



Hagerty Insurance

Fast Cars and Fast Workflows: Speeding Collaboration on a Hybrid Cloud



Use Cases

Primary Storage / Backup Storage

Keywords

Hybrid Cloud / NAS / Archiware P5 iconik / OWC Jellyfish

300+

Videos/Years

Situation

Hagerty Insurance, the world’s largest provider of classic car insurance, evolved their marketing efforts into a passion-fueled, content-driven automotive lifestyle brand. But with years of footage and a distributed team, their aging server couldn’t keep up. They needed robust, video-specific storage, easier collaboration, and reliable, off-site backup.

200+

Hours Saved/Year

Solution

Hagerty installed a Jellyfish shared storage system on-site to expand video-specific shared storage. Then, they implemented a hybrid cloud solution for cloud backup and sync using iconik for media asset management integrated with Backblaze B2 for storage. Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage along with Archiware P5 archive software also serves their backup and archive needs for legacy footage not managed by iconik.

Result

The team can now access assets, edit footage, and download high-resolution files anywhere in the world, enabling easy collaboration between remote staff and saving time that was previously spent searching for footage, pulling it onto hard drives, and shipping them off. They’re protected from disasters with off-site backup, and they put themselves in the driver’s seat with a customized, media-specific solution.

8

Years Of Film Backed up

HAGERTY[®]

Hagerty Insurance is a Michigan-based automotive insurance company. Founded by Frank and Louise Hagerty in 1984, they are the world's largest provider of specialty insurance for collectible vehicles. What began as a niche insurance agency evolved into an automotive brand focused on the love of cars and driving. Today they are a company of automotive enthusiasts and experts, with offices in the } U.S., United Kingdom, and Canada, that provides insurance while also fostering a community of car lovers through a robust media organization, driver's club, car-sharing platform, and much more.



Start Your Engines: Backblaze B2 Ignites Collaboration

Insurance may be a little boring to most people, but driving a classic car is anything but. And the team at Hagerty Insurance knows classic cars from headlights to tailpipe. They recognized this institutional knowledge as a content marketing goldmine and realized they could leverage it to grow their business. Positioning Hagerty as more than only a leading vintage vehicle insurance provider, they activated a full automotive lifestyle brand synonymous with all things cool and chrome

When Ben Woodworth, Video Team Lead, joined Hagerty in 2015, there were seven people on the media team. Today, there are more than 40 engaged in publishing a bimonthly magazine, maintaining a substantial online presence, and producing digital content to grow the brand at the breakneck pace of six videos a week.

The sort of ingenuity that grows a content engine from an insurance agency has been baked into the company from the beginning—founders Frank and Louise Hagerty started the firm because they couldn't find insurance that would value their vintage boats appropriately, so they created it for themselves. The depreciated value of a 1965 Mustang, for example, is a fraction of what a mint condition vintage Mustang would sell for in the open market. Hagerty offered the agreed-upon value when other insurance companies wouldn't.

Woodworth applied the same resourceful, build-it-yourself mentality to solving his team's storage and collaboration challenges when their needs outpaced an aging system's capabilities.

“**Backblaze is our long-term storage, allowing us to share files anywhere and quickly get people the assets they need, which greatly improves our workflow. Going forward, it really simplifies things.**

Ben Woodworth, Video Team Lead, Hagerty Insurance

Unfortunately, Your Server Is Toted

The video team is geographically distributed across two locations in Michigan and one in California. They also outsource some projects to a video production company with editors across the country. Collaborating with a dispersed team proved challenging at times, but it wasn't their biggest problem.

Their server was at the end of its useful life, and it had never truly met their needs in the first place. “Our old server was not designed for us to be dumping 100TB of footage on, and it was definitely not designed for us to be editing off of,” Woodworth said. They found workarounds and stopgap solutions, but they were still maxing out the storage all too frequently. They constantly had to pull footage onto external hard drives in order to move forward with edits. Even more frustrating, the limited storage started to affect other teams' productivity, locking them out whenever they hit capacity.

The on-premises server was also their only backup—a looming concern for Woodworth. “If that system had failed or something happened to the building, we would basically lose everything,” he acknowledged. “There was no off-site backup for that stuff specifically.”

