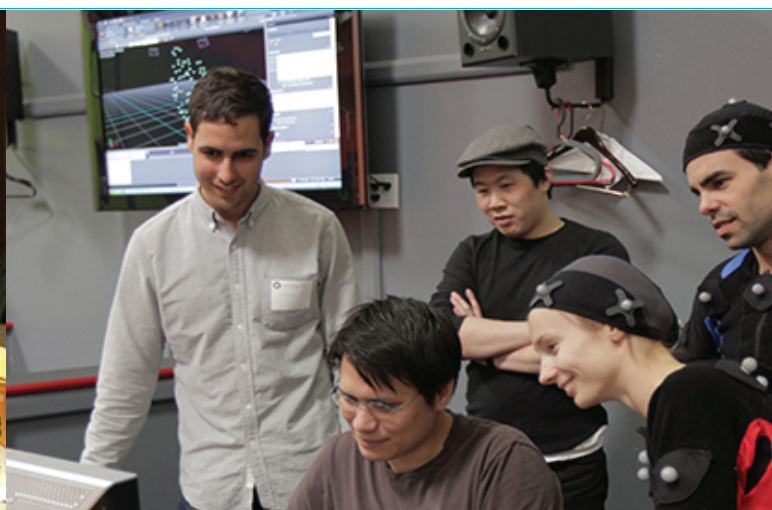# Ex'pression College Protects Massive Digital Assets with NovaStor

www.expression.edu

The Challenge: Slow Backup that Kept on Getting Slower

Ex'pression College is a digital arts college in California's San Francisco Bay Area. The college offers Bachelor of Applied Science degrees in Sound Arts, Interactive Audio, Motion Graphics, Digital Filmmaking, Animation and Game Design. Their mission is to provide an exciting and inspiring education that prepares students for a successful career in the digital arts. They achieve their mission through a dynamic hands-on curriculum, experienced staff, and cutting edge technology.

As Ex'pression College grew so did its students' production of rich digital data. Ex'pression's existing solution, Quest (now Dell) NetVault, was not meeting their needs for a variety of reasons. Huge volumes of files challenged the current backup environment by overrunning backup windows and adding layers of management complexity.

Backups could take more than a week to complete a backup cycle. Older backup would delay newer backups, creating a data traffic jam that was unable to meet their growing data needs.

Ex'pression also experienced ongoing problems with tape rotation due to missing functionality, lack of comprehensive information about tape media, and poor off-site capabilities. And with the intention of virtualizing more servers over time, the college needed a solution that supported both physical and virtual machines through a single interface.

When it came to upgrading their backup and recovery platform, Ex'pression College chose another cutting edge technology - NovaStor DataCenter from NovaStor.

Customer at a Glance

- ☛ Locations in Emeryville and Silicon Valley
- ☛ 5 PC computer labs and 6 MAC labs comprise over 355 workstations
- ☛ Enterprise class network of 48 servers and over 10TB of data
- ☛ BlueArc and Synology high-performance NAS
- ☛ 105% yearly data growth
- ☛ Tape libraries with LTO drives for data archives

Major customer concerns:

1. Backups were not fitting into backup windows
2. Transitioning from physical to virtual servers
3. Hard to manage tape devices and media

" We've really been impressed by the multiplexing technology, which has essentially cut our backup times in half. It's been much faster than Netvault, and the DataCenter solution feels more developed for tape," says Chris Niewiarowski, Senior IT Administrator. "The local technical support has also been fantastic, any time I have a question the response has generally been 20 minutes or less. "

The Solution: Enterprise-Level Protection at a Reasonable Cost

The college took advantage of NovaStor DataCenter and NovaStor's Education Bundle. The Bundle gives NovaStor's education customers the capability from Day 1 of protecting up to 50 physical and virtual servers. All plug-ins and features included without additional cost, including support for business applications like Microsoft SQL and Exchange.

After a successful pilot project with an executive committee of employees and senior education staff, Ex'pression deployed NovaStor in their data center. Backup data is now sent to the disk storage system where it is staged and then archived to the tape library. Tapes are stored safely off-site at a secondary location to ensure safety against natural disaster.

NovaStor's pricing flexibility also met Ex'pression's needs. The college was in the awkward position of owning a backup solution that was not working, but whose renewal period would not be up for another few months. NovaStor built a personalized payment plan where they allowed Ex'pression to immediately implement and fine-tune the solution, and billed the existing budget allotment once the backup renewal came due.

Why NovaStor

- **Cost flexibility:** Able to address the specific needs of an educational institution.

- **Local support:** Rapid response by experienced engineers based in the U.S.

Why **DataCenter?**

- **Fast:** Multi-streaming technology has reduced backup times by 50%.

- **Virtualization capability:** Support for Hyper-V, and VMware with granular restore.