SPHiNX AUTOMATES DISASTER RECOVERY FOR FORESIGHT FINANCIAL

THE CHALLENGE

DISASTER RECOVERY IN A REAL-TIME BANKING WORLD

When it comes to finance, the rules that govern banking practices and ensure the integrity of bank data must be followed precisely. IT is no exception. That's why Foresight Financial centralizes IT for community banks that otherwise wouldn't be able to house the robust infrastructure needed to maintain sensitive data and comply with FFIEC regulations. Foresight consolidates IT operations for five banks across twelve locations in its IBMi environment, giving these individual banks the opportunity to benefit from enterprise- level performance without the enterprise cost.

"Our Internet banking product is real-time. We couldn't afford any downtime or distruptions ," said Aaron Patterson, CIO at Foresight. Foresight previously executed its backups via an IBM LTO-4 library, but retrieving data from the physical library was challenging and time-consuming. If data needed to be recovered, it would require almost an entire day for recovery, without a 100 percent guarantee. With a 99 percent virtualized environment and the need for 24/7 availability, Foresight required a real-time method to access backup data in the case of an emergency, disater recovery or loss.

THE SOLUTION

SPHiNX THE MOST EFFICIENT VIRTUAL TAPE SOLUTION

Foresight discovered SPHiNX through their partner, North American Systems International. SPHiNX is a virtual tape appliance that offers complete disaster recovery (DR) with consolidated backups. For Foresight, SPHiNX simplified backups via virtual tape and expedited data recovery.

FORESIGHT *financial group, inc.*

www.foresightfg.com

Industry
Finance

Supported environements
IBM Power Systems with IBM i (SYSTEM i, iSERIES, AS/400)

> SPHiNX has been a big help with our DR site. SPHiNX can automate the entire backup, send data over the wire and the virtual tape at the DR site is ready and can be recovered immediately."
> -Aaron Patterson, CIO at Foresight

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Illinois corporation founded in 1986 as a financial holding company established under the Federal Reserve.

Offices: Eleven in the Northern Illinois counties.

Mission summary : Community Building Through Community Banking.

SEAMLESS INSTALLATION

Foresight needed to make sure that changes to their environment would not hinder the real-time Internet banking operations. The SPHiNX system seamlessly integrated with Foresight's existing IBMi environment. Moreover, they were even able to keep the same device name and standards already in place. The smooth transition enabled Foresight to enhance their DR infrastructure without interrupting ongoing processes. "The device was up and running and ready to go in less than 30 mins".

IBM Hewlett Packard Enterprise DELL Microsoft helpsystems veeam COMMVAULT Quantum VERITAS

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COMPLIANCE STANDARDS

Patterson had already deployed a replication solution for high availability (HA) backups, but knew this was not sufficient for total DR preparedness. "If you already have system to system replication, most people think you wouldn't need SPHiNX for backups. But the truth is – you do. If you only use replication, you could replicate an entire corrupt database and have no way to get back your original data," Patterson explained. If production data is corrupt and replicated, there is no way to recover the data without SPHiNX. Independent from the high availability backups, SPHiNX automatically sends data over the WAN to the offsite DR SPHiNX unit via a secure encrypted link. This ensures that data is backed up at regular daily intervals. Now, all Patterson has to do is point and click, and the virtual tape is mounted, the data accessible. For compliance reasons, Foresight must keep logs of who executes backups along with where and when tapes are accessed. SPHiNX helped take hours off of the process of maintaining these records with automated logging. Patterson said, "I used to stay up at night worrying about if our logs were ok. Now, SPHiNX does that automatically." Additionally, SPHiNX's built-in data encryption using the Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) with a 256-bit key length ensures that Foresight is able to automate secure transfer, adding yet another DR element that Foresight no longer has to manually monitor.

FASTER BACKUP PROCESSES AND EASE OF RECOVERY WITH ADVANCED AUTOMATION

The most important aspect of backing up data is actually being able to access your DR data. With SPHiNX, Foresight can leave behind the cumbersome method of recalling physical tape from an offsite location, which could take up to two hours or more. Now, all Patterson has to do is just point and click; the virtual tape is mounted and ready to go. Recovery can happen from a remote site with no geographical barriers to DR data availability. "SPHiNX has been a big help with our DR site," said Patterson. "SPHiNX can automate the entire backup, send data over the wire and the virtual tape at the DR site is ready and can be recovered immediately." Advanced DR automation with SPHiNX shaves one and a half to two hours of work off Foresight's weekly backups, which include 60-70 gigabytes of new data every evening. By compressing the data, Foresight is able to move information very quickly.