Woodworth worked with Hagerty's IT team to try to at least secure backups in another Traverse City location, but he understood it was not their first priority—they were rightly focused on serving the needs of the insurance business. So he offered to take matters into his own hands, and began researching better video-first solutions the team could implement with minimal help from IT.



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Ben Woodworth, Video Team Lead, Hagerty Insurance

Calling in the Mechanics

The team needed more storage so they could edit footage directly from the server without pulling it onto hard drives, and the system had to support multiple users editing at the same time. Woodworth also wanted more flexibility and control. When things went wrong or the team needed to make a change, he didn't want to rely on IT or burden them with the video team's unique needs.

He had enough technical knowledge to understand how to provision video-specific storage, so he reached out to LumaForge (an OWC company)—makers of

highly-specialized network attached storage (NAS) devices specifically designed for video editors and post-production teams. The dominoes fell into place from there as Woodworth explained, “Our research brought us to the Jellyfish, and their team led us to iconik, and iconik led us to AVI Systems, then AVI Systems led us to designing our backup program with Backblaze B2.” With the right pit crew in place, Woodworth was in position to make his storage system hum—they got to work building a new data management engine.

How the Engine Works

First, they installed a Jellyfish Rack system in their Traverse City location and a Jellyfish Mobile in Ann Arbor. The Jellyfish Rack system alone can hold up to 240TB of raw data and can expand up to five times in capacity as needed, meeting their need for bigger, flexible storage. The video team is fibered into these systems with a dedicated 100GB/s connection so they can edit in 4K. AVI Systems then advised and assisted with integrations to help them achieve a highly effective, efficient hybrid cloud setup.

They implemented iconik for media asset management (MAM). With iconik, the team can access assets anywhere with an internet connection, view proxy files, share assets with other teams or contributors, and metatag assets to boost searchability. "We needed that because we get regular requests for footage," Woodworth said. "Previously, we had to manually find that footage, put it on a hard drive or Google Drive, and send it out."

They then tapped into Backblaze B2 and iconik's native integration for storage and sharing. Full resolution files are stored in Backblaze B2 and are downloadable instantly through iconik. "Backblaze is our longterm storage, allowing us to share files anywhere and quickly get people the assets they need, which

greatly improves our workflow. Going forward, it really simplifies things," Woodworth reiterated. "If one of us goes off-site or we have to quarantine, those files are immediately available to grab, edit, whatever we need."

Backblaze B2 is also integrated with their backup and archive management software, Archiware P5. Anything that's not managed through iconik is backed up by Archiware P5 and archived to Backblaze B2. That peace of mind was critical for Woodworth. He noted that, "Backblaze B2 is protecting company assets that we've put a lot of time and money into. [In the event of a disaster,] we might lose a day's work at most." In the worst case scenario, the team can keep working from home. All told, they now store approximately 120TB in Backblaze B2 between shared storage through iconik and archive storage through Archiware P5.

Throughout the process, Woodworth worked closely with contacts from each provider who became trusted partners, giving him confidence that his team can operate the system independently and call in the experts when they need to. He noted, "It felt much more personable and personal to work with Backblaze than to just feed into the machine of AWS."



