PURESTORAGE®

Global Response Corporation is a high performing, industry recognized outsourced contact center. Innovation has been central to the delivery of exceptional customer engagements. Current initiatives seek to enhance the enterprise omni-channel experience center with automated intelligence as a foundational offering. As part of this transformation, the company is taking advantage of the revolutionary performance and reliability of Pure Storage flash arrays and the unique Pure Evergreen™ Storage business model. As a result, it has seen significant improvements in mission-critical aspects of its operations.

Global Response
THE BRAND CONTACT CENTERS

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

Scalability in support of business operations continues to be a priority as the enterprise grows. The enterprise requires technology-based solutions that improve costs, increase stability, reduce maintenance and deliver results quicker. When the executive management trusts the seamless delivery of these solutions, it can look forward to delivering on enterprise growth strategies.

GEO

North America

INDUSTRY

Outsourced Customer Service

> "Pure Storage has moved us into a whole new method of operations, from a Microsoft® centric network to a unified VMware® enterprise."
>
> Stephen Shooster, *Co-CEO*

GLOBAL RESPONSE CALLS ON PURE STORAGE TO SUPPORT GROWTH AND BOOST EFFICIENCY

The history of Global Response is a story of constant innovation and adoption of new technology. In 1974, Herman Shooster and his wife Dorothy purchased a small answering service in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Over the years, the business evolved to become the full service, omni-channel experience center that it is today. No matter which industry vertical, its clients demand sophisticated technology solutions to support the customized, high value engagements that are essential to growth.

Global Response deploys the latest Cisco UCCE computer-telephony technology integrating eGain chat and email. With the Calabrio workforce management, recordings and analytics suite, the combination delivers a comprehensive solution that can be customized to meet an array of client use cases. Sample clients include such well-known brands such as Lane Bryant, Catherines and Justice. As testament to the delivery of services, Global Response has enjoyed double-digit annual growth for a sustained period.

During more than 40 years in business, Global Response has focused on innovation in call center technologies in its quest to deliver better service to clients and improve enterprise efficiency. For example, Co-CEO Stephen Shooster holds a patent on a technique (Computer Telephony Screen Pop to the Internet). This patent describes the process of automating the presentation of the relevant client website to the corresponding brand specialist when a call is received. This service alone, replicated millions of times over, has saved the industry an immeasurable amount of time.

IMPROVED STORAGE BOOSTS THE BOTTOM LINE

By 2017, the company grew sufficiently to consider re-inventing its enterprise storage solution. "In the past few years our growth has really accelerated. In order to 'get ahead of the curve', we identified the need for a storage solution that would give us the speed and compression to deliver our services as rapidly as the market demanded," Shooster said. "By selecting Pure Storage we not only achieved our original goals but we also benefitted in ways we did not expect."

Scott Gottesman, Enterprise IT Architect, noted, "Our maintenance window shortened by 75% which gives time back to our staff. We tuned our Citrix stations so that they now boot twice as fast as our previous solution. Any amount of delay directly affects the bottom line through lost productivity. Every reduction in task duration creates a cost advantage for our clients and creates an opportunity for our associates to reallocate productive time."

COMPANY:

Global Response Corporation
www.globalresponse.com

USE CASE:

- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure – Citrix® XenDesktop®
- Database – Microsoft® SQL Server
- Cisco® Telephony UCCE Infrastructure
- eGain Chat/Email
- Custom application development

CHALLENGES:

- Complexity of storage infrastructure management diverted IT staff from higher-valued activities.
- Legacy storage solutions challenged scalability with undesirable backup times and slower than desired restore times.
- Maintenance support window time requirements were extending as the business grew, which impacted resourcing.
- Incremental solutions added to infrastructure complexity and decreased reliability.

IT TRANSFORMATION:

- Service tickets virtually eliminated.
- Latency reduced on all core applications.
- Backups, restores and snapshots improved response time and enhanced overall IT efficiency.
- Queries and report generation are now accomplished in seconds, compared to hours.
- Maintenance windows have been significantly shortened.

"If I had a clean sheet of paper to design a new data center, there is no question Pure Storage would be at the center of it."

Stephen Shooster, *Co-CEO*

A member of the IT team was familiar with the Pure Storage solution and suggested that Global Response contact the company. "We met with their sales rep, and within two days, we had an array installed and we were ready for a proof-of-concept trial," Shooster reported. "It was our first taste of the kind of customer support you get from Pure. I conducted a fault test using a simulated load at 1.6 gigs per second. I proceeded to pull out a controller, a head, a few sticks of memory and a power supply and the system remained screamingly fast at a slightly over 1 gig per second. Doing this stress-test myself gave me the confidence to move forward."

