



Falcon's Creative Group

## Taming Shared Storage for Complex Workflows



### Use Cases

Archive / Storage Optimization

### Keywords

Animation / AR/VR / Visual Effects

**300TB**

Space  
Reclaimed

**\$100K**

Dollars  
Budget  
Trimmed

**0**

Minutes  
Retrieval Time

### Situation

In 2016, Saham Ali joined Falcon's Creative Group as director of technology. His new mission was to ensure processes and workflows remained on track for the teams of designers, illustrators, visual effects artists, and editors. However, their shared storage was rapidly filling with archived content, which could potentially grind new production to a halt.

### Solution

The company needed a way to archive their valuable finished work apart from shared storage, yet have it instantly available whenever the team needed to access the files for new projects. Ali chose Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage to store his archived content and optimize their existing shared storage investment.

### Result

Falcon's shared storage is now lean and perfectly sized to meet their needs for work in progress. Their entire content library is free to grow as large as necessary and is immediately available whenever needed. Now, with their workflow running smoothly, the creative team is free to focus on delivering their best work.



For twenty years, the team at Falcon's Creative Group has blended cutting-edge technological mastery, immersive and intelligent environmental design, and world-leading digital content production to deliver some of the most breathtaking and memorable immersive experiences ever created.



## Massively Immersive Storytelling

When Saham Ali was recruited to manage technology for one of the country's most sought-after experience design firms, he knew he was going to be responsible for one of the most complex and challenging production environments ever built.

Falcon's Creative Group tells stories on a massive scale—designing fully-immersive experiences for museums, destination attractions, and more that push the limits of existing technology.

To deliver these intricate experiences, Falcon's relies on a close-knit team of creatives: from artists, designers, and engineers to writers, producers, animators, coders, and filmmakers. In fact, collaboration is so important to their storytelling process that the entire team is housed in a single building to foster creativity and encourage rapid problem solving and sharing across all departments.

Yet the team wrestled with challenges every agency faces: the pressure of delivering their best work on tight schedules, the need to avoid delays when handing off work at each creative milestone, the costs of accidental deletion, and most importantly, the essential step of ensuring work is saved so that it can be retrieved and reused for maximum efficiency on new projects.

Delivering up to 10K resolution, extremely high frame rates, and even stereoscopic 3D designed for one of the world's largest 360-degree panoramic displays meant that the team was working with enormous files sizes. There was little margin for error.



**“ Backblaze has taken care of us the past several years. We can’t believe that it’s nearline storage for the cost of AWS Glacier. In fact, we look forward to strategically leveraging it more and more in our workflow.**

**Saham Ali**, Vice President of Technology, Falcon’s Creative Group



## Unlocking Extreme Creativity

This was Ali's challenge: how to help this talented team work better, and more efficiently, using the best workflow tools and storage for their operation.

Each creative department has radically different workflow storage needs at every stage of the design and production process. The animators might generate millions of small files, while the video editors might create much fewer, but still massive, files. Everyone needed to know that their content and files were protected and archived as their projects evolved from initial designs to final handoff.

Rather than cobble together different types of storage for each step, the team found that a single shared storage solution called Qumulo was flexible enough to underpin their entire workflow. They liked that it was fast enough for both animators "and editors and worked well with their highly-customized installation of Shotgun, their production tracking and asset management software. They could keep every stage of a creative process working together smoothly.

Yet as useful as their shared storage was, Ali saw that it filled up quickly with content and assets not needed for current works in process.



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## Managing Extreme Growth

Simply scaling up their shared storage would be expensive, and Ali knew that every expansion was a potential disruption for the creative team. Ali didn't want to add complexity to the carefully balanced workflow, nor did he want to invest in a new class of on-site physical storage.

In fact, cold storage of any type was ruled out completely. Though attractive for its low price and ability to scale to their growing need, having to wait for files or retrieve entire archive sets to get a single file was not an option. Saham was responsible for supporting a world-class creative team, and he knew that time is money—a lot of money.

He needed a solution that complemented their shared storage, stored finished files, and projects

safely, made that content available to every department instantly, could grow to any size without interruption, and do so at a reasonable, predictable cost.

Ali had relied on Backblaze B2 at his previous company, so he knew it would be a dependable solution for Falcon's as well. Ali began migrating completed customer projects to Backblaze B2 which freed up enormous amounts of shared storage and greatly eased any anxiety about the team running out of space.

