



London National Gallery



Case Study

The National Gallery in London, a repository of beautiful treasures from around the world, was faced with a storage dilemma as it needed to securely store and scale its archives. Well-known artists' work hangs on its walls, including those of Paul Cézanne, Claude Monet, Vincent van Gogh and Rembrandt. However, the Gallery needed to replace ageing server infrastructure, so it could deliver modern applications, such as online tours and remote access to information, along with its need to secure and store archives.

Its archives include both images of stored and viewable art, as well as documentation and research pieces on these. The Gallery needed to make certain that they didn't lose data that is key to researchers, which was a project with immense scale, so that they did not lose this valuable information to future art lovers and researchers.

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James Curry,
Director at Switchshop

Comprehensive solution

This is where Switchshop was able to provide a comprehensive solution for the Gallery, managing the implementation of both the server and storage needs. Switchshop is a leading partner for Hewlett Packard Enterprises (HPE), and is mainly used in schools and colleges.

The research department's need for storage was the driving force behind this requirement, while they also needed to ensure easy access to information. The Gallery was struggling to manage all these aspects, and were delighted with Switchshop's solution, which also gives them scalability to increase storage capacity on demand.

HPE Modular Smart Arrays (MSA) enabled Switchshop to give the Gallery a cost-effective and fast solution that, combined with the networking aspect, offers great resiliency. The real drive to use this rule, apart from the price and performance aspects, was its scalability. "Our solution was limit-free, which was important, as the quantity of data was unknown to them from day one," said James Curry, Director at Switchshop.



Without the ability to start scanning and archiving documents, pictures, and other aspects of the Gallery's day-to-day activities, it had no idea how much space was required. The solution meant it could add racks and discs with no disruption, and in significant quantities over time. "They've already doubled their storage requirements in 12 months alone and we believe this will continue to grow," said Curry.

A modern solution

The server element needed to replace an existing ageing solution for one that was more modern and agile, specifically post-Covid, as researchers and students needed to be able to access the archives remotely. "Much like all non-essential businesses, the Gallery had to shut during Covid, while continuing to offer a working environment for researchers and students alike," said Curry.

The HPE Gen10 offering allowed it to continue being accessible, with Switchshop spending time with the Gallery's IT staff to ensure scalability and security.

Switchshop experts sat down with Gallery staff, did pre-sales design, came up with options, and talked them through the pros and cons of the various options. "They considered competitor technology, and in the end chose HPE and Switchshop solutions," said Curry.

Switchshop, in turn, offered knowledge training by ensuring that an HPE engineer was on site to help with onboarding and system monitoring.

Following the implementation, the Gallery has peace of mind in terms of where its data lives, and has complete resiliency and flexibility to allow it to turn on and off applications when it needs to, as it is no longer constrained by resource limitations. "Our servers are agile for remote working, as well as for more modern apps that are being released," says Curry.

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Secure data

In terms of storage, the Gallery no longer needs to be concerned about data loss, as the information is securely backed up, highly resilient, always on, as well as being accessible to all members of its staff, as well as approved external stakeholders. It's also made it possible for the Gallery to rapidly move ahead with archiving projects and file storage.

The solution has enabled the Gallery, which operates on a non-profit basis, to save money, which means it can bring in even more exhibits to please art lovers and researchers alike. The Gallery also intends adding more storage as its collection grows, bringing valuable pieces of art to more people, both physically and through online tours.

HPE and Switchshop

Switchshop's partnership with HPE spans over 12 years. As a HPE Hybrid IT Gold Partner, Switchshop has extensive knowledge and experience across the entire HPE range of technologies and products, as well as in the delivery of its server and storage solutions. "We'll implement the best infrastructure for the job, after listening to exactly what makes a business or organisation tick. We work together as true partners in delivering hybrid cloud offerings, with solid flexible and tangible business outcomes," said Curry.

Beyond HPE's technology, Switchshop offers the Gallery ongoing support, interfacing with HPE on behalf of the Gallery. It also offers in-house (in- and out-of-business-hours support) to the Gallery using HPE-certified service desk engineers who can help the Gallery's IT team fix issues, make configuration changes, offer third-line advice to staff on site, and work remotely.



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