

## Big dreams for digital animation come alive

Like a Photon Creative transforms business with remote work, accelerates innovation and boosts productivity by 120%.



### Customer profile



Media & Entertainment | Australia



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**Nadine Bates**

Co-Founder and CEO,  
Like a Photon Creative

## Business needs

Sluggish storage performance, limited capacity and labor-intensive maintenance was slowing the ability of Like a Photon Creative (LAPC) to produce creative content. Fortunately, LAPC replaced its existing production storage with Dell EMC PowerScale scale-out NAS systems in the nick of time. When Australia issued stay-at-home orders, the Dell EMC technology enabled LAPC to easily transition to remote work while increasing productivity.

## Business results

- Two animated features completed 2 weeks early amidst remote work transition.
- Savings reinvested in innovation.
- 20x increase in read/write performance.
- Storage deployment in 2 weeks.
- AU\$200,000 savings in loan interest.

## Solutions at a glance

- [Dell EMC PowerScale](#)
- [Dell EMC DataIQ](#)



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**Rachel Bauer**

COO and CFO,  
Like a Photon Creative

When governments worldwide issued stay-at-home orders, businesses scrambled to transition staff to work at home. Like a Photon Creative (LAPC) — an award-winning, internationally acclaimed digital animation studio — faced this same challenge while it was replacing its production storage with Dell EMC PowerScale. Choosing Dell EMC PowerScale scale-out storage turned out to be a well-timed decision.

Previously, LAPC — the only female-owned and operated animation studio in Australia — had relied on small, distributed storage deployments. Storage performance was spotty and required labor-intensive IT maintenance. Additionally, LAPC was close to maxing out its old storage capacity while waiting to receive the new Dell EMC PowerScale storage solutions.

Rachel Bauer, chief operations and chief financial officer of Like a Photon Creative, recalls, “As Australia was shutting down due to COVID-19, we were under tremendous pressure to bring in Dell EMC PowerScale. The Dell sales and support teams were out of this world by getting PowerScale into production within two weeks of arriving — which was two weeks earlier than planned.”

## Fast pivot to remote work

LAPC credits the rapid-fire performance of Dell EMC PowerScale with contributing to business gains. “With PowerScale, we’ve been able to choose the right storage tiers and protocols and get 20 times the read/write performance,” says Bauer. “It’s remarkable how much faster things run even though we’re all working remotely now.”

Nadine Bates, co-founder and chief executive officer of Like A Photon Creative, concurs, “I was shocked how PowerScale allowed us to pivot so quickly to working at home in such a chaotic environment. During the first eight months of the shutdown, we completed two major animated features two weeks ahead of schedule. The early delivery saved us AU\$200,000 in loan interest to finance these productions.”

## Savings reinvested in innovation

With the shift to remote working, LAPC expected productivity would drop to 75–80%. Instead, it increased to 120%, according to Bates. “Our success with remote working has opened the door to recruiting the best and brightest from all corners of the world and creating a more dynamic, collaborative environment for innovation. With reduced overhead for physical studio space, we’re reinvesting those savings into development.”

The company realized additional savings by taking advantage of Dell EMC DataIQ unstructured dataset management software.

Bauer states, “We’re excited about using DataIQ data analytics for data deduplication and optimizing performance. DataIQ helps us more accurately quote and forecast our needs and growth for the studio, which translates into real savings for us and our customers.”



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## Realizing the dream of virtual reality

LPAC also leverages NVIDIA RTX graphic processing units (GPUs) as core components of its render farm and workstation strategy. “The NVIDIA cards are highly optimized to give us the performance and quality that we need in our demanding, graphics-intensive render farm,” comments Bauer.

In addition, LPAC is running a trial with NVIDIA RTX to provide an enhanced work-at-home experience with virtual reality and augmented reality. Bauer says, “Since many people have loved working at home, we want to continue to offer it as an option. With NVIDIA RTX cards, VR, and AR, we can improve the quality of remote collaboration and communication and ultimately deliver a better product. It’s exciting to see how we can use technology to provide the next generation of creative collaboration and enable our directors to coach and manage teams spread across the world.” Bates adds, “The RTX architecture provides us with the foundation to be an innovator and leader in content creation and collaboration.”

## Dreaming big with Dell Technologies

LPAC views the PowerScale solution and partnership with Dell Technologies as part of its strategic business plan. Bates explains, “Having a partner like Dell Technologies to evaluate our needs and recommend a pathway forward, not just for the moment but for the future, has been invaluable. We need a technology infrastructure and partnerships that support our goals of dreaming big and going global. Dell Technologies has been a perfect match.”

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