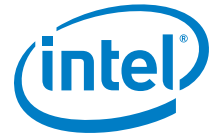


## CASE STUDY

NAS for Home and SMB  
QNAP



# Betting the Verb Farm: Using a Personal Cloud Helps a Virtual Agency Thrive

Verb Farm is a full-service editorial shop based in Portland, Oregon, specializing in information design. The agency works with companies and creative agencies of all sizes to deliver strategic content, and has endeared itself to clients—turning one-off projects into long-term relationships.

### COMPANY

Verb Farm

### SERVICE NICHE

Full-service editorial shop focused on information design and content programs.

### CHALLENGE

Finding an efficient file-sharing solution for contractors and clients that supports business growth.

### SOLUTION

QNAP TS-239 Pro II+ Turbo NAS



Verb Farm principal Stefanie Walker is the hub of a virtual team of writers, designers, editors, and programmers. “Operating as a virtual agency enables me to create flexible, custom-built project teams for my clients. Clients don’t pay for the overhead of maintaining staff they might not need, and the team scales to meet their unique needs,” she says. It can be quite a juggling act, but Walker’s attention to detail is matched by her innate flexibility.

## Growing Pains

Verb Farm’s primary challenge is sharing files and collaborating with an expanding roster of clients and contractors.

The agency is Mac-based, which can be a challenge when interfacing with PC-based customers. One client asked her to use their enterprise file-sharing platform, but it didn’t support Macs. And while many companies implemented guest Wi-Fi\* networks in years past to make onsite collaboration easier, most have now secured them to prevent unauthorized use. “Clients generally say it’s too much of a hassle to grant temporary guest access, so I’ve relied on e-mail and an online task manager to trade files,” Walker says. “Some of my clients use online services to share large files, while others have me transfer files using a flash drive when we meet in person. File sharing is still a huge challenge, no matter what size the company.”



When a friend told [Verb Farm principal Stefanie Walker] about network-attached storage, which enables file sharing using a Web-based interface, she says, “fireworks went off in my brain. My first thought was ‘I need this...my own personal cloud.’ My next thought was ‘every small business owner I know needs a personal cloud.’”

After experiencing a number of issues using the public cloud and hearing about breaches, she’s not a real fan. While she knows her concerns about privacy and security may not be warranted, she prefers to have physical control of Verb Farm project files.

To provide the highest levels of service to her clients, she also needs access to the most up-to-date version of all working files, as well as final, packaged files. “I have to control the files; I can’t let them sit on contractors’ hard drives, because I never know when a client will request a change. Evenings, weekends, I have to be able to respond promptly.”

When a friend told her about network-attached storage (NAS), which enables file sharing using a Web-based interface, she says, “fireworks went off in my brain. My first thought was ‘I need this...my own personal cloud.’ My next thought was ‘every small business owner I know needs a personal cloud.’”

### A New Tool of the Trade

Verb Farm acquired a QNAP TS-239 Pro II+ Turbo NAS based on the Intel® Atom™ processor. As a one-person business, Verb Farm doesn’t have an IT staff—or even an official IT budget—so ease of use is always a paramount consideration. Intel Atom processor is a smart investment in trusted technology, and enables simplified backup and access to important files anytime, anywhere, on any connected device.

She found it fast and easy to create a file directory and selectively upload files. “I’ve administered content management systems and Web-based services, so the learning curve wasn’t too steep,” Walker says. After creating user accounts for contractors, Walker integrated the Turbo NAS into her digital workflow. Project teams can log in from any Internet-enabled device and enjoy read and write access to the files she made available. She can also back up her most critical data to an off-site location by

trading storage space with a trusted design colleague who also has a NAS device.

As for clients, “you’d be surprised by how easy it is for them to lose track of their most recent print-ready files,” says Walker. “They’re thrilled by the idea that I can maintain all their final project files in a central repository with anytime, anywhere access.”

### Preparing for Tomorrow, Today

The QNAP TS-239 Pro II+ Turbo NAS has enough storage capacity to fulfill Verb Farm’s immediate needs, with the ability to swap in larger hard drives as the agency continues to grow its service offerings in the future.

“One of my upcoming projects incorporates video,” Walker says. “When I’ve collaborated with other agencies on video projects in the past, just managing the raw footage crippled their systems. They were always heading out to buy a few more external hard drives. With my Turbo NAS, I can scale capacity as needed to accommodate the enormous file sizes of video footage. It provides a more cost-effective solution over time.”

Besides supporting storage and file sharing across Windows\*, Mac\*, Linux\*, and UNIX\* platforms, the device is an FTP, Web, print, and multimedia server. “Now that I’ve conquered file sharing and collaboration, I can start thinking about hosting my website on the Turbo NAS, and there are a lot of other features I can grow into. As a one-person business, I’m always trying to think smarter, so I can help my clients shine. Now, with my Turbo NAS, I’m more in sync with my clients’ needs and am able to set standards that facilitate our projects every step of the way.”

### To learn more, visit:

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- » [www.qnap.com](http://www.qnap.com)

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