

Tardis/Geoscience Australia Case Study

The Company

Industry: Government

Geographics: Headquartered in Canberra, Australia.

Employees: 700.

The Solution: IBM® Scale out File Services using the IBM BladeCenter®, IBM System Storage DS4200 disk storage system and IBM System Storage TS3500 Tape Library.



Business Challenge

In 2008 Geoscience Australia needed an information storage system to turn 1.2 petabytes of low density seismic data tapes into a structured, organised information library that allowed easy access and facilitated long term storage without deterioration of the information held.

Tardis Solution

Geoscience Australia issued a request for tender whose key criterion was overall value for money. Because the solution is intended to function for many years, the agency evaluated whole-of-life costs for all the packages submitted — upfront purchase price, plus ongoing support and maintenance costs — as well as the technical merits of the solutions, upgrade paths and quality of backup support. Tardis Services' IBM solution was awarded the tender on the basis that it provided the best overall value for money package.

Business Benefits

Geoscience Australia uses its Tardis solution to:

- Safely store up to 2 petabytes of data.
- Organise and access that data more efficiently and effectively.
- Provide clients with a much more responsive service.

Quantifiable Benefits

- Cost savings achieved by handling client requests in-house.
- Reduced risk and improved business continuity through ability to create data backups.
- Automation of formerly manual processes, reducing associated staffing costs and risks.
- Increased productivity with no additional headcount.
- Improved customer service due to speed of data delivery to Geoscience Australia's clients.
- Reduction of information storage area from several kilometres of shelving to 25m².

Tardis storage solution delivers seismic benefits to Geoscience Australia.

Two centuries ago Australia was built on the sheep's back. These days, resources provide a great deal of our GDP, even in straitened economic times. Government agency Geoscience Australia has been helping to facilitate informed resource exploration for over 60 years and today maintains a 1.2 petabyte-sized archive of offshore seismic data and satellite remote sensing data that is made available to external clients. The archive, like the need for resources themselves, is growing exponentially as modern techniques enable the collection of ever larger data sets.

As a result, Geoscience Australia's ageing storage solutions needed replacing. The agency's tender outlined a number of criteria — improving access speeds, increasing operational



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efficiencies, automating error-prone tasks and providing more flexible storage to accommodate the archive's continuing growth — with the overall goal of gaining the best value-for-money solution possible.

A blended storage solution from Tardis.

Geoscience Australia selected Tardis Services to provide its new storage solution — IBM Scale out File Services using the IBM BladeCenter, IBM DS 4200 and IBM Tape Library TS 3500.

“We were fairly specific in saying what we wanted and the Tardis solution came out very favourably in the tender process,” said Paul Trezise, Executive Officer of the Petroleum and Marine Division of Geoscience Australia. “In particular it was very favourably priced compared to other options. Tardis provided the best balanced value-for-money solution.”

Future growth assured.

Geoscience Australia received the best of both worlds with its Tardis/IBM solution — IBM's hardware and support expertise, combined with Tardis' ability to provide innovative solutions, a single point of contact and personal care, ensuring its clients receive the best possible outcome every time.

The solution's storage capacity improves operational effectiveness and enables faster access to the huge archive increasing both staff efficiency and customer service levels. The system can grow up to 17 petabytes in its current configuration, giving the agency room to move for the future.

Geoscience Australia Chief Executive Officer, Dr Neil Williams, said that initially the system is catering for the massive offshore petroleum data repository, but added that it has the potential to include additional information such as Geoscience Australia's satellite imagery archive.

More dramatic benefits to come.

Once Geoscience Australia's massive data migration — transferring 70,000 tapes — is complete, further benefits will manifest but Trezise says that the Tardis solution will enable significant gains in the meantime. As data is migrated to the new system, access times could be reduced from over a month to under a day, giving clients on tight timetables more time to analyse the data and an ability to make better exploration decisions.

Eventually, some data will even be available for immediate download from the agency's website.

“That will be a really big step forward,” said Trezise. “The benefits will be quite dramatic.”

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