Optical Library Conversion
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Proprietary to Open in 3 Simple Steps

Introduction:
For years optical libraries have been a popular choice for providing long term compliant, dependable storage. Since operating systems do not have any support for optical libraries, third-party optical connectivity software is required to be installed on the host computer. Optical libraries usually contain high capacity specialized media that is not popular in the consumer market due to its high cost. Software connectivity vendors created their own file systems for this specialized media in order to overcome limitations with the file systems available at the time. In other words; file systems became proprietary.

Problems with Proprietary Management Software
Although initially this is not problematic; companies will later find that they are tied to the original vendor and therefore less flexible. All media created with the third-party connectivity software can ONLY be read using the same software. This means that the media is not portable and because of this it helped the software connectivity vendors to "lock-in" their customers. Luckily, there is now a solution.

Solution:
There is now an open, portable, standard Filesystem called Universal Disk Format (UDF) that is highly capable of storing complicated file and directory structures needed for archiving in small to enterprise businesses. All modern operating systems, including Microsoft Windows 2000, 2003, XP, Apple OS X, Linux and UNIX can natively read this format. You can now free yourself from your dependency on your existing, proprietary, optical library management software.

Writing UDF to optical libraries:
The StorageQuest Inc. Multi-Services Storage Manager 150 (MSM) can easily read and write UDF to all the popular Read-Write or WORM (Write Once Read Many) media types (CD, DVD, MO, Blue-ray, UDO, etc.) in all the popular optical libraries (HP, Sony, Plasmon, PowerFile, etc). Due to its wide support for media and optical libraries, the MSM is the perfect device for writing open, standard, portable media.

Converting Proprietary Data to Open Systems Standards:
Data which has been written with proprietary software can be easily migrated from optical libraries using the StorageQuest MSM appliance providing that the third-party management software is properly configured and running. This technique also assists customers in reducing media cost by migrating from expensive media type (i.e. MO) to more economical and widely available media type (i.e. DVD).
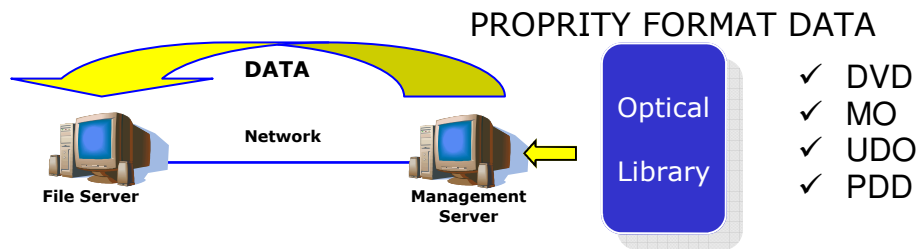
Although the three steps below illustrate a very simple (and maybe obvious) way to migrate your data to open systems, the end result is the same as if expensive conversion tools were used.

Equipment needed:
For the conversion, you will need your existing optical library, a file server with enough Storage Capacity to contain all the data from the optical library (high Capacity RAID arrays are a cost-effective temporary storage medium), and an MSM-150 from StorageQuest.

Step 1 – Offload Optical Library Data
With the existing optical library connectivity software configured, copy all the data off the optical library to the file server over the Network.
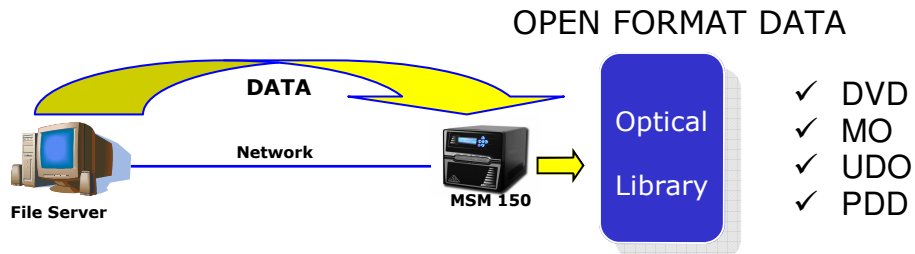
PROPRITY FORMAT DATA

DATA

Network

File Server

Management Server

Optical Library

✓ DVD
✓ MO
✓ UDO
✓ PDD

Step 2 – Configure the MSM
Connect the MSM 150 appliance to either the existing optical library or a new optical library (same or different media type) and follow the simple web-based wizard to configure the system. Once the wizard is complete; use the Media Management interface to create a new media group large enough to store all your data.

Step 3 – Copy your data to the MSM
Now that your MSM is fully configured; you can copy all your data to the Group by simply 'Dragging and Dropping' from your File Server to the MSM over the network. As the data is copied, the MSM will automatically write your data to stand-alone, open-standard UDF format.

OPEN FORMAT DATA

DATA

Network

File Server

MSM 150

Optical Library

✓ DVD
✓ MO
✓ UDO
✓ PDD

Copying data from other proprietary systems to the MSM:
The above example illustrates the conversion using an optical library as the source of the data. Note that the source does not necessarily need to be optical library management software; it can be any system as long as this software provides you with read access to your data. If you can read the files, the data can always be migrated to a new medium and new file system.

Conclusion:
Now that all your data is written using a non-proprietary file system, you are free from the dependency of the proprietary software vendor. Your organization can continue to read and write data to the optical library knowing that you will continue to be able to access your data for many, many years. Whether your media is inside the optical library or outside in a workstation or laptop, you will be able to natively read your data with any popular operating system.