

LOCATION

Australia

SOLUTIONS

Autodesk SAN

Autodesk Flame Premium®

Autodesk Flame Assist®

Autodesk Flare®

Post and Broadcast Creatives Embrace Autodesk SAN Solutions

VFX artists and businesses benefit from Autodesk Quantum partnership



Australian post-production houses and broadcasters have been quick to take advantage of Autodesk's partnership with leading scale-out storage specialist Quantum.

Existing and prospective Autodesk creative finishing customers in these markets can see the immediate benefits and efficiencies of installing Quantum's StoreNext SAN technology infrastructure.

Scalable expansion assured

Alt.VFX burst into life four years ago and the Brisbane-based post facility grew quickly to open a Sydney office where the expanded operations saw the company revisiting its storage options.

"We've got 15 people in Sydney using Autodesk Flame Premium, three Flame Assist workstations, Smoke, editing and other VFX systems," said Colin Renshaw, VFX Supervisor. "They were using a small SAN solution and originally we favoured duplicating our Brisbane configuration in Sydney but we really needed the potential to grow and when we talked to Autodesk they brought in Quantum to discuss our requirements.

"While they worked to get us the maximum bang-for-buck the big thing that set Autodesk apart was having support in Australia and readily available spare parts. Autodesk and Quantum represented a very strong solution and it gave us a lot more confidence going forward.

"We don't really know how big our Sydney office is going to be so we needed something that was fully scalable to handle potentially double the number of people. As a result we got a higher spec system through Autodesk that has a lot more headroom than what we are using now. It has the ability to do multiple 4K streams and we are confident we can hang a lot of people off it and handle a lot of data throughput when required.

"Some vendors just want to sell you kit but part of the attraction of the Autodesk's Quantum offering was they tailored a total solution, taking into account our existing system and repurposing it by backing up to our existing slower SAN."

Broadcasting benefits from StoreNext SAN

The promos department in Nine Network Australia's Sydney office was facing ageing hardware and slow file transfers when Derrick Meyer, Media Solutions Manager, began discussing upgrades with Autodesk Australia.

"We were looking for a more collaborative workflow and centralised storage solution for the Smoke and Flame systems we had then," said Meyer. "They had been supplied with locally attached fibre storage so we were always comfortable with Autodesk storage and consulted with them first to see what options were available. They offered a Quantum StoreNext SAN that had been proven in other areas and knew it would suit film and television operations.

"Our biggest concern was speed and we wanted to ensure our Smoke artists would be unable to tell the difference between localised storage and fibre attached SAN - that was our concern with any other vendor.

"We looked at other systems but they didn't give us the confidence that we had with Autodesk knowing it was their supported solution and it was going to provide us with the performance of a stand-alone SAN."

Meyer now oversees 9 Technology's workflow that utilises two Autodesk Flame Premium seats and two Flame Assist on Mac systems, all working from the new 40Tb SAN backed up to a StorageDNA LTO5 archive.

Describing the upgrade and installation as an "extremely painless procedure" Meyer said the Flame team enjoyed the speed of the new infrastructure which enabled collaborative workflows and project sharing.

"One of other benefits of the SAN is the fantastic support we get because we are dealing direct with Autodesk, not with a third party. It all runs pretty much 'hands off' with rarely a problem. In the past we could have four days of downtime but now we've got reliability back and less frustrated users."

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— Colin Renshaw
VFX Supervisor
Alt.VFX.

VFX artists and businesses benefit from the Autodesk and Quantum partnership

Refining Success

One of the difficulties of running a successful small business is managing growth. Eugene Richards, Flame Artist/Owner of The Refinery, chose an Autodesk SAN system to power his company's expansion.

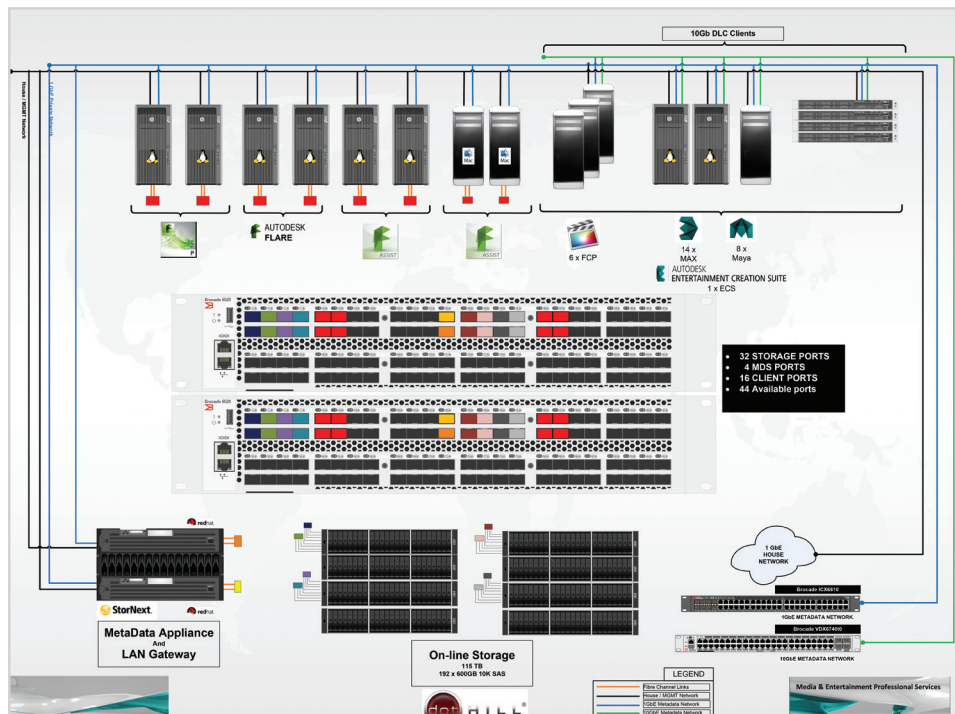
In just four years the Melbourne creative finishing company has grown from a single Autodesk Smoke operation to two Flame Premium systems supported by two multi-purpose workstations running Flame Assist and Resolve.

"Our initial workstation had very little storage and we had to do a lot of time consuming media management and archiving," explained Richards. "After completing a TVC any last minute revisions were hard to manage because the workflow wasn't efficient and required me to work extremely long hours.

"Flame was becoming a bit of an island so I began talking to others and exploring potential storage setups. We had a Smoke on Mac licence then a Flame Assist to handle the overflow therefore we wanted a storage solution to link it all together with the full flexibility to work on any project in any room, or all work together on larger projects that require a faster turnaround.

"The only real option for me was Quantum's StoreNext SAN through Autodesk. We don't have an IT engineer and needed a fully supported solution should something go wrong. Having experienced Autodesk Technical Support through our Flame subscriptions we knew it would be second to none - it's rare to get such great support from any vendor and it really played a big part of the final decision to go with the Quantum SAN through Autodesk."

Richards then convinced his partners to invest in the SAN. "The hard thing for a small business budget is that a SAN is a sizeable purchase. However it's fast becoming evident how much it's going to change our business - it provides a completely transparent workflow, speeds up everything on our backend and allows us to maximise our output. Now we can take on more jobs that we might have previously turned away because we were at full capacity."



Autodesk SAN Architecture

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