

Men-From-Mars

Breece Hill Helps Men-From-Mars Solve Raw Performance Challenges to Manage Feature Films

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

Men-from-Mars (MFM) was created in 2000 by Phil Attfield and Simon Frame, former Creative Director and Head of Production for Men in White Coats. The company is currently backed by the major Welsh media group, Barcud Derwen. It is one of nine companies within the media group and encompasses TV studios, 3D graphics, editing, CD publishing and national broadcasting of the Welsh Assembly. Men-from-Mars has provided first class visual effects on time and budget for more than 35 feature films and over 25 broadcast productions. Since its incorporation into Welsh, six feature films have passed through the Digital Intermediate (DI) department at MFM including "An American Haunting", starring Donald Sutherland and Sissy Spacek, and Stephen Wooley's "Stoned", a tour de force of a period piece unfolding the story of Brian Jones, the founder of The Rolling Stones.

Though DI at MFM is a relatively small operation, it punches above its weight in terms of its expertise and the technology it employs. With Truelight Colour Management used throughout the DI and VFX departments, clients benefit enormously from the symbiosis that exists between the two.

THE SEARCH AND REQUIREMENTS

Rhodri James, Chief Engineer for Men-from-Mars, had been having difficulty finding a storage solution that would solve his raw performance issues at a reasonable price point. As a small company, they had been using tape backup and soon discovered that it was too small for their business flow requirements. Larger tape subsystems could handle the higher capacity but were too costly, and the backup windows were too long. With these systems, it was also very time consuming to access the data and make changes. "We have been scanning in a feature film at 2K / 4K resolution which is equal to several terabytes of data," said James. "The final render of a feature film needs to be backed up at different stages," he continued. "We required a solution that could run the backups at 85 MB/sec and allow for quick restores and archiving."

Key Business Challenges

" I am continually evaluating new products for their usefulness in our business. A leaflet on the iStoRA, the all-in-one server, RAID and tape library from Breece Hill was left on my desk and I immediately knew it was right for us."

**Rhodri James, Chief Engineer,
Men-from-Mars**

- Solve raw performance issues
- Scan in a feature film of 2K/4K resolution or 2 to 4 TB of data
- Back up and restore jobs quickly
- Provide data staging of final render of feature films
- Back up a job in 24 hours (as opposed to taking weeks)
- Work within a limited budget for a small business



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210-654-8549 [] Information@tpdav.com [] www.tpdav.com



James noted that he constantly reviews the latest technologies to see how they can apply to his business. "I am continually evaluating new products for their usefulness in our business. A leaflet on the iStoRA, the all-in-one server, RAID and tape library from Breece Hill, was left on my desk and I immediately knew it was right for us," said James.

James received an evaluation unit from his trusted solution provider, XTFX. James has worked with XTFX for many years. They allowed him to review the iStoRA and make his own decision on his business flow requirements. After reviewing his requirements, they ensured him that the Breece Hill product met his specifications.

BREECE HILL SOLUTION

Men-from-Mars implemented Breece Hill's iStoRA, Single Intel processor running SUSE 9 Linux and Bakbone NetVault. The solution included an HP LTO3 drive and 3.2 TB RAID.

BUSINESS RESULTS

Men-from-Mars received several benefits with the iStoRA appliance including:

- Faster backup operations, within 24 hours
- Capacity to back up 4TB of data
- Ability to stage final render of feature films
- Cost/performance ratio unmatched
- Easy integration and lower cost: all-in-one solution eliminated the complexity and cost of buying separate products—server, disk, tape
- High reliability with industry leading components: Intel, Hitachi, HP
- Cost effective for a small business

ABOUT BREECE HILL

Breece Hill, a leader in data protection solutions for small to medium size businesses and workgroups, provides integrated data protection servers, optical technologies, autoloaders and tape libraries covering the wide variety of customer requirements. Since 1993 more than 25,000 units have been shipped worldwide. Breece Hill distributes its products through worldwide distribution, reseller and OEM channels. To learn more about Breece Hill's data protection solutions, visit www.breecehill.com.

Breece Hill, LLC | 246 S. Taylor Avenue | Louisville, CO 80027 | www.breecehill.com | 800.941.0550



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