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STORAGE
E D I T I O N

PAC STORAGE

**THE DATA
STORAGE**

INDUSTRY'S
BEST KEPT
SECRET

RICK CRANE,
CEO

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COVER
STORY

CIO 20 MOST PROMISING
STORAGE
Review SOLUTION PROVIDERS - 2021

PAC STORAGE

THE DATA STORAGE

INDUSTRY'S BEST
KEPT SECRET

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ick Crane, the CEO of PAC Storage, navigated his career starting as a commercial pilot and landed running a successful data storage company. "After working as a test and then charter pilot for several years, I started my first company, VIP Transportation, procuring and selling aircrafts while still working full-time as a pilot." Crane quickly recognized this to be a very competitive market and created a new model by devising a packaged service offering including not only selling the aircrafts, but then



RICK CRANE,
CEO

managing and chartering the airplanes when not in use by the owners. “This generated commissions plus monthly reoccurring revenue, and with numerous jet and multi-prop aircraft on the charter line, the company was very successful,” states Crane. When a viable offer for VIP Transportation presented itself, Crane sold his first company.

DATA STORAGE LAUNCH

After working several years in the skyrocketing semi-conductor market, Crane transitioned into the data storage industry in 2000. Crane and his partner, Dave Holloway, launched a new venture starting a data storage systems integration/reseller company, West Coast Technology (now known as WCT). “We focused only on selling data storage systems, mostly SANs and automated tape libraries. We chose manufactures based on product offerings and reputation,” says Crane.

By following this strategy, the WCT team quickly became extremely knowledgeable on these products, and customers embraced their expertise. While many computer resellers offered diversified computer product lines such as hardware, software, networking, and accessories, WCT stayed focused on mastering storage and upholding the service in this vertical.

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and dual
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Crane informs, “When customers needed storage or backup, they contacted us for consultation. We designed a tailored solution ideal for their environment based on requirements, growth and budgets. This became the key to our success—doing what was in the best interest of the customer. It didn’t take long for the manufacturers we represented to see just how well we handled selling their storage.” In 2005, one of the manufacturers asked Crane, “Could you help our other resellers do what you do and assist them on selling storage?”

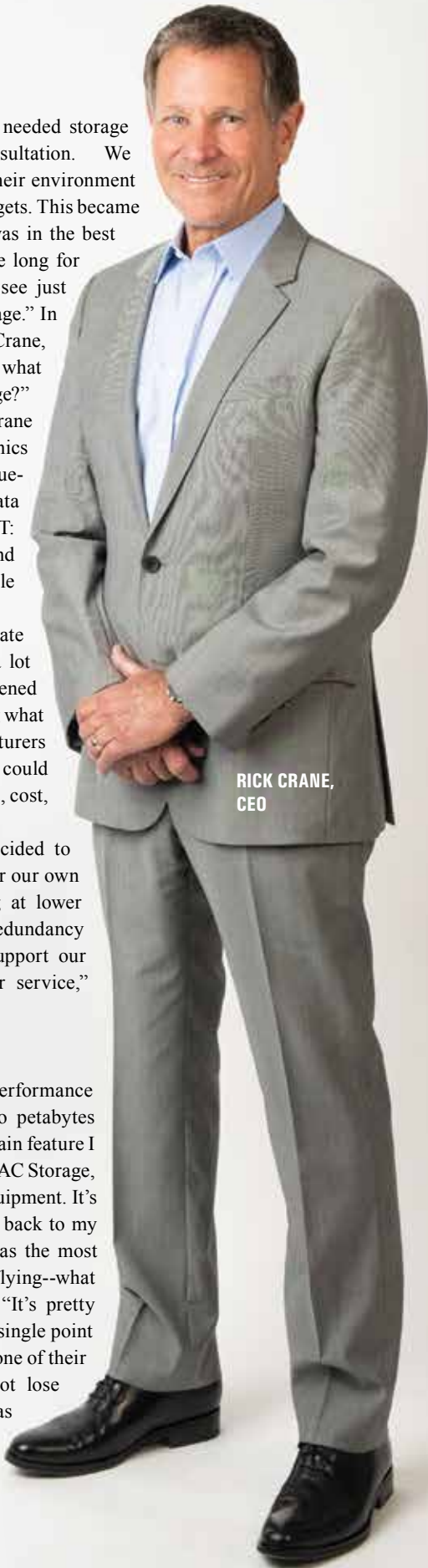
This was the stimulus behind Crane and Holloway creating a new electronics distribution company, PAC Data, a value-added distributor (VAD). PAC Data adapted a similar strategy used at WCT: focusing on a few manufactures, and again providing that same knowledgeable service now directly to resellers.

Within a year, the two separate companies were successfully selling a lot of SAN storage. Crane reports, “We listened to our customers and resellers regarding what they liked/disliked about these manufacturers and thought it would be ideal if we could control the product offering for features, cost, scalability and end-of-life dates.”

PAC Storage was born. “We decided to move forward with this mission to offer our own quality-focused data storage, offering at lower price points with the features and redundancy customers required. We wanted to support our systems in-house for better customer service,” states Crane.

