

# Photobox makes lasting memories available with just a few clicks



NetApp® hybrid cloud technology ramped up the European photo processor's production capabilities to meet peak demands.

Photobox is one of the leading online photo printing and photo gift services in the UK and Europe. Prints, canvas, calendars, mugs, keychains – the company makes sweet memories and thoughtful gifts for both special occasions and everyday life.

Photobox is fully online and is highly dependent on its IT infrastructure. From its website to processing, production, and fulfillment, lightning-fast performance and scalability are crucial.

But an aging storage infrastructure and continued growth were putting the company at risk of missing production targets – and disappointing customers.

Would a new hybrid cloud platform arrive in time to avoid a backlog, during one of the most difficult times – the holiday season of 2020?



## Zero downtime

“Migrating our infrastructure to NetApp has transformed the way we deliver our products, allowing us to process orders at lightning speed, even during our busiest times of the year.”

**John Thompson**

Director, Photobox Technical Operations

### **A reason to smile: Growth**

Founded in the UK in 2000, Photobox Group has grown rapidly, expanding to countries throughout Europe. With such rapid growth, and increasing pressure from competitors, the company needed to upgrade its existing on-premises IT infrastructure. However, after undertaking a large cloud migration of existing applications and data from on-premises infrastructure two years earlier, Photobox faced a number of challenges.

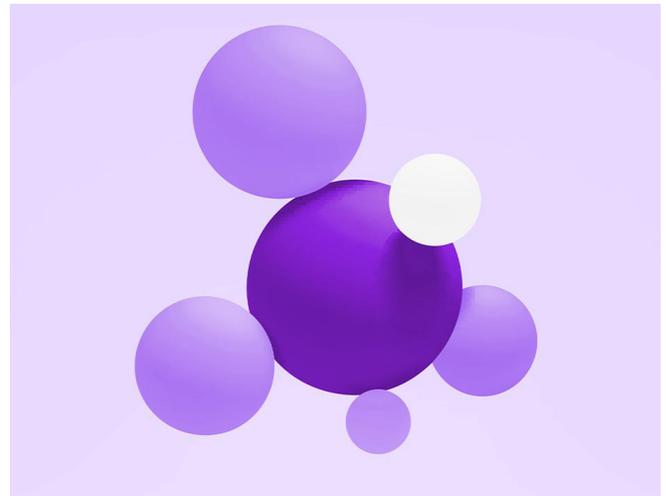
First, its compute services were coming to the end of their serviceable life, and they were in need of a refresh and upgrade. Second, its existing storage infrastructure, designed predominantly for user file sharing, was not able to process the demands of customer orders efficiently. As a result, Photobox was experiencing a plateau in production during peak months, with storage demands creating bottlenecks in production equipment data feeds, leading to missed targets and disappointed customers.

Initially, Photobox tried to resolve this problem independently, upgrading its storage in its Paris location. While this action helped relieve the bottleneck, it brought up more questions about the robustness of the company’s IT infrastructure. Therefore the team decided to take a two-pronged approach to refresh both its storage and compute to meet customer demand across the UK, Germany, and France.

### **NetApp provides clarity**

In the summer of 2020, Photobox Group chose NetApp to accelerate its infrastructure transformation. NetApp delivers hybrid cloud infrastructure with predictable performance for hybrid cloud on a highly flexible, ultraefficient architecture. The solution lets customers scale storage and compute on demand, together or independently; run multiple applications with predictable, guaranteed performance; and consume services the same way on every cloud, private, hybrid, and public.

Deployed in partnership with leading technology services provider CDW, NetApp offered Photobox a trial opportunity to test the equipment before investing in its Europe-wide implementation. During the course of this trial run, Photobox found the solutions exceedingly easy to implement, despite its lean infrastructure team. The company decided to standardize on NetApp technology and Veeam backup with a two-phase project composed of NetApp hardware and software across three sites for production and backup, plus Veeam licensing sold as OEM by NetApp.



### **Zero downtime, photos processed on time**

The NetApp solution increased Photobox’s storage capacity and compute capabilities across three international sites in the UK, France, and Germany. At the same time, the organization expanded its NetApp E-Series with Veeam backup solution to new sites. The deployment, which Photobox expected to take months, took just 6 weeks. Specifically, it took less than 48 hours to get the appropriate clusters commissioned and set up in France and Germany – a process that has traditionally taken the company 2 to 3 years.

John Thompson, director, Photobox Technical Operations, UK and Germany, said, “Migrating our infrastructure to NetApp has transformed the way we deliver our products, allowing us to process orders at lightning speed, even during our busiest times of the year. The rollout is critical to our operations, in terms of future-proofing our architecture and also in delivering the performance and capabilities that the business needs. I am incredibly proud of the team who have completed the migration in record time with zero downtime.”

Ease of use was another key priority. NetApp’s ability to scale resources granularly helps control costs. Combining this ability with NetApp backed Veeam as a backup solution, the Photobox team can manage its entire infrastructure through one pane of glass.

### **A photo finish**

The true test came in the busy holiday season of 2020. Meeting customer demand at this time of year had always been a challenge.

Photobox knew that demand would be at an all-time high due to COVID-19 and European lockdowns. People had more time at home and relied on online services to stay connected and give gifts. When running load tests in the lead-up to the holidays in previous years, Photobox quickly hit production thresholds, effectively limiting its printing capabilities. For the first time ever, when running similar load tests in September and October, Photobox was able to process 100% more than the historical peak workload.

The 2020 holiday season saw Photobox produce more products than ever before. The company faced the holiday rush head on, with no bottlenecks in its production line and confident that it could scale its infrastructure in the years to come.

Just as importantly, Photobox is now seeing a higher return rate of customers, as orders are fulfilled more quickly and customers get their memories when they want them.

### **Products**

[NetApp hybrid cloud solutions](#)

[Veeam backup solution](#)

### **Partner**

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### **About NetApp**

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As a cloud-led, data-centric software company, only NetApp can help build your unique data fabric, simplify and connect your cloud, and securely deliver the right data, services and applications to the right people—anytime, anywhere. To learn more, visit [www.netapp.com](http://www.netapp.com)



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