Within days of the start of the proof-of-concept, Shooster was convinced of the superiority of the Pure Storage array. "We instantly fell in love with Pure. Every time we pointed applications to Pure, the service tickets disappeared. I contacted the Pure sales team to complete the purchase. It didn't make any sense to go back to what we had been doing. Now I have the Pure1® app on my mobile phone and I can monitor the metrics from anywhere."

STELLAR PERFORMANCE FOR KEY APPS AT BUSIEST TIME OF YEAR

Timing of the move to Pure Storage was important, as call volumes increase rapidly in the final quarter of the year. "The goal was to get the VDI and Cisco UCCE on Pure before the start of the Christmas season, and we made that deadline," Gottesman said.

The impact was dramatic. "With Pure Storage in place, we could apply our resources to further refine the VMware environment, and reallocate our team to focus on new projects instead of support," Shooster recalled. "Since the installation of Pure, I haven't had a single service ticket related to storage or latency, and our reliability has never been better."

Global Response counts several benefits from the reliability, performance and flexibility of the Pure Storage array. "We have applications that have been given a new lease on life by having high-performing storage," Gottesman said. "Queries that may have taken an hour to run are now answered in seconds. And producing data for reports or to answer a client's question are handled much, much quicker. Pure is reliable and consistent. It isn't just fast once; it's always fast."

For Shooster, Pure Storage means "I can focus on the things that are really important to me — driving more innovation into the business and growing market share. With Pure Storage on board we are confident in our ability to scale. It also has a call home feature that will generate a ticket if Pure sees a problem. That's invaluable if you ask me."

The Global Response team also praises the Pure Evergreen™ Storage program, which guarantees customers access to the latest technology without forklift upgrades and with full preservation of past investment. Shooster said the long-term stability of maintenance costs that Evergreen provides "makes my numbers nice and clean. It's a huge hassle to upgrade as technology changes. With Pure Storage that's one less critical thing to do." Gottesman said, "It's of great value knowing you will have the most advanced features but still not have to make a forklift upgrade every three years."

EFFORTLESS MANAGEMENT REMOVES BURDENS FROM IT STAFF

While the improved productivity of the Global Response brand-care specialists is the greatest benefit from Pure Storage, the IT infrastructure team also sees many advantages. "The Pure management interface is brilliantly simple; just how it should be," Gottesman said. "I don't worry any more about all the intricacies — creating LUNs, partitioning storage, and all that. On a daily basis, I don't even need to pay attention to Pure, because it just runs."

Added Shooster, "I love showing my associates the Pure1 app on my phone. Running core functions on this platform gives me the confidence to support our most aggressive growth strategies. It's awesome!"

Another beneficial feature of Pure Storage is the size of the footprint. "It's so small and powerful that our team can replace three racks of servers and all the switches that support them," Shooster said. "The savings in supporting multiple switches, simplicity of wiring and reduced power usage all add up to a much more viable architecture. This is significant when you consider you pay per rack in a data center."

Global Response pursues a hybrid approach to its IT infrastructure needs, leveraging cloud services where appropriate while retaining compute and storage resources for its most crucial workloads. The heart of its contact-center infrastructure is a Cisco UCCE telephony system, coupled with Cisco UCS blade servers running VMware with the Pure Storage array at the heart of operations. Backup is accomplished by linking a Cisco router to Veeam software, a process that has been significantly accelerated by adding Pure to the equation. "It used to take an hour to backup 70 VMs," Gottesman said, "and now it's done in under five minutes."

Shooster said that there is more of an impact to the organizational benefit of using Pure Storage than a traditional return on investment calculation. "I don't think of just ROI. Pure has moved us into management of the network via enterprise methods, which creates a significant operational advantage."

From the perspective of an IT architect, Gottesman values the operational value of Pure Storage as a data platform. "When you have high-performing storage like Pure, it makes your CPUs work more efficiently. So, in a virtualized environment, I can put more machines and more workloads on that platform, which lowers my TCO. The systems run better and the staff works more productively."

Working with Pure Storage customer support also has earned praise from Global Response. "Seeing how quickly Pure was able to ship us our first unit and how quickly we were able to set it up makes me feel if we had a severe emergency they would be the first company on site," said Shooster.

Shooster noted, "If I had a clean sheet of paper to design a new data center, Pure Storage would be at the center of it."

Encouraged by its satisfaction with Pure Storage FlashArrays, Global Response has also acquired a FlashBlade™ solution to implement the application of artificial intelligence with the task of evaluating call-center interactions. This new initiative — which will leverage FlashBlade to extract actionable insights from call center data for advanced analytics — is a key part of Shooster's plan to empower operations. "FlashBlade will be the catalyst that I can leverage to create analytics and bots that will significantly enhance our services while reducing the cost to our clients." Shooster said. "The IT team is particularly impressed with the potential of FlashBlade to enhance performance and deliver scalability."

"The Pure Storage management interface is brilliantly simple; just how it should be."

Scott Gottesman, *Enterprise IT Architect*

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