Wide Inegration
Compliance standards

Fast replication
Secure backup

Ease of recovery
Advanced automation

THE BOTTOM LINE
COMPLETE DR FOR BUSINESS-CRITICAL DATA

With a robust, enterprise-level IT environment, Foresight ensures the integrity of data for thousands of accounts across its five banks. Seamless installation into the IBM i environment along with automated encryption and logging allow Foresight to stay online and reduce the time and resources devoted to backups and DR, while improving the recoverability of business-critical banking data. SPHiNX not only secured backed up data, but it also made it easily accessible for recoery and archiving.

SPHiNX PROVIDES FUTURE-PROOFED PROTECTION FOR MISSION-CRITCAL DATA

THE CHALLENGE

NEVER DELETE ANYTHING" STRESSED BACKUP AND STORAGE RESOURCES

"It's all about the numbers," said Roy Proctor, a senior technician at the City of Bossier City IT department. "You're either trying to save more data, run backups faster, improve network performance, or cut costs to fit a budget." The conundrum of making the numbers "work" is a challenge faced by every IT professional or department. Maintaining efficient running operations with a strict budget is especially critical for local government organizations whose customers include thousands of citizens, city departments, non-profit organziations, institutions, and different economic stakeholders.

For the City of Bossier City (Bossier), fast-growing data with no expiration date stressed existing storage systems. Backups were running past their allotted windows, replication was too long, and restoring data proved a complex, timeconsuming process involving too many ressoruces and money. At the same time, rapid data growth demanded more scalable storage for Bossier's vital information. Muchof the data had to be maintained and archived indefinitely.

Bossier needed a way to stream-line data protection while maintaining long-term informa-tion at the lowest possible cost to fit its tight government budget. Although resource consolidation and limited budget constrained Bossier's allowance for new technology, protecting valuable government information could not have been ignored.

> "The flexibility and simplicity of SPHiNX are really what sold us. [...] It's simple to expand as storage needs grow. Now we don't have to go through the tedious tasks of having people groom their data continuously. We can save it all at a low cost".
> -Roy Proctor, IT Senior Technician at City of Bossier

BENEFITS

- Lower TCO for data protection
- Future-proofed archive with long-term reliability
- Data accessibility to meet mission requirements
- Faster backup and restores

City of Bossier City   http://www.bossiercity.org/
Industry   Government
IT Profile   LTO 6, IBM i Series

THE SOLUTION

SPHiNX EMPOWERS BOSSIER TO KEEP AND PROTECT ALL DATA

Bossier deployed two products to solve their backup, data protection, and long-term preservation chsllenges. SPHiNX improved all backup processes using Bossier's existing environment - which includes IBM iSeries. SPHiNX fit seamlessly into the existing architecture, delivering tangible benefits just days after the new installation. Proctor was tasked with maintaining the city's critical data for more than 500 systems, including sensitive government documents with no statute of limitations. According to Proctor, "We aren't keeping files just for 10 or 20 years; we're keeping them indefinitely." Having data accessible atv all times and portable is also very important, as many city departments need quick access to data and any type of archive content. SPHiNX makes it easy for Bossier to guarantee the safety of sensitive city information. Features like encryption and file integrity checks ensure that data written to the archive is the same as data read, when recovered and restored.

SIMPLE AND EFFICIENT BACKUP THROUGH VIRTUAL TAPE

With the long-term archive now under control, Bossier also needed a way to improve backups for the data that remained on high-performance servers. Bossier's IT department needed a more efficient strategy for backup of their IBM i Series midrange servers that already included LTO tape IBM libraries.

With increasing amounts of incremental backup data, processes exceeded their allotted backup windows and compromised network availability for other operations. Bossier deployed the SPHiNX virtual tape solution to automate and streamline backups in the IBM i environment, along with replication processes.

> "There's almost no comparison to our previous method using physical tape. SPHiNX makes recovery about 100 times faster, which means less downtime so that I can get people their data almost instantlly". -Roy Proctor, IT Senior Technician at City of Bossier

THE BOTTOM LINE

Faced with time constraints and limited budget, Bossier needed to keep its IT center lean and efficient to meet the needs of the many city departments and citizens it serves. The two unique solutions worked with Bossier's existing infrastructure to improve overall network performance, reduce data protection costs, and simplify the preservation of irreplaceable data. "SPHiNX has been great to work with," Proctor concluded. "The team has always been quick to respond and crafted a solution that really fit my situation."

Wide Inegration Compliance standards

Fast replication Secure backup

Ease of recovery Advanced automation

By automating processes and having instant access to recovery data, the city departments have everythingthey need in order to store and backup their data. With the backup strategy already implemented, Proctor can focus on mission-critical initiatives rather than being tied down by tedious, manual processes.

info@sphinxbackup.com
www.sphinxbackup.com

North America   +1 844 7SPHiNX (777-4469)
Europe   +44 0203 966 6514