



QUALSTAR'S

SIMPLY RELIABLE

TAPE LIBRARIES

ANSWER

ANALYTIC*i*'s

UNIQUE STORAGE

REQUIREMENTS





“In our business, our client’s data is mission-critical. Without it, we don’t exist. You can’t put a value on client data – it’s off the charts – so protecting it is an absolute necessity.”

Vijay Sonty,
Vice President and
Chief Technical Officer

THE COMPANY

ANALYTIC*i* is a CRM consulting organization focused on CRM strategy, systems integration and data mining and modeling and is a division of the FCB Group. Foote, Cone & Belding is one of the largest agency brands of the Interpublic Group of Companies, the world’s leading organization of advertising agencies and marketing services companies. The mission of ANALYTIC*i* is to help its clients capture and utilize disparate sources of customer and marketing data to better understand “who the customer



*Stephen Horne (center), President of ANALYTIC*i*, discusses the company’s growing data storage requirements with Chief Technical Officer Vijay Sonty (right) and Systems Administrator Ron Feldman (left).*

is, what they buy, when they buy, and why they buy.” The result of such analysis is the cultivation of long-term, profitable customer relationships and interactions. Drawing on expertise across a number of disciplines, including strategic marketing, brand development, marketing process development, data warehousing, data mining and data modeling, ANALYTIC*i* has assisted Fortune 500 companies measurably improve the profitability of their relationships with their customers.

THE CHALLENGE

The cornerstone of ANALYTIC*i*’s approach to Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is its collection and analysis of marketing and customer data. In little more than two years, the client data warehouses at ANALYTIC*i* have grown from zero to four terabytes (4 TB). With a typical ANALYTIC*i* client presenting a raw data profile of 10-15 million customers and 1+ million transactions every month, data storage is a mission-critical concern.

The company has enjoyed tremendous success in the marketplace, but that success brought additional requirements and responsibilities. According to Vijay Sonty, ANALYTIC*i*’s Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, “the applications we run are capacity-intensive. We anticipate an annual doubling of our data storage requirements for the foreseeable future. That means we’re looking at eight terabytes in the coming year, increasing to 16 terabytes two years from now.”

Constant safeguarding of clients’ data is absolutely critical, since much of the data is real-time, 24x7 transaction-based information that is impossible to recreate in any acceptable time frame; losing the information stored on its databases would take ANALYTIC*i* months, even years, to recreate. That information covers the full gamut of a client’s operations: call center data, direct mail response, point-of-purchase data ... all of it, streamed into a data warehouse, in preparation for analysis meant to maximize

THE SOLUTION

the company's relationship with its customers. Leaving the information on the hard drive is simply too expensive for these massive amounts of data. Part of ANALYTIC*i*'s agreement with its clients is to provide their data with uptime abilities within a fully fault tolerant environment. "The only viable option in our environment is tape storage. Unfortunately, the single backup server and DIT tape storage solution we had previously implemented would not have been able to scale along with our growth," said Ron Feldman, ANALYTIC*i*'s systems administrator.

DIT proved to be a regular 'bottleneck' in its handling of customer data. According to Sonty, "we ran tests, trying to automate our DIT system with some autoloader add-ons, but we weren't satisfied with the results. And DIT capacity was just too limiting. ANALYTIC*i* added a second backup server and two additional network-attached storage (NAS) devices, but it soon became apparent that DIT would simply not be able to handle the regular increases in the data load.

Simply put, ANALYTIC*i* had unique storage requirements and needed the ability to accommodate exponential growth. It turned to Qualstar for answers.



"We looked at various tape formats," Sonty said. His team quickly determined that other formats were not viable solutions. The reliability of LTO drives, as well as their backup/restore speed, proved to be deciding factors in format selection. Qualstar's reputation for solid design and performance was the key in ANALYTIC*i*'s choice of a library vendor.

"We were seeking a lights out solution that required very little maintenance," said Sonty. ANALYTIC*i*'s channel partner recommended Qualstar's TLS-8222 tape library, running multiple LTO drives, to handle the company's escalating needs. It was a wise choice. "With the 8222, we've



*Swapping out LTO cartridges can be done within seconds on the Qualstar TLS-8222 tape library. The goal, according to ANALYTIC*i*, was a "lights out" operation; the 8222 enables the company to move a week's worth of customer data in one easy step.*

got a completely automated backup system that handles multiple 200GB (compressed) LTO cartridges with no human intervention. And the transfer rate blows DIT away."

"The 8222 gives us the ability to run our backup system without the constant

attention other libraries demand," Feldman added. "We can swap out cartridges once a week, instead of having to change them

ULTRIUM
LTO



daily." The 8222 is able to handle up to 22 cartridges at one time, more than solutions from other tape library vendors. Another factor in Qualstar's favor – their libraries utilize HP LTO drives. "We feel very comfortable

with names like that." Feldman also cites ease of use as a key factor in their decision; the menu-driven front end and documentation enable his staff to handle the data load without difficulty.

ANALYTIC*i* chose Qualstar for other reasons, as well. As a company that helps its clients with customer relationships, customer service is critical to ANALYTIC*i*. It demands the same from its vendors. "Working with Qualstar's reseller channel partner has been great. And Qualstar itself has provided us with personal attention. They had the answers to our questions, and they worked with us every step of the way," said Feldman.

It may be impossible to quantify the effect the Qualstar 8222 has had on ANALYTIC*i*, but Sonty says increased peace of mind is right at the top. "Day one, we recouped our investment. As an integral part of our data recovery plans, it was necessary to put a reliable system in place to handle the increased load of data that we were forecasting."

THE FUTURE

As more data, encompassing millions of customer transactions, pours into its ever-expanding client databases, accommodating growth at ANALYTIC*i* is an ongoing process. The plan is to move toward a SAN environment with RAID-5 to improve online disk accessibility. ANALYTIC*i* also seeks to provide dedicated servers and backup on a client-by-client basis. "With a solid backup mechanism in place, we just need to keep an eye on capacity. Remember, we'll be into double-digit terabytes within 12-18 months," says Sonty. The current objective is to maintain at least two months' worth of data, keep backup windows tight and be able to recover data quickly, if required.

Sonty notes, "Qualstar has answered our immediate and mid-term needs with the TLS-8222, but within the TLS-8000 Series, there's plenty of room to grow. The equipment is fast and reliable; as is the service we've received. We look forward to having Qualstar as a trusted partner who grows along with us."



*Sonty and Feldman at work in ANALYTIC*i*'s data center. The company currently handles a total data load of four terabytes, and depends on Qualstar's TLS-8222 library, running LTO tape drives, to seamlessly handle backups and restores with ease, speed and reliability.*

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