

The Economist Overcomes Scalability and Performance Challenges

The Economist turns to Zadara for enterprise-grade NFS storage, and to help it address key scalability and performance challenges.

The Economist is a weekly newspaper owned by The Economist Group and produced in offices based in London. Continuous publication began in 1843 and today circulation is over 1.5 million.



Company Summary

The Economist is a weekly international news and business publication, offering clear reporting, commentary and analysis on world current affairs

1.5m

subscribers

1843

year founded

25

languages

Outgrowing a third-party solution.

The publishing company was using a third-party hosting service to support their rapidly growing image library, customer database and content management system. But they realized that they were bumping into the architectural limitations of the existing hosting service. As Brendan McPartlan, Vice President of Operations and Infrastructure put it, “the hosting service was fully-managed – but not well managed – and therefore, we were constantly running out of capacity. This inability to manage capacity was significantly impacting productivity.”

Additionally, the prior hosted solution was not providing the overall performance needed to support internal requirements. The rapid pace of a media and publishing business requires data to be immediately available to meet publishing deadlines. Performance bottlenecks are simply not acceptable, and changes needed to be made.

The Economist chooses Zadara.

The Economist worked closely with their AWS consulting partner, Cloudreach to perform a comprehensive market analysis. After significant due diligence, a shortlist of vendors was selected and evaluated based on features, functionality and physical performance benchmarks. In the end, Zadara was deemed superior in all categories and The Economist selected Zadara as the vendor of choice.

A key requirement for the Economist was to find a cloud-based, NFS storage services solution connecting to their AWS compute environment. When evaluating potential providers, Zadara was the only vendor who could provide this capability sufficiently.



“With Zadara the results have been fantastic. We never run out of capacity. The topic simply never comes up.”

Brendan McPartlan,
Vice President, Operations,
The Economist



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The bulk of their storage is connected to AWS US East in Virginia, and an additional requirement was to protect their data against any form of data corruption or physical disaster. By working with Zadara, the Economist architected a combination of snapshots for rapid data recovery and remote mirroring for disaster recovery. Their AWS US East data is now being mirrored to AWS US West in Northern California. By using the Zadara snapshot and replication features, the Economist is well protected against any type of disaster.

Their new Zadara virtual private storage arrays provide them with high-performance, enterprise-grade NFS file services supporting their image library, customer database and content management system. Further, the performance concerns have been eliminated.

“The way the Zadara team architected the environment, placing our storage close to our AWS instances in US East and US West, we are now seeing significant overall performance improvements,” observed McPartlan. In addition, Zadara’s ability to provide enterprise grade NFS functionality was critical in architecting a business continuity and disaster recovery strategy for the company. Noted McPartlan: “The Zadara snapshots and replication features have been brilliant. We now meet our stringent requirements for data protection and are able to recover from any potential disaster.”

“As an AWS customer who required full featured NFS functionality, we were thrilled to identify Zadara Storage. No other vendor was able to provide the features and functionality we needed. Other solutions simply were not fully baked,” said McPartlan.

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