



# Datalink Provides Omnicom Management Services with Solution that Improves Performance and Supports RTO



## THE CUSTOMER: OMNICOM MANAGEMENT SERVICES

The Omnicom Group (NYSE: OMC) is a strategic holding company that manages a portfolio of global market leaders. Its companies operate in the disciplines of advertising, marketing, specialty communications, interactive/digital media and media buying. Omnicom Management Services is a Dallas-based subsidiary of the Omnicom Group that provides critical back office functions for local Omnicom agencies. Services provided include Human Resources, Facilities, Finance, Accounting, Information Services, and Information Technology. Omnicom Management Services uses a shared resource model to capture economies of scale and provide a higher level of service to its multiple supported business units than they could achieve by independently investing in their own infrastructures.

## THE CHALLENGE: FILE SERVICE RECOVERY TIME AND FILE SERVICE FOR MAC AND WINDOWS ENVIRONMENT

Omnicom Management Services' clients operate in very media rich environments. Of the approximately 800 users on the network, roughly half work on Macintosh computers, using Adobe® applications such as Photoshop®, Illustrator®, and InDesign®, as well as 3-D rendering applications. Users generate very large files that typically contain high resolution graphics—file size is often over 200 megabytes with the largest being more than 100 gigabytes. Users frequently open and manipulate files up to 3 gigabytes in size directly from the file server.

One of the challenges that Omnicom Management Services was encountering on the file server side was how to share files between the Mac and Windows environments in a manner such that the files would be compatible with both systems and not be corrupted. IT staff was running into issues with the file sharing systems not being optimized for half of a million files and 8 terabytes

### INDUSTRY

Management Services

### LOCATION

Dallas, Texas

### SOLUTION

Modular enterprise storage system that offers multi-protocol support for both Windows and Mac users.

### DATALINK PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Analysis
- Design
- Implementation
- Support

### BENEFITS

Omnicom can utilize SAN and NAS capabilities through one system. Hourly replication of data enables quick restoration in the event of a disaster. System users no longer experience performance lag time.

**“We gained a solution that could act as a traditional Fibre Channel RAID controller as well as an integrated host for network attached storage.”**

—Marcus Kwan  
Manager of Network Operations  
Omnicom Management Services

of live data. As a result, heavy system users were seeing 50-80 percent performance slowdowns during peak usage times. With the work flow process of Omnicom Management Services’ clients based on accessing, manipulating and moving these files, any downtime or performance degradation would severely impact them.

Beyond this, Omnicom Management Services was not satisfied that it could meet its Recovery Time Objective (RTO) in the event of a failure. With the current storage architecture—consisting of a Fibre Channel disk array system—there was only one live copy of the data. If there were a system failure, it would take four to five days to restore the data from tape. With clients estimating that they would lose several thousand dollars an hour in billable time if they were unable to access data, this was simply unacceptable.

In addition, there were management issues with the current system. “We constantly had to juggle files around to meet limitations. Obviously, when we have to move 700 gigabytes to a terabyte of data around it is very time consuming. We have to take the servers down for the time period the data is being moved and that is disruptive to the client,” said Marcus Kwan, manager of network operations for Omnicom Management Services. It was also difficult to plan downtime for any maintenance to the server or storage hardware. Because Omnicom’s clients are in a very deadline driven industry where projects often come up quickly, scheduled downtime becomes a low priority when other pressing needs arise.

## **THE SOLUTION: MULTI-PROTOCOL SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES NAS AND SAN CAPABILITIES AND DATA REPLICATION**

Omnicom Management Services was looking for a technology refresh of its disk array that would provide the latest in drives, speed and capacity; the organization also wanted a solution that would decrease downtime, improve performance and meet a recovery time objective of less than 24 hours. Upon assessing Omnicom Management Services’ existing environment, as well as its future requirements and objectives, Datalink weighed the pros and cons of various solution architectures and hardware and software technologies. Ultimately, Datalink recommended a Network Appliance-based clustered solution that supports multiple protocols and provides failover in the event of a disaster.

In evaluating recommendations from several storage solution and technology providers, Omnicom looked at some of the more traditional Fibre Channel SAN arrays, according to Kwan, but the solution Datalink designed held more appeal because it offered everything the organization required in one system that was turnkey. “We gained a solution that could act as a traditional Fibre Channel RAID controller as well as an integrated host for network attached storage—with all the integrated functionality that Network Appliance provides,” said Kwan.

Datalink installed a NetApp FAS 3050 modular enterprise storage system, with Fibre Channel and

SATA disks, that provides block level and file level data access in an IP SAN and CIFS environment. The storage system uses the iSCSI protocol to provide access to storage for email, SQL, and application servers. Both Windows-based and Macintosh-based platforms utilize the CIFS protocol to access shares hosted on the Network Appliance device. In order to gain greater compatibility with the CIFS protocol on the Macintosh side, the organization utilizes Thursby ADmitMac® software.

For data protection, Omnicom is using SnapMirror® software to take hourly snapshots of the data, replicating from the Fibre Channel to SATA disk. That replicated data is then backed up to tape. If access to the primary storage were lost, it would take less than an hour to re-route all users to the serial ATA storage and the replicated data. Then, once the Fibre Channel arrays were operational, Omnicom could mirror the data back to the Fibre Channel disk in the background and fail back over to the Fibre Channel.



## THE BENEFITS: PERFORMANCE, SCALABILITY, AND INCREASED DATA PROTECTION

Kwan cites steady performance and scalability as key benefits. Users have seen overall performance improvements of 15-20 percent but, more significantly, have experienced no performance degradation during peak usage times. “We’re seeing a very steady, non-degraded performance no matter what we throw at it,” Kwan elaborated. And the ability to grow seamlessly and dynamically has reduced the need for downtime and outage windows. This enables Omnicom to accommodate its client requirements much more effectively.

Life has also been made easier from a management perspective, according to Kwan. “All the disparate components of storage management have been integrated into one box,” Kwan said, noting the learning curve for the new technology has been minimal.

Most importantly though, the organization has greatly exceeded its 24-hour RTO for restoring data to its clients in the event of a system failure. In adding another layer of data protection, Omnicom has further showed its commitment to serving its clients.

“Everything went pretty much flawlessly,” Kwan said of the solution implementation. “Datalink was very responsive in terms of providing a design that met our requirements and responding to any of the unforeseen obstacles that came up during implementation. With this solution, we have gained features and integration without sacrifice,” he said.

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