

The Secure Data Solution™ for Disaster Recovery

Summary and Customer Benefits

Current Solution Raises Questions

The goal of any Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan is to achieve the most rapid return to an operational state possible, at the most reasonable price. Get your business processes back up and running, and do so at a reasonable cost.

Today, the most widely accepted method of getting data offsite so that it can be stored and then recovered if necessary is to back it up to physical tape, and then move the tapes to an offsite vaulting facility. The tapes can be recalled and moved to an appropriate DR facility for restoration should the need arise.

This method of archiving and recovery is widely used and has become a standard element of almost everyone's DR plan. But it is also fraught with problems, and in the evolving world of electronic data transmission, no longer economical or particularly effective.

The value of data, and thus the value of a rapid return to an operational state, is continually increasing. At the same time, the cost of bandwidth used to transmit information, and the cost of disk space used to store information, is continually declining. These trends have ushered in the era where moving data across bandwidth instead of by truck, and storing it on disk instead of on tape, simply makes sense.

A Truly Secure Solution

The Secure Data Solution™ is an integrated hardware/software product that assures that a company's critical tape data sets are automatically protected, moved, and

One Customer's Story

One customer currently enjoying the benefits of the Secure Data Solution is a Washington, D.C.-based financial services company. The company has been integrating the Secure Data Solution into its disaster recovery planning throughout 2007. They currently utilize the Secure Data Solution to emulate and replace physical mainframe tape drives in their Washington, D.C. data center.

Once tape images are written to the Secure Data Solution, they are compressed and encrypted, and then copied to a remote Secure Data Solution at their recovery site in Philadelphia.

The Systems Engineer responsible for the next generation recovery project told us, "When we are finished with the implementation, one of the biggest benefits we'll get is that the data sets we back up begin being sent to our recovery site as soon as they are created here. With our old method we have to wait until the end of the evening when all the backups are completed before a truck comes and picks them up. That means if we experience a disaster anytime before that truck comes, we have to fall back to the previous day's backup. We always have the potential of losing an entire day. Our management had to build that possibility into our BCP before, but the new solution will fix that."

That particular problem is solved because the Secure Data Solution begins moving each backup at the moment the virtual tape image is "dismounted" on the system. This reduces the company's exposure from an entire day to mere minutes.

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archived at a remote site. The Secure Data Solution also assures that data sets are always available to be restored at both the primary and remote sites. All data controlled by the Secure Data Solution is encrypted and only authorized individuals have access to it.

The Secure Data Solution provides automated encrypted backup and offsite archiving of critical business data, helping businesses address challenges introduced by the proliferation of government regulations, such as Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPPA, and Basel II. It does so by encrypting and protecting sensitive data that companies currently write to traditional physical tapes.

Though widely accepted, the practice of writing sensitive data to physical tape and moving it offsite is increasingly being called into doubt on more than just questions of efficiency. Recent media reports indicate unprotected data on tapes is increasingly vulnerable to negligence, motivated insiders, and theft.

Customer Benefits

The Secure Data Solution provides companies with a viable method of storing sensitive data, moving it offsite, and storing or recovering it at a remote location. It replaces physical tapes with extremely affordable, high-availability disk-based storage. It uses advanced compression and deduplication techniques to dramatically reduce the bandwidth necessary to transmit the data. These approaches bring immediate customer benefits:

- Disk-based storage and electronic transfer is far less expensive than traditional tape creation, handling, and movement.
- All data is protected and encrypted, addressing both practical and regulatory issues.
- The Secure Data Solution provides integration with a customer's current backup-and-recovery software and processes, and works with both midrange and mainframe systems.
- Compression and tape staging immediately and dramatically improve the efficiency of current tape resources and staff, and produces immediate savings.

One Customer's Story (continued)

The Secure Data Solution also provides this company with tremendous benefits at the recovery end as well. "In the past, if we had a disaster, or a test we would call our archiving company and tell them to get our tapes over to Philadelphia. This would take a while, several hours at least. Then we would still have to load all those tapes and begin the process of restoring them. This takes hours as well, so it could really take a while. With the new method the tape images will already be there. The device in Philly looks like several dozen tape drives so we can begin restoring the images a heck of a lot faster than the old way. At our last test, we did the entire recovery in just a couple of hours."

In addition to the speed-related issues, there is also the issue of expense. Just a few years ago, this approach might have worked technically, but its economic viability would have made it a questionable venture. Now, by incorporating the latest compression and deduplication techniques, this customer requires less than one tenth the amount of disk and bandwidth to store and transmit their data. This provides more than enough cost savings to make projects like this one a go.