

A FORSYTHE CASE STUDY

Backup and Recovery Plan and Design

A Fortune 100 Manufacturer

Business Challenge

A Fortune 100 manufacturer was beginning to experience problems with its aging, traditional tape backup and recovery solution. With data supporting its multi-billion dollar business being replicated daily from more than 50 remote locations, as well as between its primary and disaster-recovery data centers, a reliable backup and recovery solution was mission-critical.

Solution

Forsythe began by performing a focused assessment on the manufacturer's existing backup infrastructure. Based upon the results, and its understanding of the manufacturer's data recovery requirements, Forsythe suggested a solution incorporating new "snapshot view" and backup-to-disk technology. The manufacturer, however, was concerned about the cost of implementing advanced technology and the potential difficulties of managing an environment that represented an entirely new backup and recovery paradigm. It also questioned whether the new technology would work in its particular environment.

To address the manufacturer's concerns, Forsythe created a preliminary architecture design and then ran a successful proof-of-concept test of the proposed solution in the manufacturer's existing environment. A return-on-investment (ROI) study found strong cost-justification based on the estimated decrease in downtime, streamlining of file recovery processes, and improved ability to meet service level agreements. The manufacturer's concerns about manageability were addressed both during the proof-of-concept, which included knowledge transfer, and in a series of user-group meetings Forsythe worked with the vendor to arrange between the manufacturer's staff and that of several other companies that had recently implemented the same technology.

Results

First and foremost, the manufacturer now has confidence that its tremendous daily volume of mission-critical information is being replicated reliably and thoroughly, and can be easily recovered if and when needed. Furthermore, the speed with which data files can be recovered has increased dramatically. Previously, a user who lost data typically had to wait 24 hours for the file(s) to be stored. Now, the time from help desk phone call to file restoration is a mere 15 minutes.

In addition, from an operational standpoint, the steps that took 24 hours to accomplish—phone calls to retrieve a tape from the off-site vaulting facility, the manual process of accepting the tape, loading the tape, uploading the data from the tape, and making sure the tape gets properly re-catalogued at the vaulting facility—have all been eliminated. The operator has immediate access to the recorded data, and all manual points of failure have been eradicated. At the same time, the new solution has enabled the manufacturer to obtain better results from its previous backup system, by significantly reducing the system's processing requirements, and thus increasing data throughput.

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