

## RED BEE MEDIA INVESTS IN MEDIA MONITORING SOLUTION TO SECURE CLIENT DATA ON TAPE

Red Bee Media invests £42,000 in the StorSentry™ solution to proactively monitor the quality of its clients' tapes which hold television programmes, adverts and films. StorSentry™ reduces the risk to Red Bee Media's business operations by safeguarding its media, preventing tape failure, eliminating the risk of losing data and planning for future storage growth and helps to optimise operational efficiency.

### Best-practice media monitoring

Red Bee Media is responsible for handling thousands of critical media-backup tapes for clients such as the BBC, so it is imperative that its digital content is fully monitored, preserved and stored efficiently. In March 2006 Tony West, Head of IT at Red Bee Media, decided to look at ways of using best-practice methods to monitor and safeguard its media. The value of Red Bee Media's business lies in the data and content it stores for its clients on magnetic tapes. The company needs to feel confident that all the content stored on the tapes can be instantly retrieved and that at the point of writing to the tape, a correctly functioning drive is used, and that a well performing cartridge is employed, ensuring the data's eventual retrieval.

West explains: *"We look after media which stores television programmes, commercials and films and at any time this can be requested to go live on air. Unlike in other industries, where backups are only used for disaster recovery, our media needs to be constantly accessible and is the key asset to our clients. Bearing this in mind we needed to follow best-practice methods to reassure our clients that their content is safe. We also wanted to be able to proactively prove best practice in the case of an audit."*

Before StorSentry™ there was no media monitoring solution available on the market so Red Bee Media could not predict when a tape or drive in its data centre could fail via a media monitoring solution. Each new generation sees more complicated tape drives being introduced; making responsibility for monitoring tape more complicated than it has been previously. As a result, it was critical for Red Bee Media that any risk involved in storing their content is reduced.

West continues: *"Modern day tapes and tape drives are more sensitive than previous versions and are therefore subject to more complications. As with any technology there is always a risk and we decided to mitigate this*



### Red Bee Media

Red Bee Media specialises in the broadcast of digital media and offers the complete range of services required to promote, play out and provide access to broadcast content across all media, from television to mobile phones. Based in its Broadcast Centre in West London, Red Bee Media provides digital media distribution and promotion services. Red Bee Media, formerly a commercial subsidiary of the British Broadcasting Corporation, is now majority owned by Macquarie Capital Alliance Group, a fund managed by a member of the Macquarie Bank Group.

### Key Figures

Quantum Scalar i2000 Library  
Front Porch Digital (FPDI)  
LTO Cartridges

*by utilising an effective media monitoring solution. We needed to quickly identify if there was a problem with any of our tapes or drives, and if so what the problem was and how to solve it (for example, a factor as small as dust can impact the performance of a tape). We wanted a tool which could analyse our systems, so that we would not have to investigate each tape or drive to pinpoint problems."*



## Proactively monitoring archives

West decided to look at the media monitoring solution StorSentry™ which had been developed by Quotium and is resold by Imation worldwide. Following a thorough evaluation West was very impressed with the tool which could allow his team to monitor its data storage media, identify problems and proactively reduce the chances of media failure.

Prior to installing StorSentry™ the IT team was monitoring its drives and tapes through error logs. However, these did not identify what the problem was – for example whether the issue stemmed from the drive or the media. StorSentry™ gave the team increased visibility of its drives, allowing them to locate precise information such as when media should be changed to ensure that content is not at risk. The tool also checks that the drive and media combination of the library is working at an optimal level, as well as establishing if migration of data from one type of media to another is required.

The installation of StorSentry™ took place within a couple of hours, with ongoing support from Imation & Quotium. The software is non-intrusive and is installed on the media servers. The tool gives an overview of the state of the drives and the media, through a detailed inventory, and provides the IT team with three grades of alerts for media problems (warning, failure and critical).

Red Bee Media has configured the StorSentry™ alert system to the highest alert setting so that it takes no risk with emerging problems and has a less tolerance for failure. The tool allows the IT team to check if cartridges have reached the pre-set age or usage limit, and the pre-set error threshold. It also gathers information on the number of mount operations, duration of use as well as read/write deterioration rate. Within these alerts are clear advice and information on how the IT manager could solve the problem. This allows the team to schedule the maintenance at a time that's convenient for the business.

In addition Quotium helped Red Bee Media to obtain the optimum use from its drives in terms of throughput. The software provides an accurate overview of its archive allowing the team to identify if, for example, it is only using 10 per cent of a particular drive. By identifying a poor throughput the team can be more productive with the same number of drives. The company can also anticipate future growth by looking at how much tape is currently being used and look at the rate at which it is growing.

Red Bee Media is also working closely with the Imation team at its European Technology Centre in Neuss, Germany on producing audit reports. These give the team an expert overview of exactly what is going on in its data centre and identifies any potential problems.

West concludes: *“The installation has proved a great success. The software identifies potential problems before they occur giving us time to fix them, so we don't have to worry about whether our magnetic tapes are wearing out. We are now absolutely confident that our clients' data is safe because errors are flagged to us earlier.”*

*“Our management team knows that it is getting the best out of our investment, and the solution alleviates the pain of day-to-day performance management at an operational level. We have been using Imation and Quotium's professional services consultation to further identify and reduce the risks of storing content and we have already purchased more StorSentry™ licences.”*

## About Quotium

Quotium Technologies is a software vendor that develops innovative solutions to address the security, availability, and performance of applications from the development phase through to production as well as the data security and availability needs of corporate archives.

Quotium's software products, including Seeker, Qtest and AppliManager, provide a complete solution to clients, guaranteeing the continued operation of user applications which are at the heart of many companies' activities. With StorSentry, Quotium Technologies addresses the data security and availability needs of corporate archives.

The company utilizes its highly potent technologies to address the needs of a highly international client base, comprising medium sized and multi-national enterprises across all business sectors.