

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Global engineering firm builds faster, bigger, better



NetApp Cloud Volumes Edge Cache supports growth through global collaboration and cost efficiencies

A large engineering and construction company employs a global team of architects and engineers. A key challenge for the company was how to let distributed teams work in real time on the same files without risk of file conflicts or productivity delays.

NetApp® Cloud Volumes Edge Cache gives the firm the ability to consolidate all data from multiple locations around the world into a single cloud footprint that enables real-time collaboration and speeds results without jeopardizing the performance of users at the edge.

Reduced disaster recovery to less than an hour

“Our number one job is to keep everyone productive. Cloud Volumes Edge Cache lets us do just that.”

IT Solutions Specialist, global engineering firm

The need to be more efficient

To continue its growth as a global company, the firm needed to find a solution that would eliminate the hassle engineers faced every day when working on big CAD projects.

The manual work schedule process required engineers across 15 time zones to work on any given project only during their allotted 8-hour time window to avoid file conflicts between different locations. Each day, engineers would package up their daily work and send multiple large files to the next engineering team as they started their work day.

This process inevitably failed from time to time, resulting in lost productivity, redundant work to update older versions of files, massive rework, and painstaking remediation. These avoidable mistakes frustrated the engineers, extended project deadlines, and most importantly, affected the bottom line. The firm needed a solution that would allow their users to collaborate freely, rapidly recover from system issues, improve employee morale, and save the company money.

A rocky path to success

The engineering firm initially tried to use a startup cloud storage company, but they quickly ran into serious issues. The vendor had a closed solution with a proprietary file system. This system often left the success of engineers in the hands of the vendor’s support team when they encountered issues requiring support — an almost daily occurrence. Most of these issues were due to failures in the solution’s file-locking architecture at global scale.

It turned out that the startup’s marketing told a good story — until the solution was put to the test at scale. If the network was slow or unavailable, issues arose because the offices couldn’t ping each other regularly. For the file-locking capabilities to work correctly, the edges needed to maintain constant, uninterrupted connection with their peers, which was difficult to guarantee as the network grew. Additionally, the only way to access the storage was through the company’s proprietary edge devices.

These failures and the inability to access data resulted in many support calls that didn’t meet the level of service that the engineering firm needed from their data center partners. Extended wait times, lack of urgency to resolve issues, and overall mishandling of support cases resulted in hours of down time, leaving engineers unable to work. The company needed to stop relying so heavily on the global storage bottleneck.

As the renewal date for this vendor’s solution approached, the firm decided to look elsewhere. An initial review surfaced two primary competitors for consideration: NetApp and yet another startup cloud storage vendor. The startup vendor was quickly ruled out because they didn’t have an answer to the file-locking issues at scale that the company was experiencing. NetApp Cloud Volumes Edge Cache, on the other hand, sailed through a very successful pilot with the engineers — so successful that the engineering firm was able to access files without ever dealing with the NetApp support team.

Rapid recovery from a disaster

Cloud Volumes Edge Cache has become an essential part of the firm's everyday business toolset. It has changed the way they work, and their team is delighted with the success they are having with Edge Cache.

One of the engineering teams in the United States faced a crisis when a hurricane hit the Gulf Coast. With their previous vendor, such a devastating natural disaster would have required a rebuild of the entire environment, a process that could have taken weeks. By consolidating their data into the cloud and accessing it from any location with Cloud Volumes Edge Cache, the affected engineers were able to resume work remotely in less than one hour. Productivity crisis averted.

NetApp Products

NetApp Cloud Volumes Edge Cache

NetApp Global File Cache

Cloud Backup

Learn more about NetApp Cloud Volumes Edge Cache



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About NetApp

In a world full of generalists, NetApp is a specialist. We're focused on one thing, helping your business get the most out of your data. NetApp brings the enterprise-grade data services you rely on into the cloud, and the simple flexibility of cloud into the data center. Our industry-leading solutions work across diverse customer environments and the world's biggest public clouds.

As a cloud-led, data-centric software company, only NetApp can help build your unique data fabric, simplify and connect your cloud, and securely deliver the right data, services and applications to the right people—anytime, anywhere. To learn more, visit www.netapp.com



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