.

Challenges

As the fast-growing company signed contract after contract to distribute music for independent labels and artists, INgrooves found that expanding its existing storage solution was proving extremely costly.

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>
> **Nicolas Ratineau**
> Director of Systems Engineering
> INgrooves

"As a music company, we are constantly storing more and more content," explains Nicolas Ratineau, director of systems engineering for INgrooves. "Nothing is ever deleted – no matter how old the music. We know we have to add storage as we grow, but the cost of adding a full rack to our existing system was prohibitive to our business." In addition to the cost of adding a rack, there was substantial inconvenience and ancillary costs, because it also meant fitting a heavy device into limited space and working with experts to evaluate the power situation and install proprietary connectors. The company wanted a more cost-effective, scalable option to handle growth, a few terabytes at a time.

Solution and Benefits

Solution

Ratineau consulted with Silicon Mechanics, an industry-leading provider of rack-mounted server, storage, and high-performance computing solutions, and learned about zStax, Silicon Mechanics' enterprise-level Open Source-driven Software-Defined Storage platform, and the zStax StorCore unified storage appliance. The zStax solution is built on Nexenta, a fully featured NAS/SAN software platform with enterprise-class capabilities, and NexentaStor High Availability (HA) Clusters.

INgrooves started by deploying a zStax HA cluster in a proof of concept (POC). Because zStax products are powered by NexentaStor, a hardware-independent storage platform, Silicon Mechanics was able to select the ideal processor for the application: in this case, a high-performance and low-latency Intel Xeon processor. The POC went extremely well: INgrooves set up the appliance easily, without having to wait for an outside expert to come to the site and rack the device.

After the success of the POC, INgrooves deployed two additional zStax HA clusters to support its everyday business activities, bringing its total to more than 600 TB of usable storage space. It also deployed an additional zStax HA cluster for use in asynchronous disaster recovery at a data center in Dallas, TX. For ease of management, all systems use the same interface.

Benefits

INgrooves estimates that using zStax reduces the company's storage equipment and installation costs by nearly 70 percent, money that it can invest in other parts of the IT infrastructure to provide better service to customers. Plus, the appliance's compact configuration means that INgrooves gets nearly three times more storage in the same amount of physical space as with its prior solution, making zStax an easy and cost-effective way to expand storage capacity without having to invest in building out its data center. "With zStax we can scale indefinitely to meet our needs," says Ratineau.

Ratineau was especially happy that the hardware does not require a special power connection. The previous system required its own power circuit with a battery unit system that added to power consumption, whereas the zStax deployment uses power from the data center. Plus, it can be used on existing racks, leveraging current infrastructure. INgrooves has found the web interface to be simple to use, so staff can operate the system with very little training.

Another consideration was disaster recovery, and replicating data from one site to another. Replication is included in zStax, while other vendors typically charge extra for it. INgrooves found setting up replication to be far easier with the zStax cluster than with its existing system.

INgrooves has realized the immediate value it sought: scalable, cost-effective storage and disaster recovery, coupled with flexible, enterprise-ready management in a platform architected, built, and supported by an expert partner. Going forward, INgrooves plans to transfer its entire storage infrastructure onto the zStax platform.

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