

Global Ministry and
House of Worship

Global Ministry and House of Worship Protects Content While Expanding the Mission



400TB

of Content

Situation

The IT director for a global ministry and house of worship struggled to back up content to an LTO tape system as fast as the production team was creating it, especially after conference weekends where they shoot four times more video than during a typical weekly service—approaching 15 terabytes of data at a time. And, due to storage constraints, they could only archive finished content, not raw footage, making it difficult to reuse any older material.

30

Year Archive

Solution

The ministry selected Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage because it could keep pace with their high volume of data at a price that allows them to store copies of all their video—finished and raw—off-site. Every night, automated backups copy newly ingested video footage to Backblaze B2. Even after a jam-packed weekend conference, all data is completely secured before the next event.

12TB

per Week
of Growth

Result

Having all their content stored in Backblaze B2 instead of on LTO tape has opened new opportunities for the ministry. Now, all original footage is available for re-editing and repurposing in new productions. And the time saved by not needing to juggle LTO tapes gives the IT director and his team the bandwidth to focus on strategic projects.

This customer started as a local church revival ministry and has since grown into an international evangelistic outreach organization, ministering around the world. As a global ministry and house of worship, this customer strives to reach the world with the Gospel of Christ through revivals, television, audio/video media, printed material, missionary sponsorship, and outreach services.



Tape to Cloud Migration Moves Ministry Forward

While the LTO backups from the previous weekend's conference were running in the background, the IT director for a global ministry and house of worship was on the phone with a salesman who was pitching him an "unlimited" backup service. But when the IT director asked for a quote for 400 terabytes of content, "unlimited" suddenly became limited to 15 terabytes. And 15 terabytes of video and audio data is close to how much content the ministry generates in a single weekend conference, not the sum total from more than 30 years of history.

The organization grew from a local church revival ministry into an international evangelistic outreach effort, broadcasting programs on over 100 stations and networks in practically every country of

the world. The ministry has published more than 80 books and hundreds of DVDs and CDs, with everything fulfilled from their headquarters. Along with their media operations, they support worldwide outreach programs through missionaries as well as serving prisoners, victims of abuse, people with substance use disorder, and others in need.

In the late 2000s, the pastor of the ministry felt compelled to focus on youth ministry. As the IT director explained, "The pastor saw youth in America in a bad place, suffering from drugs and gangs, and wanted to reach them in a positive way." They launched a major building initiative, which resulted in a 4,000 seat conference center built on 90 acres adjacent to the church headquarters. The conference center hosts a dozen gatherings per year, drawing thousands of youth for conferences, plus weekly services for a growing local congregation, which, taken together, generate a massive amount of content and a thorny data management challenge for the IT director.

Huge Weekend Conferences Quadruple the Content Generated

On weekends when it hosts conferences, the ministry generates four times more footage than on an ordinary Sunday, putting a strain on IT operations with a volume of data that threatens to overwhelm LTO backups. On an ordinary weekend, the ministry hosts three services, each with eight cameras shooting at 1 GB/minute, generating over 2–3TB of footage. On a conference weekend, the quantity balloons to 30 hours and 12TB of footage generated.

To secure data at that volume, the IT director had to make some hard decisions. Even before the conference center ramped up operations there was so much content being produced that they struggled to keep copies of everything off-site. Because of these limitations, the ministry generally only saved finished content, not raw footage. Frustratingly, their production team could not easily reuse this archived content because they had often superimposed graphics on the finished content that were difficult or impossible to remove.

Bringing the Cloud Into a New Data Center

For years, the IT director wanted to use cloud storage for backup and archive, but he was limited by internet bandwidth. Their infrastructure couldn't upload data as fast as the ministry was producing it. Everything changed when the ministry built a new, 1,000-square-foot data center with 30 tons of cooling systems, three power sources, and 12 miles of gigabit fiber internet on a private line. That's equivalent to a Tier 2 data center on the 90 acre church campus.

Once the data center infrastructure was in place, the IT director contacted Backblaze. Backblaze B2 Cloud Storage could not only accommodate the high volume of data, but its performance also tested faster than Amazon S3, which charges five times more per terabyte. Because of Backblaze's pricing, the ministry can store copies of all their video content off-site on Backblaze B2.

Every night, a backup program searches for video footage newly ingested to the servers, and makes a copy to the Backblaze B2 account. It may take a week to send three days of conference footage, but the data is completely secured before the next event. They uploaded the ministry's existing 400TB content library in the downtime between conferences.

“ For content we deemed worthy enough, we stored copies in a locked room with sprinkler systems, and prayed we didn't have a fire or a tornado.

IT Director, Global Ministry and House of Worship

“ If something were to happen to our facility, we can get projects we’re working on back from Backblaze immediately, then retrieve remaining content as needed over time.

IT Director, Global Ministry and House of Worship

Keeping Content Safe From Loss and Available for Reuse

Having all the ministry’s content archived in Backblaze B2 instead of on LTO tape opens new opportunities for the ministry. Now, all original footage is available so they can re-edit it over and over in new productions without being limited to a single camera angle or having to work around graphical overlays. And finding what they need in the 400TB content library is direct and easy. The tape room was so disorganized, the IT director described searching for content like “finding a needle in a haystack.”

What’s more, the IT director knows that within a couple of days, new data is safely stored off-site and out of their hands. When someone comes to him saying, “Oops, I accidentally deleted a file, can I get it back?” He can pull it back from Backblaze B2 right away.

The time saved from not digging around in the tape room or feeding tapes into the LTO drives for backups allows the IT director and other staff to focus on more strategic projects. Whether it’s the television department focusing on creative or logistical initiatives, or the IT department focusing on operations and maintenance, they now have more time to focus on work that moves the ministry forward.

Peace of Mind as the Ministry Continues to Grow

The ministry's mission to serve youth has special significance to the IT director. He relates, "I went through a rough spot as a teenager until I found the Lord. I heard our preacher on television, ordered and read his books, and it changed my life." He feels called to pastoral ministry, and for now, that means supporting the church and the pastor from an IT perspective.

In the nine years the IT director has served that mission, the ministry has rapidly expanded, going

from a small business with two servers to an enterprise with over 100 servers. From their data center, the ministry supports a million hits per month on their website, 25,000 podcast listens per day, and answers phone calls from thousands of people a day.

With this level of activity, it wasn't easy for the IT director and his team to find solutions that they can count on. At the end of the day, what Backblaze provides is peace of mind. They know that the multiple terabytes of new content the ministry produces each week, and the nearly half-petabyte of historical content are protected today, and will be available in the future. And that frees them up to follow wherever their faith leads them.

“ We lost vendors along the way as we grew. When we told Backblaze how demanding our requirements were, there was no ‘I’ll have our engineering team get back to you’ like we got from other vendors. They knew Backblaze B2 could handle it.

IT Director, Global Ministry and House of Worship



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.

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