



CASE STUDY

Avoiding 3 Serious Consequences of Backup Non-compliance

Healthcare Systems Company Saves Millions Annually by Integrating Trouble Ticketing

Customer:

Healthcare Systems Company

APTARE Solution:

APTARE StorageConsole Backup Manager

Technology Environment

Storage: EMC® Symmetrix® DMX™ and VNX® arrays

Backup Solution: Symantec™ NetBackup™

Amount of Data: Several Petabytes

"The APTARE reports are so simple to run, read, and share that you don't have to be a technician or have access to the backup solution. These self-service capabilities help us further optimize staffing resources and keep employees focused on their core mission rather than on data entry and collection."

*Senior Executive,
Healthcare Services Company*

A healthcare services company was spending too much time recording backup status. For every failed cycle, a technician had to manually note how effectively and quickly failed cycles were addressed. With more than 8,000 tickets created because of failed backups per week, technicians were spending more time reporting on the failures than on actually fixing the issues.

The massive labor required to report backup status created another issue. As a large multi-national corporation, the company is required to conform to dozens of industry and federal regulations that are set up to ensure financial transparency and privacy. As part of that effort, the company is required to record backup status for every server in the environment and indicate how effectively and quickly failed cycles were addressed. The inability to meet the regulations can be devastating leading to fines, bad press, and a loss of customer confidence. Other corporations in the financial services, insurance, and government sectors also face similar compliance issues.

Proving compliance is an extremely labor-intensive process. The company, like most multi-nationals, conducts several voluntary internal audits for every external audit in an effort to catch issues before there are serious consequences. Audits are conducted for other business reasons as well—from quality control to productivity analysis. With regulations getting more robust in recent years, the company was conducting several audits per day leading to the formation of a dedicated team of auditors.

With literally thousands of servers in the environment, the compliance team was tasked with keeping track of millions of data points decentralized and archived in large tape libraries. Finding a specific server's backup cycle from months before was a painful, near cost-prohibitive task. Also difficult was tracking issues with backups and their resolutions in a reportable way. Audits could take up to six weeks and would require several departments working together to track down the required data.

"Several technicians were allocated solely to tracking and compiling audit data— basic admin stuff," said Rick Clark, CEO, APTARE, the company that was tasked with making the backup reporting and compliance processes more efficient. "Our customer knew that those



Key Challenges

- Increasing requirements around compliance, auditing, and reporting
- Large amount of time spent on data entry; not enough spent on root-cause analysis
- Hard to prove compliance

Business Results and Technical Benefits

- Automated reports and alerting saves hundreds of hours of manual processes per week
- Cut the time for running audit reports from weeks to minutes
- Less time needed for data entry and manual reporting; more time spent on root cause analysis

employees would be much more valuable finding the root cause of all those failed cycles rather than simply tracking and recording them for compliance reasons.”

Engaging with a Trusted Technology Partner

Previously, APTARE delivered a storage reporting solution that provided the company with a 360 degree view of storage capacity by tier including internally-owned versus utility-owned as well as by department, application, and user. The new found visibility into its storage environment now allows the company to deliver storage as a service to its thousands of global users and enables an accurate and efficient chargeback model. The company now knows exactly how much storage is allocated, how much is being used, and how much it will need in the future. The solution ended up paying for itself within six months and has seen a 700 percent return on investment since deployed.

Given this previous success, APTARE was tasked with finding a more efficient way of tracking backup cycles for the thousands of servers that run the healthcare services group’s IT infrastructure. The solution also needed to efficiently record the reporting data for compliance.

Streamlining Backup Reporting

APTARE StorageConsole Backup Manager captures detailed information in a single database that gives organizations immense knowledge available on the status of their environments for reporting, compliance, and root-cause analysis. Other tools are based on multiple databases decentralized in various locations making it impossible to work with complete data sets for advanced reporting and compliance purposes. The APTARE solution’s extensive data collection capability and central repository makes it possible for the healthcare services company to streamline the backup reporting process, ensure the fulfillment of any backup policies, and prove compliance to internal and external auditors.

Help Desk Integration worked with APTARE to integrate APTARE StorageConsole Backup Manager with the company’s proprietary help desk tool allowing technicians to gather information on failed backups without having to search archives and make notes directly in the ticketing tool. The APTARE professional services team tapped into the rich data sets from Symantec™ NetBackup™ components (logs, command line interfaces, master servers) and integrated them directly into the help desk solution where they could be analyzed and reported on by technicians.

Now, instead of recording notes for each individual backup, which can number in the thousands per day, the healthcare services company’s technicians can apply changes to groups of tickets. Instead of having to open each ticket and record the solution thousands of times over, the technician can record the resolution across an entire group. While it may seem insignificant, the ability to condense thousands of steps to just one saves hundreds of hours of productivity each week, a powerful cost savings for the multi-national corporation.



Why APTARE?

- Seamless integration with the company's helpdesk solution
- Easy to run, read and share reports, including self-service option
- Backup data collected in a central repository for easy integration into custom reports

"Working together with the customer, we were able to make the reporting process more efficient," Clark said. "In a single action, we were able to take work that used to take them thousands of minutes and condense it to just a few minutes."

Eliminating this repetitive reporting allows break-fix technicians to address many more tickets and spend more time on root-cause analysis. Instead of running around, putting out fires and reacting to issues, technicians are preventing the backups from failing in the first place.

Proving Compliance Seamlessly and Effectively

The APTARE integration and reporting mechanism also streamlines compliance reporting and the effort to prove compliance adherence. Auditors have the right to identify a random list of servers and ask the company to present proof that the servers are being backed up properly. If there are any failed backups, the company needs to show that the issue was remediated, how long it took to fix, and what steps were taken to prevent the failure in the future.

Previously, the internal auditing team would have to interface with each backup technician to gather the required information, sapping resources from their daily duties. Often, the backup data was archived in a tape library which could take weeks to track down by another department. Now the compliance team can simply run a report through APTARE StorageConsole and share the information with auditors. Whereas the process used to take several departments weeks, it now takes a single administrator a few minutes.



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