Data transport that is not only fast, but safe for handling sensitive litigation data

Data Expedition, Inc.® (DEI®) interviewed an applications analyst from one of their major legal industry clients, a global Am Law 100 firm headquartered in the U.S. Although the law firm and the analyst cannot be named due to company policy, the conversation below provides good insight into DEI and its solutions.

You use ExpeDat, DEI's high-performance file transfer software?

Yes, along with ExpeDat's ServeDat lightweight file server that we host locally here in our data center. We also host ServeDat in our remote litigation service environment, which is another data center nearby.

All of our edge-facing client data ends up at this data center so that we can serve it up to different client teams – different attorneys for different law firms that are working on cases. We are able to use Relativity [an eDiscovery document management application] to get that data, but a lot of times that data is very, very large, so to get it from our normal data center or our normal satellite offices, we just pump it in there. Without Data Expedition, we really couldn't do that.

How long have you used ExpeDat?

More than five years – probably longer.

What was your first impression?

I think before I came to this team, they were using another solution, and I know that we found ExpeDat was better than that, so that should say something about the product. When we first started using it, I did not understand what MTP™/IP[1] was, what the protocol was, or how it worked. Just working with Seth [DEI founder and CEO Seth Noble] really helped us understand how it does what it does, and gave us a lot of knowledge on the back end to better safeguard our circuits.

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[1] *MTP/IP is Data Expedition's patented technology that uses unique flow-control and error recovery algorithms to achieve high-network efficiency across all IP networks.*

There are a lot of reasons why we use ExpeDat – and it's not just because it's fast, but because it's also very safe for what we do. And, not just encryption, but safe for our circuits because we have these satellite office circuits that we really don't want to flood. We want to upload as fast as possible, but not so fast on the network that we end up taking it off or pulling it down. DEI has been really good about helping us work through issues like that – we're able to have this software that lets us push the limit of the circuit without really having to define what the circuit actually is because it's self-sensing. It's been very good for us in that regard.

Do you use it at all locations?

We do - every office where we have an analyst in that position. At least 15 offices globally. Not in Asia currently, but everywhere else.

Anything about ExpeDat that surprised you?

The single sign on service, as far as using analyst credentials from the get-go without any special configuration on our side is really, really great. With a lot of products, the SSO requires a lot of manual configuration. This seems like it's just automatic. The set-up is really easy. There's not been a whole lot of times we've had to troubleshoot it either – it just works.

We hear all the time from customers that it just works . . .

We have attorneys who have become client value team analysts who work on the tech side, but a lot of them are not that tech savvy to begin with, and they can use ExpeDat without any training. It just looks like any file explorer, so it's easy for them to pick up.

What are your responsibilities as an applications analyst?

Another analyst and I basically work for the enterprise. Rather than for one office, we work for the whole firm, and we dictate what software we stay with, what software we eventually transition to, and pick out new products. We also help build different concepts and keep all of the client value data running, which is mostly litigation-based. We are in charge of encryption, and storage for a lot of that client data, and how they access it.

What is the typical file size that you transport?

We've transported data as big as half a terabyte. We'd do more if we were allowed, but some of our clients don't want to have to download data that large depending on where it's going. Usually ExpeDat is the software solution we use to get our internal data to our hosted environment, where it is critical we are able to process stuff in

place in the hosted environment, as opposed to at a local data center, So, the faster we can get it over there the better.

The reason we use ExpeDat versus FTP is it is just so much faster. We use other software as well that does similar things, but nothing really does it as well as ExpeDat does, with the sole purpose being to get data as fast as possible across these links.

You talked about litigation, so transporting files in a timely manner can really make a difference in a case.

Yes. It's a matter of getting it there in a day or in 3 or 4 days if we're shipping it by drive. There is also a cost savings there as well. Whenever we ship a drive, there is going to be a handling fee at the data center itself to have it plugged in – just to have it plugged in is going to cost you some money. Then to have them actually charge for media handling which basically involves opening up a box. Every time we use ExpeDat versus a drive, we probably save a couple hundred bucks, which adds up to a lot of money.

Can you talk more about security and how critical it is?

We are audited constantly by our clients. [Major financial institutions] and other large banks can be very specific about what they want to know, "What is the encryption level, is it at rest, is it encrypted in transit, who has access to it?" These are questions that come up in every audit and there are probably a thousand more. It's important to us because it is important to our clients. DEI has always passed their audits.

