



Solving unique client challenges, building trust



Customer: Ideal Integrations

Industry: Computer software/services

Country: United States

Ideal Integrations maximizes client success with customized, flexible solutions

Building relationships with clients and vendors is pivotal to how Ideal Integrations does business. With a flexible storage solution, Ideal Integrations has transformed its ability to respond to file storage service requests, scaling capacity and performance independently as its clients' needs grow, strengthening those valuable relationships.

Growth as a collaborative effort

Rapid technological change over the past twenty years has given IT teams and managed service providers plenty to keep pace with. In that period, Ideal Integrations grew from 10 employees to 145 and expanded its footprint to six data centers across five states. When Christopher Fox, now chief technology officer (CTO), joined Ideal Integrations nineteen years ago, he and his co-workers did everything. Engineering, help desk, sales — the work was shared. Today, roles are clearly defined, but the teamwork mentality remains.

Ideal Integrations relies on trusted vendors to enable its diverse offerings. In considering the organization's ability to grow while serving clients' evolving needs, Fox points to the prioritization of partnerships, "We like to find the best-in-breed products and rely on the relationships we have with the supplying vendors to grow and solidify," Fox notes. "We pride ourselves on being a solution provider."

By nurturing relationships with its hardware and software providers, Ideal Integrations creates a communication flow that ensures its sales representatives and engineers maintain the most current information about their solutions — and can leverage that knowledge when supporting clients.

"Our focus is on maintaining the client partnership and building a solution," says Fox. "We have a conversation and listen to clients' needs versus promoting one-size-fits-all technologies."

Vision

Strengthen client relationships by improving the ability to deliver customized solutions

Strategy

Integrate flexible, scalable solutions that deliver on performance while empowering clients to maximize return on IT investments

Outcomes

- Increases recurring revenue by 59% at solution-hosted locations
- Enables clients to adapt to changing business needs
- Develops a robust and scalable future-proof file storage offering

"This was a perfect storm where what our client required and what we needed at Ideal Integrations aligned completely with the HPE GreenLake model."

— **Christopher Fox**, Chief Technology Officer, Ideal Integrations

If there's a will, there's a way

In a partnership, both parties take on an active role in achieving success. So, when a client approached Ideal Integrations with a file storage challenge, Fox and his team got to work developing a solution despite not having a file storage as-a-service offering at the time.

"From a performance perspective, our client had five or six different NetApp file servers that hosted all of their file shares, and they were approaching end-of-life," Fox says. "We needed to be able to put the file shares on a platform that could offer flexibility, scalability, and higher performance."

Since Hewlett Packard Enterprise was already a primary vendor partner to Ideal Integrations, and because the client had existing HPE solutions in place, the conversation between Ideal Integrations and HPE advanced quickly to determine a joint solution for the client. The right fit would need to be a modern, efficient file storage platform — one that could support the immediate need to move the organization's files away from the sunseting NetApp infrastructure while enabling Ideal Integrations to scale and diversify the service to adapt to the client's planned growth.



Diverse offerings and personalized support

Ideal Integrations supports clients across numerous IT environments, from small- and medium-sized businesses to large-scale enterprises. With a wide range of solutions and services — including network design and implementation, data center solutions, cloud computing, and security — all Ideal Integrations' clients benefit from an individualized approach to IT.

"The fact that we offer so many different levels of IT support makes us a good fit for any size client in virtually any vertical," Fox adds.

Flexibility is critical for an organization that focuses on partnerships. In approaching client needs individually, Ideal Integrations strives to maintain scalable, centralized platforms that make it easy to expand services as new requirements emerge. Adapting to client growth involves a foundation of consistency that can support expansion.

"We have larger clients that pick and choose when they engage Ideal Integrations for more specific projects. But on the back end, we are hosting their infrastructure, so if they decide they need more services — or, for example, if their employee responsible for running backups leaves — we can step in and further increase our involvement as a trusted partner," Fox says.

Employees may come and go, but Ideal Integrations' clients can depend on continuously available resources and expertise for their IT environments.

"With management and technology leadership turnover, our clients come to us to ask about IT issues that, at that moment, no one in their environment understands," explains Fox. Being there in challenging times deepens relationships and invites opportunities to enrich collaboration.

Expanding into new markets

Ideal Integrations is motivated to bring its partnership-based approach to new markets. With its first acquisition in July 2023, the organization is shifting from a slow and steady growth model to accelerated sales and capacity. Fox sees leveraging an existing sales team to connect with prospects in those additional markets as the best way for Ideal Integrations to continue to grow.

"We are focused on spreading our offerings to different markets," Fox observes. Instead of pursuing a target vertical or client size, Ideal Integrations envisions differentiating in new markets through its ability to grow with its clients, no matter how big or small their IT challenges may be.

"As a services provider, easy performance and capacity planning allows us to span a broad spectrum of customer needs."

