



## Serving up data is a recipe for success

As one of the first foodservice distributors to use technology to enhance its product delivery, Gordon Food Service needed efficient, high-performance NVMe flash storage to keep pace with growth



Distribution

North America

### Business needs

Gordon Food Service makes more than 20,000 deliveries daily to over 100,000 foodservice customers—ranging from healthcare facilities and restaurants to schools and universities. To route its fleet of 2,700 trucks efficiently and ensure cost-effective pricing, Gordon Food Service requires responsive, reliable access to data.

### Solutions at a glance

- [Dell EMC PowerMax 2000](#)
- [Dell EMC XtremIO](#)
- [Dell EMC Unity](#)
- [Dell EMC Data Domain](#)
- [Dell EMC Data Protection Suite](#)
- [VMware vSphere](#)

### Business results

- Ensures high speed and performance to keep deliveries on track
- Cuts costs by significantly reducing storage footprint
- Simplifies management workload—allocates storage in no time
- Allows for database recoveries in minutes rather than hours
- Future-proofs storage investment for years to come

Keeps  
**20,000**  
deliveries a day  
on time



**4.5:1**  
data reduction  
ratio



Founded in 1897, Gordon Food Service has grown to become the largest family-operated, broadline food distribution company in North America—serving foodservice customers in the Midwest, Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest U.S. and across Canada. The company also runs more than 175 Gordon Food Service Stores that are open to the public in 11 U.S. states.

A pioneer in automating its distribution centers and leveraging technology to improve the speed, accuracy and efficiency of deliveries to restaurants, schools, healthcare facilities, hotels, and even cruise ships, Gordon Food Service has rapidly grown to more than \$14 billion in sales. To keep pace, the 20-year Dell EMC customer was one of the first to install Dell EMC PowerMax 2000 storage arrays with NVMe flash storage for high performance and scalability.

## Delivering business success

In the past, Gordon Food Service wasn't getting the speed and performance it needed from its storage arrays. This was true in its virtualized environment, where VMware vSphere's input/output (I/O) blender effect occasionally created storage bottlenecks. And it was also an issue for the company's Oracle databases, which experienced storage performance and latency issues that sometimes required remediation via costly additional server resources.

"We've been very impressed with how Dell EMC PowerMax gives us plenty of I/O and fast response times, so we can run our business more effectively," says Scott Giles, senior storage administrator. "In addition, support for end-to-end NVMe and storage-class memory future-proofs our investment, so we can efficiently grow with our PowerMax arrays."

With dual-ported NVMe drives, Giles and his team can maximize bandwidth and IOPS while minimizing latency. The inline deduplication and compression of PowerMax also helps Gordon Food Service store a lot more data in a smaller footprint, reducing its space, power and cooling costs.

"We're seeing a 4.5 to 1 data reduction ratio, which enables us to effectively store approximately 80TB of data in a 24TB PowerMax array," Giles remarks. "We've reduced our footprint from five bays to just the bottom of a rack."

*"Having Dell EMC storage technologies along with data protection gives us that cohesion of products that allows us to do more."*

Scott Giles  
Senior Storage Administrator  
Gordon Food Service

Secure snapshots  
guard against  
cyber attacks and  
allow recovery in  
**minutes**



Because data is essential to keeping Gordon Food Service on the road to success, dependability is critical as well. "Knowing that we can always access our data and get back up quickly in the worst-case scenario is very important to us," Giles notes. "It's like having an insurance policy that you hope to never use."

With Dell EMC SRDF for seamless remote replication and SnapVX for secure, space-efficient snapshots, PowerMax ensures that Gordon Food Service's data will always be easily recoverable—while protecting against cyber attacks. "The snapshots mean we'll no longer have to do a full database recovery from backups," explains Giles. "Rather than hours, we can recover in minutes if needed."

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Senior Storage Administrator  
Gordon Food Service

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Senior Storage Administrator  
Gordon Food Service

## Set it and forget it

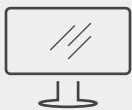
Gordon Food Service also values the simplicity, flexibility and automation built into PowerMax—with its intuitive, HTML 5-based Dell EMC Unisphere interface. Giles and his team have found the arrays to be very easy to configure and manage.

“PowerMax gives us the ability to pretty much set it and forget about it,” says Giles. “Once our arrays were installed, allocating our storage took minutes.”

In addition to its PowerMax arrays, Gordon Food Service relies on a number of other Dell Technologies products in its data center. This includes Dell EMC XtremIO and Dell EMC Unity arrays, to provide outstanding performance and flexibility in the company’s pre-production environments. Gordon Food Service also uses Dell EMC Data Domain and Dell EMC Data Protection Suite for data protection, backup and disaster recovery.

“Having Dell EMC storage technologies along with data protection gives us that cohesion of products that allows us to do more,” Giles comments.

“Dell Technologies has been a great partner. They continue to invest in their products and we enjoy better tools, enhanced performance and more features and functions,” he concludes.



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