



CASE STUDY

Smoke & Mirrors improves global digital asset management of more than seven petabytes of video with Spectra T950 tape library

“ Spectra Logic’s highly scalable T950 library, with its sleek design and smaller footprint, was definitely the best proposition for us. We also wanted to work with an established vendor in our sector that offers ongoing expert tech support. Spectra Logic met all our criteria and has been fantastic in delivering a smooth transition to the T950. We are now considering implementing Spectra solutions globally. ”

George Cook, Head of Engineering, Smoke & Mirrors



Dual frame
Spectra T950

About Smoke & Mirrors

Established in 1995, Smoke & Mirrors is an award-winning visual effects and full service post-production company, headquartered in London. The organization has a team of approximately 300 creative and technical employees servicing the entertainment sector from its offices in Bangkok, New York, Chennai, Sao Paulo and Shanghai. It is the only company in its field to offer a fully integrated, dedicated print post-production service, providing international excellence, innovation and expertise for advertising, film and music industries worldwide.

The Challenge:

Smoke & Mirrors’ global engineering team was looking to replace its previous storage system – a Quantum i2000 – at its headquarters office in London, in order to continue offering excellent service to its growing, worldwide customer base. There were several important requirements that Smoke & Mirrors needed to consider when searching for a new storage solution. To support its growing client base, Smoke & Mirrors needed a new system that would allow for fast online streaming of up to terabytes of uncompressed media, as well as the ability to move these large media files quickly. Easy sharing of and accessibility to files were essential to Smoke & Mirrors’ business, as digital files for remastering, including editing and production, needed to be stored and shared between the creative staff across the company, as well as with the respective clients.

Smoke & Mirrors needs to store live jobs that can scale up to 6TB each and total up to 150TB per client. The initial capital cost of the new system and on-going operating costs were key considerations, given the massive petabytes of data Smoke & Mirrors manages on a regular basis. Cost considerations included the data centre expense of storing that data as well as scarce and very expensive office space in central London. In addition, the Smoke & Mirrors team wanted knowledgeable, continuous vendor support to be part of the package.



Image from the home page of the Smoke & Mirrors website

CASE STUDY: Smoke & Mirrors Post Production

The Solution:

After reviewing a number of available options, a Spectra Logic T950 tape library with eight LTO-6 drives and an expansion chassis were selected to run alongside the company's existing Isilon NAS. The T950 is driven by IBM's Spectrum Protect, and today stores more than 7PB of archive data for Smoke & Mirrors.

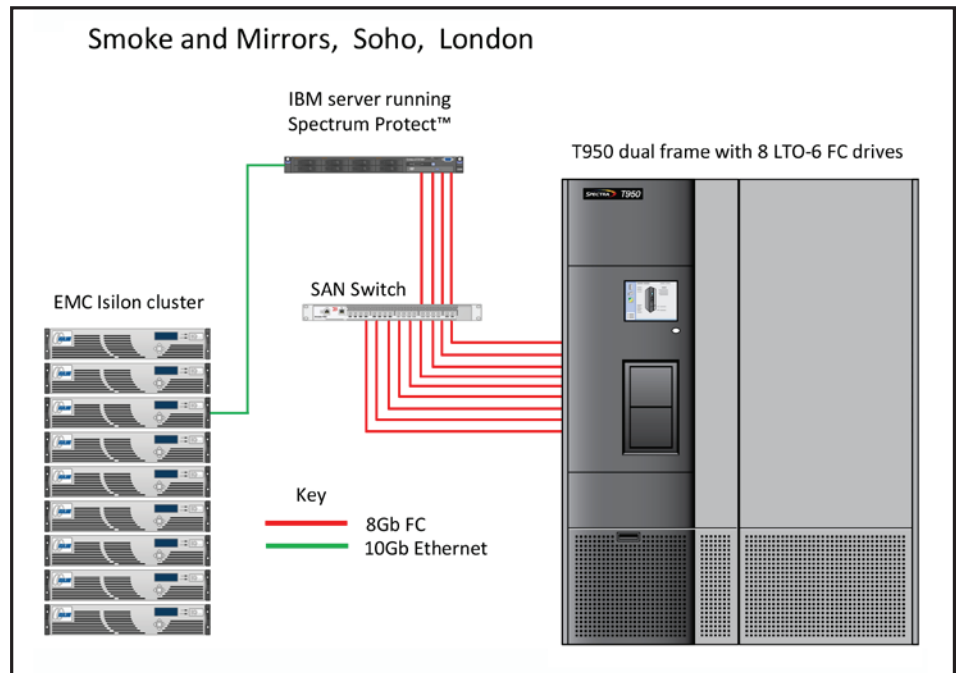
The Spectra Logic T950 library provides the ease of use that Smoke & Mirrors was seeking, reducing staff involvement significantly, and allowing them to quickly and effortlessly share user files both internally and externally. It offers affordable scalability and high throughput, enabling them to manage their quickly expanding data, and delivers the best total cost of ownership of any tape solution. It was perfectly suited to deliver the performance increase needed by Smoke & Mirrors and provide a higher number of tapes in a small footprint. More than that, they could deploy the solution while they upgraded their IBM Spectrum Protect archiving system, allowing for a smooth transition.

Environment Snapshot

- Spectra® T950 Tape Library
- LTO-6 tape drives and media
- Isilon NAS
- IBM® Spectrum Protect™ Software 7.1
- Linux RHEL 6.6 Operating System
- Media & Entertainment environment

Why Spectra:

- High performance
- Ease of use
- Scalability
- Small footprint
- Unmatched customer support



Spectra® T950 Tape Library:

The Spectra T950 library is designed and built to meet the stringent requirements of the enterprise for data integrity, data security and high reliability. The T950 library reduces staff involvement significantly, affordably scales in capacity and throughput, and delivers the best Total Cost of Ownership of any tape solution. Support options range from the expected 24x7 worldwide onsite support to more advanced offerings including our industry-first Assisted Self Maintenance (ASM) program as well as proactive management and reporting tools that ensure you maintain optimal system availability.

LTO-6 Drives and Media can help you maintain or reduce your existing footprint by maximizing your data density allowing you to store more data per square foot. LTO drive specifications include up to 6.25 TB compressed capacity, digital speed matching of 40MB to 160MB per second, data transfer rates of up to 400MB per second; backward compatibility of read/write for LTO-5 media; and backward compatibility of reads for LTO-4 media.