

All Aboard America: Driving Growth with Pure Storage



This is a guest post by Eric Cornwell, senior network engineer at All Aboard America.

The perfect storage solution takes on enormous workloads and allows you to do amazing things, but it sits quietly in the corner invisible to your IT team. Behind the scenes, it acts as the foundation of all your data-driven processes from customer analytics to security.

That's what Pure Storage® delivers to us at [All Aboard America](#). I love my job here for many reasons, and Pure is a big part of that. I never need to worry about storage. If I'm having a performance issue with my network, I know it's coming from somewhere else.

Not that I'm surprised. I was introduced to Pure in 2012 when my team tested an early generation Pure Storage® FlashArray™. We torture tested the array by pulling out every cable that we could, even while putting a couple of test virtual machines on it, and it didn't hiccup once. We never lost our connection, and even minor dips in bandwidth bounced back. I remember looking at my coworker and saying, "OK, this is for real." I was delighted when the Pure sales rep came back with a deal that matched my scope and budget.

Pure was a relative newcomer back then, but the fact that they delivered their solutions with a 30-day

guarantee gave us peace of mind. We were amazed to see how easily it handled data and bandwidth, not to mention how much faster it made our other machines once we turned them on. When my boss checked in on day 25 of the trial period and asked what I thought, I told him that if he returned the Pure array, he'd also have to hire my replacement.

The Wheels Keep Turning

My response to my boss at the time was obviously over the top, but my appreciation for Pure's technology has only grown since then.

*"Since going live with Pure, our organization has doubled in size and the solution is still going strong."
-Eric Cornwell, Senior Network Engineer, All Aboard America*

For the past three years, I've had the privilege of working for All Aboard America, the fourth largest motorcoach operator in the United States and Canada. Our holding company, All Aboard America Holdings Inc., wanted to expand, but first, we had to consolidate several smaller data centers across our various groups to a single, centralized solution. When I was asked to evaluate new SANs for the business just months after joining, the decision to go with Pure was easy.

My CEO and I opted for [FlashStack](#)® software-defined infrastructure, which combines Pure Storage FlashArray//X with Cisco UCS server technology. In addition to the reliability and ease of use I've come to expect, this discretely scalable full-stack architecture gives All Aboard America the flexibility we needed to support our growth ambitions. Since going live with Pure, our organization has doubled in size and the solution is still going strong.

No Disruptions, No Headaches

As the primary SAN for our virtualized environment, FlashArray serves every user and IT workload across our business. Not only did we get a high-performance storage solution but also an array that is robust and error-free and requires little maintenance. To date, FlashArray hasn't caused me a single headache. It's to the point where I tell people at other companies that I'm spoiled as a systems administrator because Pure makes my life so easy.

Even a recent controller upgrade was completely seamless. As part of our Pure [Evergreen Storage](#)™ subscription, we upgraded our original //M20 controller to the latest //X20 version with no disruptions or downtime. In the best possible way, it was a nonevent. For most companies, controller or other hardware upgrades are generally scheduled during a maintenance window in case something goes wrong. But for this upgrade, I wasn't even at my computer at the time and only checked in after a few minutes to confirm everything had installed successfully.

An Evergreen Relationship

The final piece of the puzzle for me is the peace of mind I've received through our Evergreen™ subscription, not just at All Aboard America but throughout my career. Instead of expensive upgrade cycles and disruptive installations, I can just adapt my storage investment to the business's changing needs with zero headaches. Even new software features are included in our subscription, and we can just turn them on when we want, with no added cost or disruption. There are always going to be surprises and fires to put out in other facets of what we do as system admins, so it's a real luxury to not have primary storage and

upgrades on my list of worries.

Looking ahead, All Aboard America plans to enhance our data recovery and backup strategy with one of Pure's new software features: SafeMode™ snapshots. Ransomware and malware are growing concerns across every industry, and we want to make sure we're set up to fend off the threat and recover data with minimal disruption to our business.

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