

QuadGraphics®



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Jeffrey Ding, the principal Technical Analyst

Background

In 2004, after struggling with Mac®-to-Windows® communications within its prepress media division, QuadGraphics implemented GroupLogic’s ExtremeZ-IP® solution to provide fast, easy and transparent Windows file access to over 600 Mac desktop employee and customer users around the world. In QuadGraphics case, users share files across a range of over 50 Windows servers within the enterprise.

ExtremeZ-IP is the only Windows-based Apple® Filing Protocol (AFP) server solution that actively supports all Mac OS versions, allowing for easy file and printer sharing between Mac desktops and Windows servers. This was a critical decision point for Quad/Graphics when selecting their Mac-to-Windows access solution.

In addition, ExtremeZ-IP supports standalone server configurations as well as QuadGraphics’ clustered servers for high availability, further ensuring seamless workflows regardless of the Windows IT architecture.

Six Years Later: A Growing Enterprise

Now, six years later, QuadGraphics has expanded its print operations to cover 30 sites worldwide, supporting four times the number of Windows servers and more than 800 Mac desktops.

“We couldn’t be happier with how ExtremeZ-IP has performed. It has completely eliminated our cross platform file-sharing issues, and as a result has increased productivity, saved time and enhanced the overall performance of our prepress division,” said Ding. *“ExtremeZ-IP works so seamlessly, our Mac users just take it for granted, and we don’t even worry about it.”* However, as QuadGraphics’ business has expanded, the IT team found itself facing a new type of challenge.

The Challenge

QuadGraphics had been purchasing ExtremeZ-IP on a per server/cluster basis based on the number of Macs connecting simultaneously - but because of the sheer volume of new Mac users and server sites, the IT team was continuously requesting additional license keys to keep up with the growing demand.

QuadGraphics® (www.QG.com) is one of the world’s leading printers of catalogs, magazines and other commercial products. With \$1.8 billion in annual sales, the company’s top customers include, Condé Nast, Hearst Magazines’ and several leading consumer catalogs from popular retailers such as J.Crew, L.L. Bean and Talbots. Headquartered near Milwaukee, WI, QuadGraphics has 11 plants in the United States as well as locations in Europe and South America.

Jeffrey Ding is the Principal Technical Analyst and Adam Forester is the Systems Administrator for QuadGraphics, responsible for the hardware infrastructure and software systems, day-to-day IT operations and internal customer support.

“We were reaching the maximum user limit on our licenses very quickly. Whether we added a new site, more users, changed the IT architecture or reconfigured the servers, we had to go through the same process each time we wanted to upgrade,” said Forester. “We thought there could be a more efficient way to manage the licenses as we scaled our operations.”

The Solution: Enterprise License Program

After recognising this issue, GroupLogic introduced the Enterprise License Program (ELP). An upgrade from the classic pricing model – ELP is a per-Mac based pricing model designed to be a cost-effective licensing solution for medium to large-scale enterprises.

ELP allows for quick and easy deployment of Mac/Windows file sharing solutions across the enterprise-wide Windows Server infrastructure – all with a single service contract and license key. All upgrades and support are included in the program as well.

The Proven Benefits

“Throughout the years, Group Logic is one of the only technology solutions providers I’ve worked with that actually listens to its customers and makes product improvements in response to user feedback,” said Ding. “They are committed to getting it right.” Prior to the Enterprise License Program, Jeff and Adam were on the phone with the team at Group Logic requesting new license keys almost every week. Internally, the process was also time consuming.

“In an organization as big as ours, it takes a lot of time to get through the layers of approval and planning to make a purchase,” said Ding. “With ELP we have essentially eliminated the procurement chain – saving us a tremendous amount of time. It’s a single key with unlimited connections that allow us to adjust our infrastructure how we want, when we want. ELP fits wherever we fit.”

QuadGraphics receives additional benefits with ELP including, more efficient server deployments, a simplified management process and a decrease in customer support issues. Group Logic’s established relationship with Apple is another tremendous value QuadGraphics has come to rely on for its success. *“As Apple’s operating system changes and new versions are released, GroupLogic ensures product support and compatibility. We don’t ever have to worry if it will work, because they are committed to making an incredibly stable product,”* said Forester.

Looking Ahead

“It’s fun being part of the GroupLogic team,” concluded Ding. *“Their willingness to work closely together over the years has provided the opportunity to mold and shape the development of ExtremeZ-IP. Looking ahead we’re excited about the additional benefits ExtremeZ-IP and other GroupLogic solutions will bring to our business.”*

About Acronis®

Acronis® is leading the next wave of data availability, accessibility and protection solutions to simplify today’s complex IT environments. Acronis technology enables organizations of all sizes to manage the always-on anywhere data access demands of users, reducing risk against the loss of valuable corporate data, and controlling management and storage costs. With proven technology for data migration and disaster recovery for physical, virtual and cloud environments, and secure enterprise file-sharing and synchronization regardless of type or platform, Acronis is enabling organizations to embrace new IT strategies and options such as BYOD and Mac in the enterprise. For additional information, please visit www.acronis.com. Follow Acronis on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/acronis>.

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