

NETGEAR® ReadyNAS® and Egnyte® Local Cloud on NAS Liberate Non-Profit's Storage Environment



Profile

Based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that exists to defend the First Amendment rights of students and faculty members on College and University campuses throughout the United States. For the past 10 years, FIRE has been dedicated to protecting fundamental rights in the following four areas: freedom of speech and expression; religious liberty and freedom of association; freedom of conscience; and due process and legal equality on campus.

FIRE's core mission is to protect the unprotected, and to preserve the essential qualities of individual liberty and dignity.

Background

FIRE's computing environment consists of 20 Windows-based desktop PCs, several laptops, and a Windows Small Business Server 2003 that provides centralized file storage for the entire organization. Over the past three years, the Small Business Server has experienced two drive failures and a RAID controller failure, putting the organization's data at risk and hindering employee productivity.

FIRE's workforce has also become increasingly distributed, with nearly a quarter of its staff working in different cities throughout the United States. However, with only a 3Mbps SDSL line in the office, the connection was excruciatingly slow for remote staff to access the organization's data via the VPN. The staff responded to the problem by frequently foregoing the central server altogether, in favor of emailing files back and forth.

It was clear that although the organization was still quite small, it had outgrown its environment. One physical server and a VPN was no longer a viable solution. The inadequate connection speed was crippling. Sending files via email was an insecure, inefficient method that lacked any sort of central management, data protection, or version control.

PROBLEM/OBJECTIVE

ASSEMBLE A RELIABLE CENTRAL DATA STORAGE SOLUTION THAT ENABLES FAST, SECURE, EFFICIENT REMOTE FILE ACCESS

With no internal IT staff and a small, geographically distributed workforce, it became the responsibility of Robert Shibley, Vice President of FIRE, to find a solution. "We really had two significant problems," says Robert. "First, the number of failures the Small Business Server had experienced was making us really nervous. And second, our remote employees were so fed up with the speed of our network connection, they weren't using the server, anyway. When employees resort to email as their primary method of data transmission, that's never a good thing."

Robert set out to find a storage solution to centrally protect FIRE's critical data, while enabling FIRE's distributed workforce to remotely access the organization's data anytime and anywhere. The solution had to be consistently reliable, so system quality would be essential. The system would also need to provide multiple disks to support advanced RAID configurations. "Our data is critical to our ability to help the people who come to us," says Robert. "We require continuous, immediate access to it and we can't afford to ever lose it."

The solution would also have to enable FIRE's distributed workforce to remotely access the organization's data. "It wouldn't help us to have a file server with fantastic data protection capabilities, if nobody actually put the data on it," says Robert. "We had to discourage our employees from emailing files. It's not secure or efficient, plus it leads to a host of other issues. But we had to give them a superior alternative – one that avoided our dreadfully slow network connection."

SOLUTION

COMBINATION OF NETGEAR® AND EGNYTE® SATISFIES THE ORGANIZATION'S NEEDS, WITH A COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION THAT IS EASY TO USE

Robert found a unique solution that would solve all of FIRE's problems and was actually less expensive than replacing his Windows Small Business Server. NETGEAR®, known for reliable, high-performance, business-class networking products, and Egnyte®, a leading provider of Cloud File Servers, had combined their strengths to develop a joint solution.

Robert purchased a subscription to the Egnyte Local Cloud on NAS. He then purchased a NETGEAR ReadyNAS® Duo with up to 4TB of storage capacity from two hot-swappable SATA trays, and support for NETGEAR X-RAID™. Egnyte's hybrid solution blends file storage and sharing from the cloud with access to the same files on the ReadyNAS device. Robert

installed the Egnyte Local Cloud software on the ReadyNAS to seamlessly synchronize FIRE's files between the ReadyNAS and the cloud. Egnyte also features central administration and access control capabilities which integrate with the ReadyNAS, allowing a common set of file access policies to be enforced across the NAS and the cloud.

"The NETGEAR ReadyNAS Duo provided the reliability and data protection we needed, at a price we could afford," says Robert. "The Egnyte Local Cloud on NAS made the solution even more valuable by periodically syncing with the ReadyNAS, so our remote employees can access everything almost as if they were sitting in the office. They're no longer bogged down by the slow connection speed in our office. Plus, the Egnyte cloud gives us an off-site storage solution, so now our data is completely protected."

RESULT

SUPERIOR DATA PROTECTION, PLUS COST SAVINGS

Robert installed the new system three months ago, and is pleased with the results. "The combination of ReadyNAS and Egnyte has proven to be an extremely cost-effective method of solving a problem distributed organizations regularly face," says Robert. "Rather than emailing files around, our local and remote employees are sharing files via the ReadyNAS and the Egnyte Cloud. Local employees save their files locally to the ReadyNAS, while those who are remote save them to the Egnyte Cloud. Either way, the files are securely replicated to the other automatically."

Robert could not be happier with his new storage environment, and he is amazed at the cost savings it provided. "Just the backup solution, itself, is worth the price," says Robert. "I wasn't looking forward to spending another \$6K-\$7K for another server just to push files around, plus the cost of remotely backing up hundreds of gigabytes of data. The combination of the ReadyNAS and the Egnyte Local Cloud on NAS is a nice, low-cost alternative. It saved us money, and it has built-in data protection!"



ReadyNAS® Duo

*The 3-Year Hardware Warranty only covers hardware, fans, and internal power supplies, and does not include external power supplies or software. Hardware modifications or customization void the warranty. The warranty is only valid for the original purchaser and cannot be transferred.

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