Are there any anecdotes or situations that stand out where an analyst really needed something critical transported and ExpeDat was instrumental in making things easier on both ends?

Pretty much monthly we have somebody who has an incident where it is critical to get data up that night. And there is only one way to do it, and that's through Data Expedition.

Analysts come to us and say that, "We have 'x' amount of data that has to be reviewed by tomorrow morning", and if it weren't for ExpeDat, there would be no way to get it there.

So ExpeDat would be your choice if something just absolutely had to be there fast. Is that based on your confidence level, reliability, past experience . . . what would you point to?

Really all of those things. It's our preferred tool of choice. So, we just know from experience that it's going to be able to do it. We know what speeds we have to set

aside for it, too, so we know what it's capable of already. If we use something else, we don't really know what the reliability level is.

We recently upgraded all of our circuits in every office. We have actually been playing around with some of the settings on the back end because we are actually worried about being too fast rather than too slow most of the time. That's because we have a very sensitive network team and they don't like to see high yield on the circuit. Which is kind of ironic because it's what we want. We want to use 95% of the circuit and they start freaking out when they see that. It's been a battle occasionally, but they are starting to relax on this kind of stuff. ExpeDat actually works and it's not flooding circuits, so they are a little more at ease with it.

I don't think I ever heard that before – concern about being too fast? Is it more about the sensitive network team being very conservative and wanting to accommodate all data without crashing the system?

The real concern is that we keep the quality of service up for Voice over IP, video conferencing, Citrix traffic, so we have to be considerate of other traffic as well. One of the things that Seth has been working on improving is the aggressiveness settings and the round-trip time settings to do auto sensing of how likely it is to be flooding a circuit at that moment, and then to pull back automatically based on the round-trip times and aggressiveness settings. So, to have Seth work with us on that is really nice.

I don't know how many companies give customers access to the actual brains behind the technology.

Seth likes the feedback, too. "What kind of things would you like to see logged? What kind of pictures do you want to see next time? That's a really good idea!" It's a two-way street. We're here to let him know what would help him create a better product.

Can you describe what kind of files you transport?

HIPAA documents, legal documents, it's all evidence – all of it. It's of the utmost importance that it's secure. So, we have to trust that the encryption is sound and we do. The data that we're transmitting is always client data so there's always an NDA behind it. It's very sensitive data.

Very often it is media, so it's all types of media, PDFs, Word documents, videos, court transcripts – a mix of everything. Most often it ends up being a lot of images because,

what happens is, we end up doing data processing and part of that entails creating image files of the data. Every piece of data becomes an image at some point.

If you had to guess, how many software packages do you have to juggle?

I would say in the range of 60- 70.

Are there occasions for you and other applications analysts to review the different software products you use? Any feedback about ExpeDat – what they like or don't like?

What they don't like is us telling them they cannot transport between 'xyz' hours because we're worried it's too fast. Other than that, the client value analysts themselves don't usually have a whole lot of feedback for some of this stuff. They just use the tools that we provide and they don't ask a lot of questions. That said, they have never brought us anything better and have never complained about it. Those are two plusses – I cannot think of many software packages that we haven't had someone complain about, so ExpeDat is one of the few. We probably do reassessments annually as far as what software we're using and what else is out there. We really haven't reassessed using DEI. It's one of the few that we don't go back and say, "Oh, is this one we should kick out?" I cannot think of when we've asked that – have never had to. With DEI, there has never really been any need to change or look for anything else.

About Data Expedition, Inc.

Data Expedition, Inc.® (DEI®) is the creator of the world's only data transport software that instantly adapts to fully utilize any network path, maximizing the throughput of existing network infrastructure. Since 2000, DEI has provided data transport solutions to the world's largest companies across nearly every continent and industry. The company's patented MTP™/IP technology uses unique flow-control and error recovery algorithms to achieve high-network efficiency across all IP networks. Companies using DEI's solutions can automatically transport data as fast as the underlying infrastructure will allow without human intervention at a fraction of the cost of other solutions. For more information or to download a FREE trial of ExpeDat for the cloud, please visit www.dataexpedition.com. Follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn.

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