

## Case Study: Unity All Flash

# DIGITIZATION IN MOTION

From the stories to the people – rail travel is a part of our culture – and an industry traditionally slow to change. And for an old business such as the Rio Grande Pacific Corporation (RGPC), seeking relevance and success within the digital world presented specific challenges and a number of new growth opportunities.

### Customer:

Rio Grande Pacific Corporation

### Industry:

Transportation

### Location:

Fort Worth, Texas

### Solutions:

Dell EMC Unity All-Flash storage

### Challenges:

Improve the speed of service, drive business growth and ensure on-time operations

### Results:

- 86% reduction in server use (28 physical servers and racks vs. 4 servers)
- 93% reduction in power consumption (15,000 watts vs. 1,000 watts)
- 2 minutes to provision a server, not hours
- 45 seconds to produce an end-of-month report, not 30 minutes

### Challenges

For RGPC, being a short-line holding company – responsible for getting 475,000 passengers and 120,000 car loads for 140 freight customers to their destination on time – wasn't enough. The company wanted to branch out further and redefine rail travel through modern technology.

However, RGPC's old technology lacked the resilience and reliability to ensure on-time performance, let alone support the expanding portfolio of service offerings. Employees' work was often slowed by the length of time it took to create reports and perform other tasks.

### Supporting a new business model

With assistance from CDW, a Dell EMC Titanium Black partner, the Dell EMC Unity All-Flash midrange storage is now at the core of the company's redundant infrastructure, which incorporates three data centers. RGPC deployed Unity 300F devices with 32 TB of storage capacity. IT managers use the Dell

EMC Unity Virtual Storage Integrator to set up servers on VMware.

Following this successful effort, the company will again collaborate with CDW to extend its reach by marketing its services and solutions to other rail transportation businesses. Chris Bertel, VP of finance at RGPC, explains, "Our strategic partnership with CDW allows us to have access to additional technology services and companies."

Having implemented Dell EMC's Unity All-Flash storage, RGPC elevated its competitive standing and became a more valuable solutions provider within its industry.

CIO Jason Brown says, "The primary difference between Rio Grande Pacific and most other short-line holding companies is we have modern technology. Our Technology Group has now developed what we like to call our Railway Internet of Things or RIOT. We're pulling together systems that were once separate into a single dashboard for our customers to see. RIOT and our other solutions are being developed on Dell EMC Unity All-Flash."



## Final destination

By deploying Unity All-Flash storage, RGPC achieved outstanding efficiencies in operational improvements in several areas of business.

### Delivers businesswide efficiencies

While it once took hours to provision a server, it is now a two-minute process. Employees produce an end-of-month report in a mere 45 seconds instead of 30 minutes. In addition, it used to take half a day or longer to complete 15 TB backups, which are now completed in just a few hours. Brown connects those accomplishments to the company's ability to advance its industry.

### Reduces power costs and server use

RGPC realized an 86% reduction in server use and also cut its use of electrical power by 93%, from 15,000 to 1,000 watts.

"Having a Dell EMC Unity All-Flash storage array lowers our electrical footprint, which means we save money

on UPS systems and generators," says Brown. "And overall rack performance has increased. We went from having 28 physical servers to just four."

### Ensures on-time, reliable railroad operation

The efficiencies realized with its Dell EMC Unity All-Flash infrastructure, combined with the systems' reliability and business continuity resulting from redundant configurations, help RGPC to maintain its schedules and meet delivery commitments.

Brown explains, "The Dell EMC Unity All-Flash storage array has allowed our dispatch systems to not only run faster but also deliver another level of redundancy in case there's a loss of servers. It provides us with the fault tolerance to keep our systems running and to operate the railroad safely without delays."

Curtis Oelmann, RGPC's director of IT, is excited about those improvements in the context of RGPC's anticipated growth and client-service delivery.

"This is our first commuter line that Rio Grande Pacific has taken on," he says, commenting on a new client.

### Enables executive ability to grow and reposition the business

RGPC executives rely on the Dell EMC Unity All-Flash storage to provide more real-time data on all aspects of their business as they perform strategic planning and make decisions about the future of the organization. Bertel says, "Dell EMC is helping us run our business a lot more smoothly because we're able to store data and access it at any time." Bach points out that modernizing IT supported RGPC's effort to turn railroad operations from a cost center into a revenue center.

"Dell EMC will assist us in getting more real-time data on all aspects of our business so that we can manage it more efficiently," he notes. "If you're going to adapt for the future, you have to have the data at your fingertips. Dell EMC products help us do that."

To learn more, visit [CDW.com/EMC](https://www.cdw.com/emc)