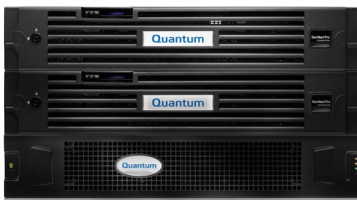# Quantum®

CASE STUDY

Motion Design Studio Moves to StorNext for Next-Stage Growth

When Swordfish started to be limited by its legacy storage infrastructure, the company turned to Quantum's StorNext Pro Foundation with the help of integrator, Advanced Systems Group. The result was performance fast enough even for 4K resolution files, support for all Swordfish's existing applications, and a configuration that made the switch easy and affordable.

swordfish

FEATURED PRODUCTS

StorNext Pro Foundation

"If you're looking for a backbone for your company, there's no better solution. The Quantum StorNext Pro Foundation is the heart and soul of Swordfish and I can't recommend it highly enough."

Matt Silverman
Founder and Executive Creative Director, Swordfish

> " StorNext Pro Foundation was designed to make it easy for a company the size of Swordfish...to combine the highest performance, the widest range of applications, and to be both simple to install and cost effective. "
>
> **Dave Van Hoy** - President, Advanced Systems Group

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- StorNext® Pro Foundation
- Adobe Premiere, Blackmagic DaVinci, Autodesk Maya, Cinema 4K, Houdini, RV for Playback, Pixar Tractor

KEY BENEFITS

- High-speed Fibre Channel client support enables sharing of large files and faster collaborative workflow
- Faster performance provides opportunity to expand business services and compete more effectively
- System supports all the customer's legacy applications transparently
- Preconfigured system provides StorNext benefits in an affordable, easy-to-install solution designed for smaller companies
- Robust reliability ensures the integrity of client data and protects key business assets
- Scalability provides a growth path to support the next generation of high-resolution media content

www.quantum.com/customerstories

Swordfish is a graphics studio in San Francisco that specializes in motion design, both for marketing and user experience. The company's customer list includes some of the largest and most innovative tech companies on the globe, including Sony, Google, Dolby, and Salesforce. com, as well as advertising clients that represent a wide range of traditional consumer products. The company started out small but grew rapidly as it added more and more clients and expanded the kinds of services it could provide. In the process, Swordfish's success put a huge strain on its legacy infrastructure and storage resources.

"I started Swordfish about 2-1/2 years ago with limited resources," explains founder and Executive Creative Director, Matt Silverman. "We had an [Apple] Mac Mini and some direct-attached storage. After a while, we found ourselves working on really big 4K projects, with lots of RED source footage, and a bigger

team. Everybody was trying to hit those files at the same time over GigE, and we realized that we needed a much more robust solution.

"As a motion design studio, our needs are very different than a traditional post house. Although we do projects of different sizes, some of them involve a lot of big, heavy 3D renders of 4K resolution content—and some of the new ones are stereoscopic 4K so everything doubles in size. On projects like that, the processors really bottleneck, and it might take us up to three hours to render a frame. So we needed really powerful performance, but we also needed a system sized for our business. And whatever we came up with also had to work with all the different applications that we were running— that includes Premiere, DaVinci, Maya, Cinema 4D, Houdini, [and] RV for playback."

ADVANCED SYSTEMS GROUP HELPS PLAN STRATEGIC CHANGE

For help in planning the next steps, Swordfish turned to Advanced Systems Group LLC (ASG), an integrator based out of Emeryville, CA that specializes in selecting, installing, and supporting production, post-production, and shared storage systems for the broadcast, film, creative, and corporate video markets.

"I had worked with ASG before, at another company, and I had complete confidence in them," Silverman explains. "What they had designed and installed then was a very large Quantum StorNext system using a Fibre Channel SAN. I loved the performance we had, but I didn't think there was any way that we could scale that kind of environment down to be practical for [a] 20-person company like Swordfish and still give us the power we needed. And I really didn't know what it would take to meet our needs and give us the ability to handle the next generation of even higher-resolution content that we can see coming."

Swordfish was happy to take ASG's recommendations.

"I've got so much on my plate as a business owner and creative director that the last thing that I want to worry about is the technical

ADVANCED
SYSTEMS
GROUP

details of this Fibre Channel versus that Fibre Channel," says Silverman. "Having a value-added reseller like ASG, who I trust with my life, is great. Whatever they say to use is what I'm going to use because I know that they're going to be providing me with the best solution."

