



CITY COUNTY CREDIT UNION ACHIEVES KEY DR INITIATIVE WITH EVAULT PROTECT

“Management now loves going to the Board of Directors and saying, ‘Look how safe our customers’ data is.’”

City County Credit Union (CU) knows the importance of being prepared—for both the expected and the unexpected. Its location in Florida’s hurricane-prone Broward County subjects the company to severe storms and the related challenges of serving members during power and infrastructure disruptions.

So far, City County CU has been lucky. It has escaped significant damage from natural disasters. But the credit union isn’t taking any chances. According to Chief Information Officer Nancy Bourdon, disaster recovery was identified by the organization’s board as one of four strategic initiatives—right along with its renewed emphasis on membership growth, branch expansion, and geographic expansion.

City County already outsources many of its core banking functions to an out-of-region provider. Yet, the credit union still found itself amassing a growing collection of local data from its Microsoft Exchange email system, employees’ Microsoft Office files, SQL database applications and a Reed Data archival application, used to store everything from teller receipts to member statements.

Goals

Like many credit unions, City County had for years backed up its smaller data sets to a tape drive associated with each server. As the amount of data and number of servers grew, the credit union upgraded to a centralized DLT tape drive attached to multiple servers. Soon, however, this arrangement became unwieldy and somewhat less secure, especially in the event an offsite restore was needed. Having heard of the EVault Protect automated online backup and recovery service from a colleague at a recent tradeshow, Bourdon and Information Systems Manager Jerry Ryan hoped it might help them:

- Become confident about remote backups and restores
- Replace manual backup processes with automated disk-based backups
- Ensure the credit union’s compliance with regulatory requirements
- Improve both backup and restore times for individual files and whole servers
- Get better support in disaster recovery situations

Challenges

A number of issues had arisen as the credit union struggled to grow its tape backup infrastructure. One was the challenge of dealing with where to store the tapes. “We weren’t sophisticated enough to send the tapes offsite. They sat in a file cabinet 30 feet from the server,” said Bourdon. “In retrospect, that wasn’t such a good idea.” The organization

Customer Snapshot

Name

City County Credit Union

Line of Business

Banking—Regional Credit Union

Location

Broward County, Florida

Product

EVault Protect™ plus an Agent plug-in for Microsoft Exchange Server

Configuration

16 Microsoft Windows servers

Capacity

1 TB of data protected

Core Processor

Summit—A Fiserv Resource

Goals

- Reliable offsite backup and disaster recovery
- Replace manual, inefficient tape backups with disk-based automation
- Security and regulatory compliance
- Faster backups and restores
- Better support in the event of a critical restore

Challenges

- Unacceptable windows for tape-based backups/restores
- Security, compliance risks
- Lack of confidence in remote restore capabilities
- Too much IT staff time devoted to backups
- Avoid purchase of new tape hardware

Solutions

EVault Protect offers fast offsite backup and recovery services to an out-of-region, disk-based vault.

Results

Automated, “set-if-and-forget-it” scheduling and reports frees the equivalent of a full-time IT staff member for other duties. File recovery occurs in a few seconds, with larger, full-server recovery possible over a few hours.

faced challenges getting the tape drive to talk to all the servers. As Bourdon and Ryan recall, backups to tape were often faulty, making restores unreliable. Another source of frustration: Helpful answers were not always forthcoming from the current backup software vendor's foreign, outsourced support center.

Continued data growth began to push the tape infrastructure beyond its limits. "We were at the point where the DLT drives just weren't cutting it on a nightly basis and we couldn't write everything we wanted to tape." A decision had to be made: Whether to invest in more tape hardware—such as an automated tape library, or to go another route. Given the myriad issues Bourdon had already witnessed with the organization's tape infrastructure, she had little faith in its ability to support a massive restore if something were to happen to the whole facility. "We decided if we were going to change our backup process, let's make the whole process better instead of just putting a Band-Aid on it," she said.

Solutions

Bourdon and her team evaluated the merits of EVault Protect online backup and recovery services against that of a few other online backup providers. It didn't take long for EVault to rise to the top. "EVault is a pioneer in online backup and was just more established in this area than the other vendors. There were questions the others just couldn't answer," recalls Ryan. "The sales representative for EVault was pretty good and knew how to answer all our questions." As Bourdon recalls, EVault was also one of the few who didn't just offer encryption of data, but multiple levels of encryption. "That was available with EVault from day one, and I didn't have to worry about someone from EVault looking at my data because I hold the keys to it," she said.

Today, the EVault Protect service runs on 16 servers, backing up the equivalent of 1TB of data each night to a Tier IV, SAS-70 Level II EVault data center in another state. "SAS-70 is a big thing in the credit union world. It means a lot to provide our auditors with the SAS-70 certification to ensure we are secure in our treatment of backup data," said Bourdon.

Results

With EVault, Bourdon was able to move the credit union away from its reliance on less secure, less reliable backup tapes. "We moved completely off tapes the day we turned EVault on. We also told CA, 'Goodbye.'" The credit union has yet to regret the move, and is very pleased with the minimal interaction and management the system now requires.

"You really set it and forget it," said Bourdon. "We use the online tools to schedule all the servers and review the logs and reports each morning. Other than that, we seldom need to look at it anymore." In fact, EVault Protect has freed up so much IT staff time, Ryan estimates it has gained them the equivalent of another full IT staff member.

Restores of individual files now take a few seconds, instead of a few hours. When a whole server needed restoring after a hardware failure, EVault was quick to supply a NAS device loaded with the latest backup data. This allowed Ryan to restore the server in just a few hours.

The ease of encryption was also a plus. "We now encrypt all the data that goes on the vaults. It's been really easy to do," he said. "EVault lets you make a couple of clicks and define how strong the encryption level is that you want, and you're done....It just gives us a much more secure method of protecting our data, not to mention being easier for us to manage."

"Our relationship with EVault has since solved every single one of our pain points," said Bourdon. "I can't say enough about how good the experience with EVault has been. We always look for partners that understand our business and understand where we're coming from. If we need to do restores, we might be under a lot of stress. With EVault, we never have to explain ourselves twice. EVault is always there to support us."



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