



Atomic Cartoons Realizes 2x Data Reduction, 20% Lower TCO with Cohesity



INDUSTRY

Media and Entertainment

USE CASE

Backup and Recovery

TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS

VMware

CHANNEL PARTNER

Powerland

Key Benefits

- 2x data reduction
- 75% lower data volume—from full to a quarter—lowering costs
- 3 hours a week gain in IT productivity
- Faster project backups—from months to days to hours
- 20% lower data management TCO

Consumer demand for digital content via streaming services is skyrocketing. Atomic Cartoons delivers comedy, action, adventure, and other high-quality animated projects for the most respected entertainment companies in the world. Atomic's artist studios create massive projects with petabytes (PBs) of data that IT regularly has to back up and archive to tape. With storage costs and archival challenges growing, Atomic deployed Cohesity for faster, more reliable backups. Its Cohesity investment has paid off, speeding large project backups from months to hours, delivering 2x data reduction that has cut data volume by three-quarters, and giving IT staff back three hours a week of productivity. All-in, Cohesity has helped lower data management TCO by about 20 percent at Atomic Cartoons.

Challenges

Animated projects are data-intensive and Atomic requires IT to manage about 3 PBs of data. Before moving to a modern data management platform, the company relied on snapshots of its primary Isilon system and archiving to tape as its only backups for 2D and 3D creative as well as IT projects. In addition to exceeding storage limits and increasing time spent on archiving tapes, backups negatively impacted performance on current projects. When an artist or member of IT accidentally deleted work, it was a time-consuming multi-step restore process.

"Before, we were archiving straight from our Isilon and had two main challenges: our capacity usage on the primary storage stayed higher for longer due to having to keep the shows we were archiving on our primary storage and the performance impact we were seeing for archival was slow. Artists were noticing when we did the tape archival," said Robert Crowther, IT manager at Atomic Cartoons.

Solution

In an industry where creative work takes hours and hours to complete, the modern Cohesity data management platform gives Atomic artists and IT complete confidence that their work is always backed up. Now any creative project or IT work done on the network—for the Vancouver, Ottawa and Los Angeles studios—is automatically protected by Cohesity. The hyperscale platform

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Robert Crowther, IT Manager, Atomic Cartoons

performs a nightly backup with incrementals to capture only day-to-day changes and exclude others based on IT-established policies. This approach has eliminated the need to restart a project from scratch while significantly reducing the time, space, and impact of the backup process.

"The 'regex' [regular expression] exclusion feature saved our backups. It's cut the time by hours for all these file backups because it's scanning for changes while ignoring the rendered files that we don't need," said Crowther. "On one project, backups went from months to a few days. Cohesity ran faster and faster, so we're down to four hours now on that project. Together, incrementals and the regex exclusion are hugely beneficial and have reduced our data volume to about a quarter of the space."

Faster restores with Cohesity saves time without impacting creative work. IT can quickly search, discover, and restore a single file or an entire VM. Now instead of spending time trying to troubleshoot and fix a storage anomaly, IT simply performs a restore from Cohesity with the click of a few buttons. The team also can easily start a sandbox environment without bringing performance down.

Atomic describes both the Cohesity platform and the company's support team as innovative and proactive. "I really don't worry about Cohesity. It just works. And predictive analytics ensure we get alerts if something seems wrong. For example, we were ingesting less data than usual because we changed a workflow in our LA studio, and Cohesity sent me an email just to let me know we were backing up less data," says Crowther. He adds, "Because we're in a very innovative industry, we really push our vendors to the limit and Cohesity's product and team has really been incredible—very reliable and fast."

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Results

With the Cohesity data management platform, Atomic has improved agility and reduced costs. Instead of 40 TB per episode, Cohesity filters unnecessary information to make each 3D show about 11 TB which typically fits on one tape. "Less tape is less storage expense and less work for us because we're not having to go back and change tapes as well as recheck that tape drives are working correctly, or resume backups on different tapes, label and ensure it's all stored in the right place. The process is also faster because we're archiving straight from Cohesity as the source—and it's really simple to use," Crowther says. He estimates Atomic IT staff saves about three hours a week on each project archival.

While the industry-expected data reduction ratio for an animated production workload is approximately 1.3x, Atomic has realized 2x reduction with the amount of data it creates per day. Something Crowther says is "unheard of in the media and entertainment industry."

Atomic is achieving the following benefits with Cohesity:

- 2x data reduction
- 75% lower data volume—from full to a quarter—lowering costs
- 3 hours a week gain in IT productivity
- Faster project backups—from months to days to hours
- 20% lower data management TCO

About Atomic Cartoons

Atomic Cartoons is an artist-driven, multifaceted studio that includes some of North America's most creative animators, directors, producers and writers. Founded in 1999 in Vancouver, Canada, the company produces for clients including Netflix, Nickelodeon, Marvel, Disney+ and Lego.

Learn more at [Cohesity.com](https://cohesity.com)

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