PURPOSE-BUILT TO BE FULLY REDUNDANT

Today, PAC Storage provides high-performance enterprise solutions with scalability to petabytes for on-premise storage. “There is one main feature I believe is most important, not only for PAC Storage, but for many processes and types of equipment. It’s no single point of failure. I reminisce back to my flying years, asking myself, “What was the most important feature on the plane I was flying--what was critical to me?” informs Crane. “It’s pretty simple stuff. I wanted a plane with no single point of failure. For most companies, data is one of their most valuable assets, and they cannot lose access to that data. So, PAC Storage was purpose-built to be fully redundant with dual fans, dual power, and dual



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controllers.” It is apparent why PAC Storage is rated with five 9’s uptime (fully operational 99.999 percent of the time) and high availability.

Designed as a complete enterprise solution, PAC Storage offers exceptional products that meet any customer requirements today, and adapt to the client’s future needs. The company has ultra-high-speed performance with its all-flash systems, high-density adaptable hybrid storage, scale-out NAS and video-enhanced large capacity systems. All are capable of almost any connectivity requirements. PAC Storage provides many options at an effective price point including: SAN and NAS Storage with a cloud gateway, up to 24 host port options, 512 GBs of flash, auto-tiering, replication and more. “We offer the best ROI in Data Storage, and the customer service to go with it,” says Crane.

DELIVERING UPGRADEABLE FEATURES AND SCALABILITY OPTIONS

PAC Storage firmly believes that enterprises shouldn’t ever have to discard any product just because they need to increase throughput, performance, or capacity. As a result, the company delivers many upgradeable features and scalability options so the equipment can adapt to clients’ changing needs without throwing components away. The company offers three controller-level options for performance: PS 2000 for entry-level, PS 3000 for a step-up in performance and four-core CPUs, and top-notch PS 4000 with eight-core CPUs for the fastest performance requirements.

“All three of these controller options offer multiple chassis sizes from 12, 16, 24, 25 and 60-bay rackmount systems. Most of these chassis accept SSDs, 10k and nearline enterprise drives. Clients can even mix and match drive size and drive performance in the same chassis,” states Crane.

For connectivity, PAC Storage also has 16 and 32 Gb fiber channel, and for NAS and iSCSI, the company can add 10, 25, 40 Gb and accommodate 100 Gb connectivity. “All of our systems ship with controllers in the drive chassis, so no appliances are required to serve-up file sharing,” mentions Crane. Further, the company’s controllers allow block and file-level and include cloud gateway options to the client’s existing or preferred cloud provider.

Historically, PAC Storage has had a heavy focus on the federal sector, with all their solutions listed on the GSA Federal Contract. This contract undergoes strict testing and guidelines, and the PAC Storage solutions can be supported for ten years from point-of-sale.

Over the last two years, PAC Storage has received a stellar response from the M&E sector. In this arena new sales come primarily through PAC Data working with top local resellers in Hollywood and New York. “Our NAS solutions have become very attractive due to our versatility, cost-performance and customer service,” mentions Crane. The PAC Storage equipment is being deployed into environments previously dominated by Quantum Stornext, Cumulo, and Isilon. PAC Storage’s performance results show it can match most competition performance requirements at almost half the cost.

NOW OFFERING END-TO-END SOLUTIONS

In May of 2019, the company’s corporate umbrella facilitated an acquisition merger with BOXX Technologies, a high-



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performance workstations manufacturer. “We are now celebrating our two-year merger anniversary. This was a very exciting merger, a creation of great synergy between the two manufacturers,” says Crane. PAC Storage’s entire crew stayed-on with Holloway and Crane. They are now offering end-to-end solutions from desktop to datacenter with BOXX’s workstations and PAC’s storage solutions. Today the end-to-end solutions can be within the datacenter itself with the newest product, BOXX’s FLEXX data center platform.


BALANCING NEW TECHNOLOGY WITH VIABLE STORAGE FOR GROWTH

Crane believes that many remarkable cutting-edge technologies are forward-thinking, but not necessarily viable for every client. “We want to ensure that the equipment we recommend to our clients is tangible and manageable to integrate seamlessly into their applications and

workflow. We don’t want to sell them something they won’t use, and at the same time we also want to ensure they are covered for their data requirements today and in the future.”

“Data Storage is growing at explosive levels. A normal company’s data grows about 50% per year. We are seeing new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and 4k video, growing over 200% per year. A few years back, we were quoting a few hundred terabytes to most customers. Today, many conversations and quotes are addressing petabyte (PB), which is over a 1000 terabytes(TB). In addition, the data that needs stored actually requires exponential data storage requirements. When a customer now has a petabyte of data, they will require an additional PB for backup. They also need an additional PB to store a copy offsite for disaster recovery. That’s three PBs to store and protect 1 PB of data,” Crane elaborates.

PAC Storage’s latest product lines address this growth with new NAS options including a Scale-Out NAS product scalable to 100 Petabytes with performance up to 100GB/s. The PAC Storage Scale-Out NAS solution accommodates massive capacity and throughput for a wide range of unstructured data. This year they also unveiled a Video-Optimized NAS to address the influx of video storage for clients on a limited budget.

To this end, PAC Storage is at the forefront of balancing new technology with viable storage for today’s applications and budgets. “We’ve obtained a lot of knowledge over the past 22 years listening to what customers are looking for and finding smart solutions for them. We believe sales and service requires being completely honest as clients want someone to work with they can trust, and high-quality products they can count on,” concludes Crane. 

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*The annual listing of 20 companies that are at the forefront
of providing Storage solutions and transforming businesses*