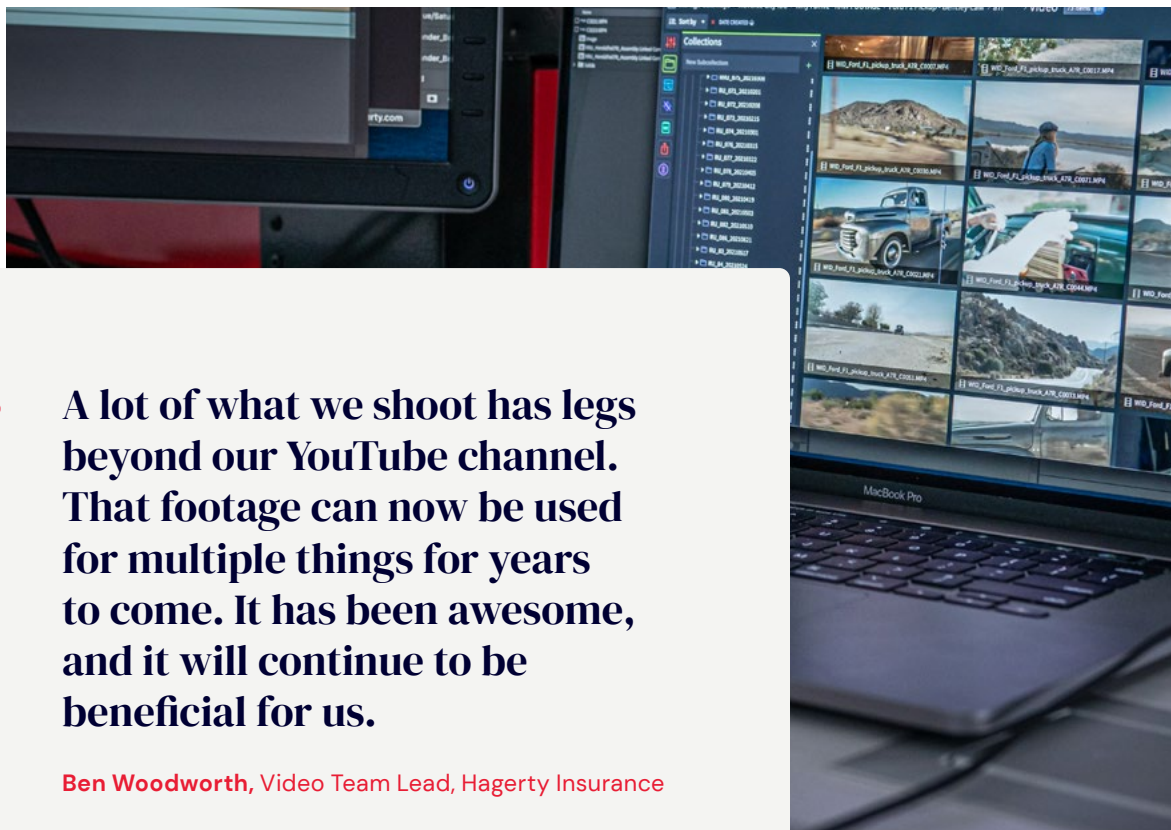
Ready for the Grand Prix of Data Management

The new system paid off in ways Woodworth hadn't expected, particularly working remotely. "Our initial thought was that we just needed a system that worked for our team members in Traverse City and Ann Arbor," he said. "Then, of course, everything shut down with the pandemic. It provided solutions for scenarios we didn't know we were heading into."

Simplifying collaboration also made contractor management much easier. The team hadn't found a reliable way to retain raw footage shot by contractors. Now, Woodworth simply adds the contractor as a user

in Iconik. They can upload footage directly, and it's stored in Backblaze B2. "We have all that stuff backed up from any number of people across the country immediately," he explained. "If we don't contract with them anymore, we still have all the assets."

When they had to share data manually, they'd lost hard drives in the mail. At one point, all that arrived was a piece of cardboard with an address—the box and hard drive were gone. Now, they can simply send a link, saving the video team up to 200 hours each year searching for footage, copying it to a drive, and shipping it out.



“ A lot of what we shoot has legs beyond our YouTube channel. That footage can now be used for multiple things for years to come. It has been awesome, and it will continue to be beneficial for us.

Ben Woodworth, Video Team Lead, Hagerty Insurance



Running at Top Racing Speed

The ability to easily search and download full resolution versions of footage unlocked opportunities the team may not have been able to capitalize on otherwise. They'd received calls from national networks looking for B-roll. "Prior to this year, that would have required a whole lot more work on our end to get everything in place and organized," Woodworth said. "Now, it's easy—here's a link. A lot of what we shoot has legs beyond our YouTube channel. That footage can now be used for multiple things for years to come. It has been awesome, and it will continue to be beneficial for us."

Finally, Woodworth has the control and flexibility he wants with an independently managed system. "The system is custom-built for what we need, and we can handle it ourselves," he attested.

Like a nitrous oxide injection to the metaphorical fuel intake, but street legal—and arguably much cooler, their new hybrid cloud solution gave Hagerty's video team the boost they needed to operate as fast (and furious?) as the cars they love so much.



AVI Systems is a systems integrator with 20+ locations across the United States and projects delivered in 25+ countries around the globe. They customize, integrate, and service technology solutions for broadcast, audio/visual, digital media, and enterprise clients.

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