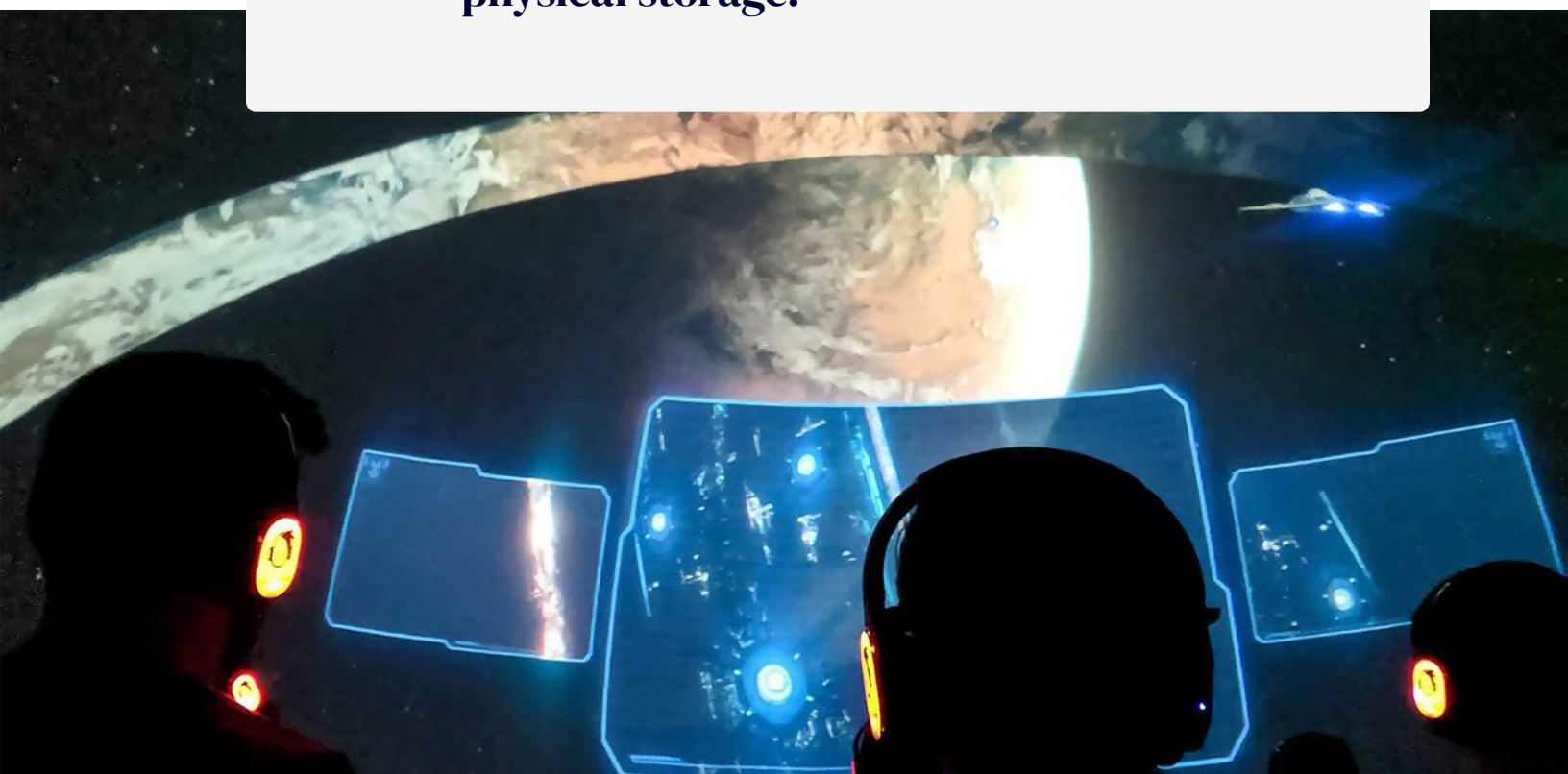
Backblaze's active cloud storage lets his team retrieve individual files or entire project folders instantly—all without having to retrieve an entire archive set, as is common on cold cloud storage systems.

## Ready to Uncover New Frontiers

Now, with a highly optimized workflow capable of tackling today's largest challenges Falcon's is excited to keep pushing the boundaries of design. They are developing deeper integrations between their solutions like Shotgun, Qumulo, Backblaze B2,

and their own custom code, and are designing even more immersive and dynamic experiences that let attraction visitors customize their experience for real time, dynamic storytelling on a scale that has never been achieved before.

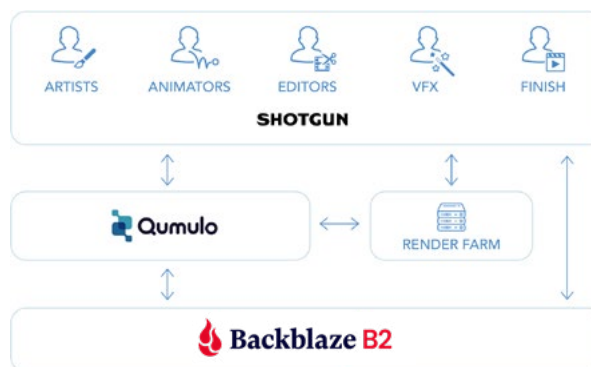
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With Qumulo serving the entire workflow, and Backblaze B2 serving as a highly protected, active content tier, Saham kept Falcon's architecture simple and reliable, and highly optimized for both performance and cost. He can now carefully manage the growth and cost of Falcon's shared storage to match the needs of current projects, and he can rely on Backblaze B2 to grow as large as needed for everything else.



## About Backblaze

Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage is purpose-built for ease, instant access to files and data, and infinite scalability. It seamlessly supports workflows via hundreds of third-party software integrations, or through direct APIs and CLIs. At only \$5/TB of object storage per month (a fraction of the cost of the largest solutions), Backblaze B2 is priced so users don't have to choose between what matters and what doesn't when it comes to backup, archive, data organization, workflow streamlining, and more.

**[backblaze.com](https://backblaze.com)**