– Christopher Fox, Chief Technology Officer, Ideal Integrations



Fox looks at the example of clients who have been with Ideal Integrations for twenty years as a model for how the organization stands out among its competitors.

“Over the years, our long-standing clients have expanded their engagement with us to include consulting services, managed services, and hosting as their businesses have grown.”

When their clients grow, Ideal Integrations grows.

Partnerships at work

HPE has been a trusted partner for Ideal Integrations for five years, and the company has HPE Alletra 6000 in place as part of its primary infrastructure for client-facing storage services. Since Fox was familiar with the HPE GreenLake cloud from past discussions with his HPE team, he saw this most recent client request as an opportunity to expand Ideal Integrations’ services with a new file storage offering on a robust platform.

“This was a perfect storm where what our client required and what we needed at Ideal Integrations aligned completely with the HPE GreenLake model,” Fox commented.

With the client as the anchor tenant, Ideal Integrations pursued HPE GreenLake for File Storage, a scale-out file storage solution designed to accelerate even the most demanding data-intensive workloads with enterprise performance at scale. Dramatically simplified data management via the HPE GreenLake made it easy

for Ideal Integrations to get up and running quickly. Meanwhile, the disaggregated shared everything architecture of HPE GreenLake for File Storage and the flexible consumption and service options within the HPE GreenLake enable the company to independently scale performance and capacity as needed.

With HPE GreenLake for File Storage, Ideal Integrations opened new pathways for bringing individualized support and services to its clients. “Easy performance and capacity planning allows us to span a broad spectrum of customer needs and quickly bring our offerings to market,” Fox notes.

“The single HPE Alletra Storage MP modular hardware platform for both block and file data makes our investments future-proof, and the efficient data reduction and data protection technology of our data software gives us savings on power and footprint and improves ROI from our capital equipment investments.”

Since implementing HPE GreenLake for File Storage, Ideal Integrations has realized a 59% increase in recurring revenue from services in the locations where the platform was installed. Additionally, the company sees the potential for increased expansion to additional clients.

“Right now, we’re focusing on our anchor tenant and ensuring we understand the processes very well before we offer it as a general service offering,” says Fox. “After that, we’ll be able to hit the ground running in recommending this to other clients.”



A centralized future

For Ideal Integrations, an HPE-driven file storage-as-a-service solution is unique considering the volume of vendor partnerships and the number of products the company manages.

"We don't usually buy platforms through other vendor partners for the sake of installation and support," Fox says.

"It exemplifies the relationships we have with the HPE team because we felt comfortable having them help us through the installation process," he explains. "With HPE, we saw a one-stop shop for support, products, and standardization across our cloud."

By centralizing service delivery with HPE, Ideal Integrations is transforming how it approaches client conversations about challenges, pain points, and goals for growth. With expansive new opportunities in storage, the organization can be proactive on behalf of those partnerships.

"We chose HPE GreenLake for File Storage for its performance, flexibility, and simple management," Fox says. "Today, it's a platform for our client's general file shares, but by putting those in a platform designed for exabyte scale that can offer higher performance as needed, it opens up conversations about the future."

Not only has HPE GreenLake for File Storage solved file storage for the individual client, but Fox sees "a new service offering that is very diversified" with the potential to impact clients of all sizes.

"Having a streamlined platform and support helps us deliver that service at an accessible cost," notes Fox.

As Ideal Integrations grows into new markets, more organizations of all sizes will realize the impact of achieving their IT goals.

Growing together

With HPE GreenLake for File Storage implemented — the most significant production Ideal Integrations has supported for this client so far — more production work is underway.

"The client is confident with us," Fox says. "We hope that this implementation will introduce new services or additional capacity for other services."

"It's a sticky platform," he continues. "Once you spend six to eight months moving all of your files over to a new platform, if it's working well for you and is cost-effective, you aren't going anywhere."

"I imagine a conversation once this initial project is done where we can say, 'By the way, what we moved you to isn't just another NetApp-type platform. Here are all these ways it can help your organization.' We have benefited by implementing a new service offering, one that is very diversified, even if it isn't diversified for this client yet."

Engaging HPE as a vendor partner sets the tone for the future, with partners working together to deliver flexible and dynamic services.



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– **Christopher Fox**, Chief Technology Officer, Ideal Integrations

Explore more

HPE GreenLake for File Storage empowers organizations to simplify data management and transform faster with enterprise-level, scale-out file storage.

[Read](#) the top 12 reasons to choose HPE GreenLake for File Storage.

[HPE.com/us/en/HPE-GreenLake-File-Storage.html](https://hpe.com/us/en/HPE-GreenLake-File-Storage.html)

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Solution

HPE GreenLake for File Storage with the following bundled components:

Hardware

— HPE Alletra Storage MP

Software

— HPE GreenLake for File Storage OS

