RESCUED FILM PROJECT

Seagate Server Solutions Keep Lost Memories Alive From Rescued Films

Overview

It all began with simple curiosity for Levi Bettwieser. A film technician by trade, Bettwieser would often find undeveloped film and loose film rolls when shopping at thrift stores. His curiosity got the best of him and he would develop the rolls at his in-home studio. As he began to amass a collection of photos, he started putting them online, opening a window to a forgotten past. This is how The Rescued Film Project began to take shape.

But what really kickstarted the project was a viral video detailing the process of him restoring more than 30 rolls of film shot by an American soldier during World War II. The painstaking, methodical process involved was almost as extraordinary as the photos it revealed. Since then, Bettwieser has been deluged with thousands of rolls of undeveloped film, donated by those following the project on social media. And in developing this film, Bettwieser has reconnected family members with images they've never seen, and brought together people from across borders, communities and cultures.
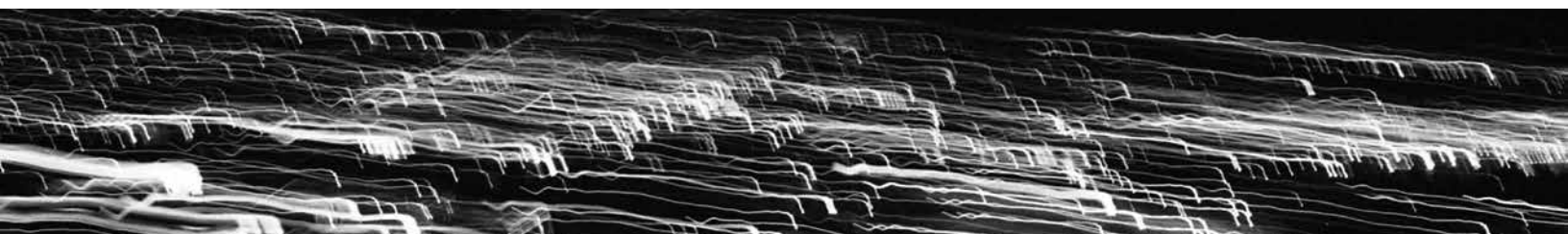
"Rescuing orphaned film is definitely an emotional experience. The impact from seeing those images for the first time gives me the passion to continue to the project," said Bettwieser. "That's when the adrenaline kicks in."

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Challenge

Though passionate and dedicated to his work, there are simply not enough hours in the day for Bettwieser to get through the backlog of film he has collected. In addition to his full-time job, Bettwieser spends an additional 20 to 30 hours a week simply processing and scanning film. And due to the popularity of the project, he's received more film than he can handle, with a backlog of rolls numbering in the hundreds.

But where this really becomes challenging is in backing up this huge amount of data. The Rescued Film Project has over 10,000 scanned photos that average about a gigabyte per photo. When copying files from one external drive to another, it was taking Bettwieser approximately six to eight additional hours per drive — and at 2TB per drive, his piles of hard drives was becoming difficult to manage. The Rescued Film Project was looking for a storage solution that could handle the extremely large files that he works on every day, and do so with speed and precision. In addition, this solution would have to possess an automatic backup process that could preserve and protect his growing library of photos.

Solution

Seagate worked with Levi to build a 4-bay NAS PRO 20 TB server, connected to a wireless router that could share data with multiple computers. Due to the large file sizes he worked with, this solution was focused on speed — with transfers up to 200MB per second, and convenient remote access, opening the project up for volunteer assistance. And because the server makes use of Seagate's easy-to-use RAID technology, Levi's data is protected even if an individual drive fails. In fact, he can continue working, even in the event of a drive failure, with no loss of data.

In addition, Levi is using Seagate's Evault Cloud Backup Service to automatically back up all of his work to the cloud. With it, Levi has the best of both worlds: fast local backups with ample room for all of his work, and offsite backups to protect The Rescued Film Project in case of emergency.

Results

With this new storage and data solution, Levi has been able to hook up multiple computers and scanners to the server with no loss of bandwidth. At 25-30 minutes processing time per roll, Levi formerly was able to get through 100 rolls a month. Now, he's doubled the speed at which he can process the film, allowing him to tackle his months-long backlog. And with the extra time he's saving, Levi now has the time to grow the project in other ways, including looking into grant writing, building an online store, and communicating with fans via social media.

Now, with the help of Seagate, Levi's looking to scale the organization. The server solution has ample bandwidth for another workstation, which would triple the speed at which he could process film. And with both on-site and cloud-based backups now available to him, Levi can rest easy knowing that the memories that he's helped share with thousands are safe and secure.

"Seagate has been amazing," said Bettwieser. "I used to buy their products already, but they've provided thorough and professional support during this entire process. I've had to ask for very little, but have been given a ton. It's awesome for me to see a company that makes such great products back it up with quality people and ideals."
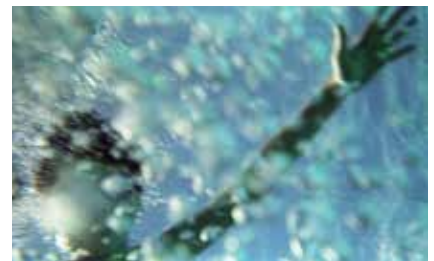
AT A GLANCE

CHALLENGES

- Due to the popularity of The Rescued Film Project, backing up their huge amounts of data has become a real challenge

- The management of numerous hard drives has become increasingly difficult

- Backing up the files was a time-intensive process that only increased as the number of photos increased

IT ENVIRONMENT

- Seagate NAS PRO 20 TB server

- Evault Cloud Backup Service

RESULTS

- Increased processing speed with new storage and data solution

- Enabled scalability with ample bandwidth from server solution

- Secure data storage with on-site and cloud-based backups)

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