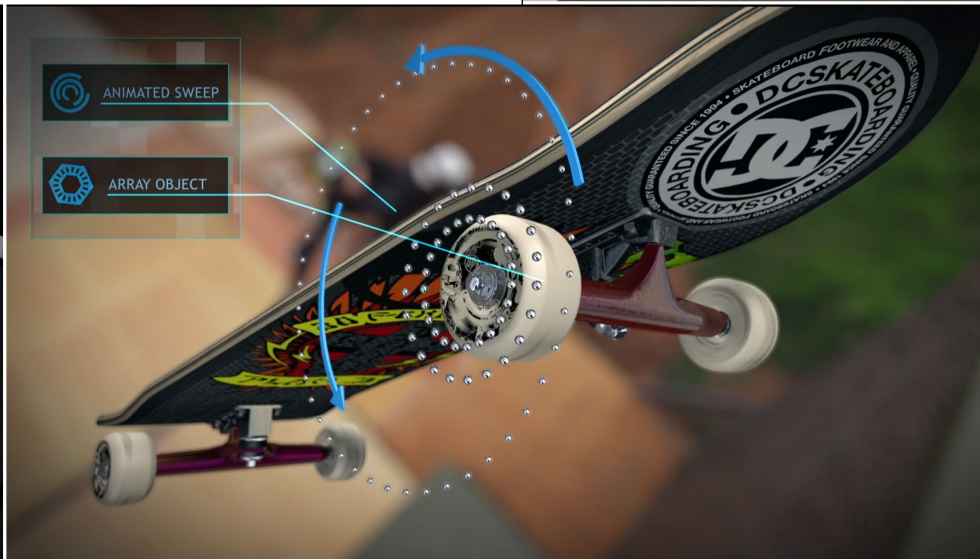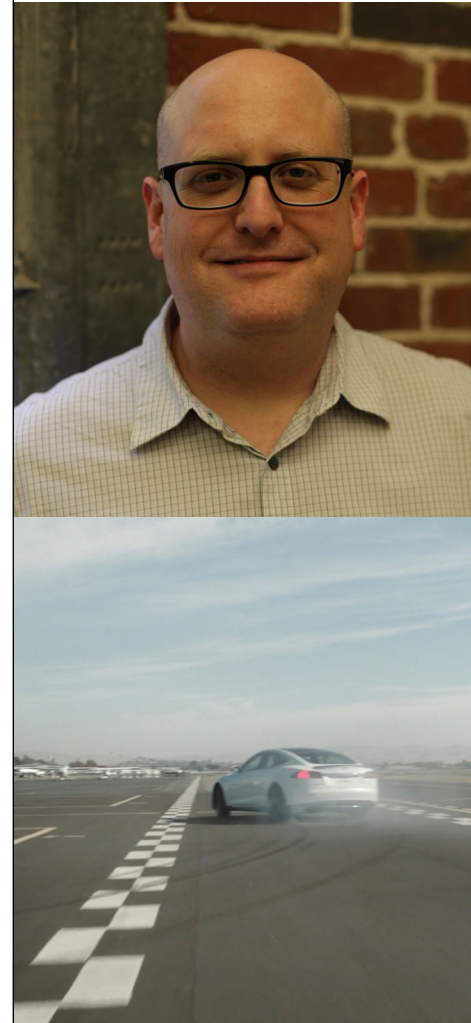## STORNEXT PRO FOUNDATION PROVIDES THE ANSWER

The system that ASG recommended was the StorNext Pro Foundation solution. It combines StorNext 5 software, redundant metadata controllers, and high-performance SAN storage in a pre-configured solution. The system installed at Swordfish includes 96TB of high-performance SAN storage.

"StorNext Pro Foundation was designed to make it easy for a company the size of Swordfish...to combine the highest performance, the widest range of applications, and to be both simple to install and cost-effective," says Dave Van Hoy, President, Advanced Systems Group. "Based on our experience with other innovative startups that are pushing the technology envelope, we knew it could meet all of the company's needs and give them performance and scalability to meet their needs in the future."

The StorNext high-speed Fibre Channel connectivity solved all of the performance problems that Swordfish had been seeing, and it gave the company bandwidth to offer services

"With the old system, we didn't have the speed to bring customers in and let them be part of a client-supervised session. But with StorNext, now we do."

Matt Silverman
Founder and Executive Creative Director, Swordfish

Competitive Moments

to its customers that had not been possible with the legacy system.

"With the old system, we didn't have the speed to bring customers in and let them be part of a client-supervised session," Silverman adds. "But with StorNext, now we do. We can take huge files—32-bit EXR files where each frame is maybe 16 to 20 megabytes a frame—just drop them right into RV and hit play. It works perfectly in real time with no dropped frames. That means that we can offer lots more post-production services than we could before, and that means we can successfully compete with the big LA post houses."

ROBUST AND RELIABLE

In addition to performance and scalability, Swordfish was looking for a solution that would provide trouble-free reliability and be "bullet-proof."

"My business relies on data. The bits that are on those drives is all I got. If I lose those bits, I will be out of business," Silverman explains. "The StorNext Pro Foundation has proved to be every bit as reliable as the ASG team told us it would. The thing just works, and that's the beauty of it. You just let the thing run in the background. You never have to turn it on. You never have to turn it off. It just goes, and it creates this amazing network for you to attach to.

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ABOUT SWORDFISH

Swordfish is a motion design studio based in San Francisco specializing in marketing and user experience, as well as offering a range of post-production services. Its team of directors, designers, animators, and technologists work with direct clients and ad agencies to design memorable pictures in motion. For more information, visit www.swordfish-sf.com.

To contact your local sales office, please visit www.quantum.com

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