



## From 30 Minutes to Seconds: How Hornet Scaled Creative Production with Qumulo and AWS

With Qumulo and IMT, Hornet gave artists instant access to files, scaled production in AWS, and eliminated the cost and hassle of shipping hardware

### Overview

[Hornet](#) is a full-service creative studio that produces live-action, VFX, stop-motion, 3D animation, and brand strategy for top brands and entertainment companies. For over 25 years, Hornet has established a reputation for producing exceptional work through its roster of directors and artists.

As demand increased and projects began to overlap, Hornet needed a way to expand computing power on demand without the cost and complexity of shipping physical machines.

### The Challenge

Hornet's production pipeline had been built on an on-premises setup, with rendering and storage running locally and a basic AWS account used as a supplement. The system worked effectively within the studio, but in the cloud, it fell apart.

There was no storage syncing, and every file had to be moved through a VPN with a 1.2 Gbps cap. What took seconds in the studio could stretch into 30 minutes in the cloud. As projects grew in scope and multiple productions ran at once, the impact became impossible to ignore.

Cloud workstations lagged, artists were slowed down, and scaling by renting hardware consumed time, money, and energy. Shipping machines back and forth became a significant production effort in itself. The team recognized that AWS virtual desktops could only become a real option if they had faster and more reliable access to data.

“ Our goal was to make the artist's experience on a cloud machine as good or better than on-prem. We knew local data access in the cloud was the key

— Gareth Porter, Head of Pipeline



**HORNET**

### Results at a Glance

**Industry:**

Media Production

**Use Case:**

Cloud-based unstructured data management for virtual desktop and rendering workloads

**Deployment:**

100% CNQ on AWS

**Location:**

Global, HQ in the United States

**Why Qumulo:**

- First-choice recommendation from trusted partner IMT
- Seamless integration into existing pipeline
- Cross-platform compatibility (Windows/Linux)
- Lower cost and higher performance than alternatives

**Results:**

- Cloud desktop performance comparable to on-prem
- Faster project delivery
- Reduced hardware rental costs and complexity
- Improved ability to collaborate across time zones

**Partner:**

Integrated Media Technology (IMT)

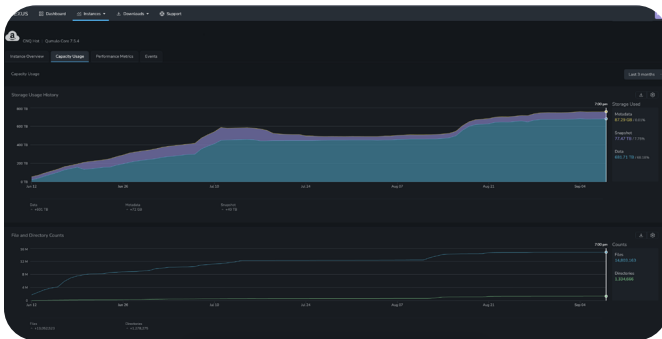


## The Solution

Hornet partnered with AWS and long-time collaborator [Integrated Media Technologies \(IMT\)](#) to modernize its workflow with [Cloud Native Qumulo \(CNQ\)](#) running in AWS. With CNQ mounted directly to virtual desktops and render nodes, artists could open and work with project files in seconds rather than waiting up to 30 minutes in the cloud.

The environment mirrors Hornet's existing setup, allowing teams to continue working without changing how projects are structured or managed. Permissions remained consistent through Active Directory, keeping access simple and secure.

CNQ also supports both Windows and Linux, allowing artists to collaborate without barriers. Creative tools such as Maya, Houdini, and Nuke plug in directly, so teams can work the same way they always have—only faster.



“Initially, we adopted it for storage. But once we saw how much faster and more responsive our workflows became, we realized it could change the way our artists work.”

— Gareth Porter, Head of Pipeline

## The Deployment Journey

Hornet's transition to Qumulo in AWS took just six weeks and happened without a single interruption to ongoing production.

**Day 4:** The CNQ cluster was live in AWS.

**Week 2:** The team had migrated and validated the data.

**Weeks 3–5:** The pipeline was tested, performance was fine-tuned, and operations at scale were confirmed.

**By week 6,** artists were logging into cloud desktops at better speeds than they enjoyed on-premises, now with the flexibility to instantly expand resources for any project, anywhere.

“The deployment was fast, the maintenance is minimal, and performance has exceeded expectations compared to other cloud storage options.”

— Gareth Porter, Head of Pipeline

## Business Impact

- **Faster Performance:** Cut file load times from 30 minutes to seconds.
- **Greater Scalability:** Add virtual desktops and rendering power on demand.
- **Lower Costs:** Pay only for compute and storage that is actually used.

“Hornet's journey shows how cloud-native infrastructure is reshaping media production. By running Qumulo in AWS, they've combined better-than-on-prem performance with cloud agility, empowering their artists to create without limits”

— Brandon Whitelaw, VP, Field CTO & Cloud GM, Qumulo



Image courtesy of Hornet

## Looking Ahead

Hornet plans to expand its use of Qumulo with faster file transfer, synchronization, and real-time collaboration across time zones. The goal is to keep creative momentum flowing across global teams, from concept to final frame.