Wellcom Worldwide Helps Remote Workers Collaborate with CTERA Global File System on AWS

Executive Summary

Wellcom Worldwide, a global creative digital production agency, uses the CTERA Global File System to help a large grocery store chain give remote designers fast, easy access to project files, simplify internal and external collaboration, and enhance data protection. The CTERA solution includes home-based CTERA Edge Filers that connect to a virtual storage system that runs on Amazon EC2 and Amazon S3.

Giving Remote Employees More Reliable File Access and Storage

Wellcom Worldwide, a global creative digital production agency, provides digital, print, photography, and video services for global customers. The company's content, production, and technology experts work in Australia, Asia, Europe, and the United States to support teams of media production specialists. Wellcom's customers include global brands, local businesses, and creative agencies.

One of the company's customers, a large grocery chain based in the southern US, relies on Wellcom technical and production expertise to help its in-house studio to design and produce weekly print and digital sales mailers. However, when designers began working from home during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the chain needed a more reliable way to store and share project files. "Each specialist needed to access files that were hundreds of gigabytes per project, and there are usually thousands of assets for each project," says Shaun Gray, global chief information officer at Wellcom Worldwide. "The amount of data made it impossible for each designer to save and share files on a home computer."

Although Wellcom set up an on-premises network-attached storage (NAS) solution for the chain, there were challenges with connectivity. "There were 50 remote designers using a VPN to access files, and they struggled to save, store, and share files because of bandwidth constraints," Gray says. "This was a major problem because of the amount of work, with weekly circulars and constant updates. As a result, collaboration was very difficult." In addition, the grocery chain needed specific security protocols in place to ensure data sovereignty.

Implementing the CTERA Global File System on AWS

Wellcom considered various solutions before selecting a cloud storage system from CTERA, an Amazon Web Services (AWS) Partner. "The CTERA offering provides a hybrid workflow and the visibility of a web portal," Gray says. CTERA also runs on AWS, an important factor in Wellcom's decision. "We've run much of our business on AWS for years, and we now have a substantial AWS footprint," says Gray. "We trust the reliability and scalability of AWS."

CTERA worked with Wellcom to implement the CTERA Global File System, a portal solution that connects distributed sites and users to a centralized file system that runs on Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2) instances and relies on Amazon Simple Storage Service (Amazon S3) for data storage. Wellcom deployed CTERA Edge HC100 filers in each designer's home, which connect to a virtual storage system on AWS. Each filer enables access to a petabyte-scale cloud environment that enables fast access to project files. "Moving to the CTERA platform gave us a lot more functionality in terms of sharing files and having access to content," says Gray.

Wellcom used CTERA's software migration tool to help the grocery customer move more than 15 terabytes of data from the on-premises NAS solution to the CTERA solution hosted on AWS. The customer also uses a Wellcom marketing resource management software solution (BrandSystems), which runs on AWS too.

Enabling Easy, Reliable Access to Large Project Files

Using CTERA, the grocery chain's designers and production specialists can easily access large files while working from home. "Using CTERA on AWS, our customer's remote designers can access

project files of up to 400 gigabytes or bigger from home, with no issues at all," says Gray. "They can quickly find and download the assets they need to build digital pages. This helps them create and update store circulars every week, which the company counts on to drive sales for a multibillion-dollar business."

Wellcom's customer also has the scalability it needs to support growing volumes of data as the business grows. "Because CTERA stored data on AWS, which increases scalability and performance, the customer no longer has to worry about how much data is stored," says Gray. "This is critical because the project files are getting bigger all the time. We're already storing more than 200,000 assets at any given time for this customer, and that keeps increasing."

Simplifying Internal and External Collaboration

Wellcom's customer is relying on CTERA to enable easy collaboration between production teams. "The CTERA web portal gives all designers the ability to easily share files and collaborate on projects remotely," says Gray. "This will help them increase productivity overall."

Additionally, the grocery chain can now collaborate more easily with external partners. "The CTERA solution has opened up more avenues for this customer beyond its internal studios," says Gray. "It can now open up to advertising and media agencies and other suppliers, so it can expand visibility into its data and foster collaboration."

Boosting Data Protection

The CTERA solution is also enhancing security for the grocery chain by enabling secure file access, encryption, and user authentication on AWS. CTERA Edge Filers also provide full control over key management and data residency. "Security is one of the most important parts of the solution for this customer. For example, it has strict rules around where the actual data is stored," says Gray. "With CTERA on AWS, we can ensure data protection and enhance security."

Wellcom is now looking to expand the use of CTERA within the company while also bringing CTERA to additional customers in a range of industries. "By running this solution on AWS, we have the opportunity to win new business and also increase our own collaboration internally," says Gray. "We had great support from the CTERA team during this project, and we look forward to building on our strong relationship."

About CTERA

CTERA, an AWS Partner, is a leader in distributed cloud file storage solutions for more than 50,000 enterprises and millions of corporate users across the globe. The company's Enterprise File Services Platform unifies endpoint, branch office, and cloud file services to enable next-generation file storage, collaboration, data protection, and disaster recovery.