

IDT uses the ObjectEngine™ platform from Pure Storage to increase efficiency, add flexibility in its IT infrastructure, and reduce costs for backup and recovery.



BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Customers benefit from more reliable and cost-effective communication and financial services, while the IT staff spends less time and money to ensure business continuity.

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David Wartell, *Chief Technology Officer*

IDT RINGS UP BIG SAVINGS AND FLEXIBILITY USING OBJECTENGINE FROM PURE STORAGE

David Wartell is a firm believer in cloud technology, but when he arrived at his new job at IDT in 2017, he found that not everyone shared his level of appreciation.

“IDT has its roots in the telecom business of the 1990s, and while it has adapted very effectively to the mobile communications world of the 21st Century, cloud technology wasn’t always the first thing people turned to,” noted Wartell, Chief Technology Officer of IDT, in Newark, New Jersey.

IDT is the leader in providing communications and financial services to immigrant communities, helping them stay in touch and share resources with friends and family around the world. The company’s flagship BOSS Revolution service has tens of thousands of retailers and handles more than 150 million customer transactions a year.

Wartell’s background was in software and cloud services, and his charter as IDT’s new CTO was to update its systems and processes to support the company’s continued growth. “My goals were to reduce costs, increase efficiency and add flexibility to our IT infrastructure.” An early focus was in the area of data protection.

Like many enterprise IT organizations, the company’s backup solution centered around purpose-built backup appliances, or PBBAs. That meant major investments in equipment, maintenance contracts and staff support. One aspect that especially aggravated Wartell was the business model of legacy storage vendors. “It’s just been a fact of life in the storage business that a vendor will make you re-buy storage every three or four years when the equipment reaches the end of its lifecycle. That’s just unacceptable to me.”

LOOKING TO THE CLOUD FOR FLEXIBILITY

He added, “Anytime I have an opportunity to go into the cloud versus buying hardware, the cloud is always going to be my preferred choice. Some people will say the cloud is attractive because it lowers cost. But that’s not the biggest benefit in my view. I believe the best aspect of the cloud is the flexibility and scalability it gives you.”

IDT is a growing business, as well as one with varying levels of customer demand. “There’s a lot of variation as to when people make calls or transfer money,” Wartell observed, “and we have to be able to scale up or down to satisfy that demand without over-investing in systems or people. We need both scalability and cost-efficiency.”

COMPANY:

IDT
www.idt.net

USE CASE:

- ObjectEngine backup and recovery

CHALLENGES:

- Inflexible, costly legacy storage conflicted with the company's commitment to a cloud-based IT strategy.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- ObjectEngine provides the performance, flexibility and efficiency that reduces costs and increases the reliability of backup/restore functions.

“What Pure Storage and ObjectEngine give you is peace of mind.”

David Wartell, *Chief Technology Officer*

Wartell and his team looked at numerous alternatives for a new backup solution but found that all of them required on-premises backup-specific appliances – clashing with his emphasis on cloud — except one, ObjectEngine (formerly known as StorReduce) from Pure Storage.

(StorReduce was acquired by Pure Storage in August 2018, and is now offered as the Pure Storage ObjectEngine platform. ObjectEngine, together with Pure Storage FlashBlade™ system, offers the industry's first flash-to-flash-to-cloud platform, which allows enterprises to recover data rapidly, save money via cloud economics, and re-use data for workloads and business priorities beyond backup — such as analytics, artificial intelligence and regulatory compliance.)

IDT uses ObjectEngine to send data to Amazon Web Services S3 object storage. By using powerful de-duplication technology, ObjectEngine shrinks the size of data files by up to 97%, sharply lowering the time and cost required to send data to, or restore data from, AWS.

It was a perfect solution for Wartell, even though he was skeptical at first. “It sounded too good to be true, but we tested the service and the performance of ObjectEngine matched our on-premise solution, both in sending data to AWS and restoring from it. We had been using two dedicated high-speed lines to send data from our old systems to AWS, and they were almost always full. With ObjectEngine, we save on transmission cost, reduce the time required for backups and restores, and increase our ability to respond to changing circumstances.”

OBJECTENGINE CUTS COSTS, BOOSTS EFFICIENCY

The efficiencies and savings achieved through ObjectEngine are important. IDT lowered its TCO by approximately 80%. The company handles around 5 billion calls per month, and each of those calls has information that must be captured and stored for billing, quality and business-intelligence purposes.

ObjectEngine supports all of Wartell's goals for enhancing IDT's IT infrastructure:

- Cost control – by reducing the amount of data transmitted to and from the cloud and, more importantly, not being exploited by PBBA vendors with forced re-buys;
- Efficiency – by giving IDT employees the tools to do their jobs more efficiently and redirecting the time and attention of IT personnel to higher-value activities; and
- Flexibility – by increasing the company's ability to scale service levels on demand.

In addition, ObjectEngine supports key performance indicators such as the quality of service to customers by increasing network resiliency and availability.

“What Pure Storage and ObjectEngine give you is peace of mind, with the knowledge that your data is safe, and is available when and how you want it,” Wartell said.

The bottom line for Wartell is that challenging old assumptions can lead to better service to customers and greater returns for the company. “Everyone would tell you that backing up to the cloud was too expensive and too slow. But with ObjectEngine, it's just the opposite; it's faster and costs less.”



info@purestorage.com
www.purestorage.com/customers