

Accident Exchange

Company Overview

Established in 2001, Accident Exchange is one of the largest accident management companies in Europe. It operates a fleet of more than 5,000 cars including all of the major manufacturer brands and models, and has a team of over 750 people who provide security for almost 4 million motorists.

As an Association of British Insurers (“ABI”) Tier 1 approved supplier, Accident Exchange offers motorists involved in non-fault accidents a like-for-like replacement vehicle for the period that they are deprived of the use of their car, passing the bill to the insurance company of the at-fault driver. Accident Exchange also arranges insurance policies which protect customers from having to pay charges in the event that they are not recovered from the at-fault driver or their insurer. When instructed by a customer, Accident Exchange notifies the relevant third party or their insurer of a claim.

The Challenge

The accident insurance service has experienced phenomenal growth over the past years and since being authorised and regulated by the FSA and the Ministry of Justice, backup and recovery of its data had become crucial to the way in which it operated. To remain compliant, Accident Exchange is faced with the legal requirement to keep data and records all telephone calls for a minimum period of 18 months. During this time Accident Exchange can receive up to 0.9 million calls, generating over a terabyte of data, and produce a further terabyte in the shape of four-to-five million claim files.

With its customer facing website, Accident Exchange functions on a 24/7 basis so it becomes absolutely critical that the backup and recovery of data is fast, efficient and effective. Incremental and full backups have to happen without fail, every day, in order to meet customer demands for access to their personal insurance claim information. Keeping services operating at optimal levels requires an in-house team of 20 developers with a team of 10 looking after infrastructure and the data centre itself.

Accident Exchange had been operating VERITAS for backup across two data sites, each consisting of a number of servers backing up to tape libraries, with SQL running the database—but loading was continually failing, jobs were taking too long and other issues. Exchange Cluster server, clustered SQL server and ESX farms rounded out the complex data storage network that was now requiring better protection and improved management. With increasing levels of calls and claimant documents to be backed up and retrieved, Accident Exchange needed a management system that could synchronise across the entire storage infrastructure, delivering effective replication and backup to both disk and tape.

The Solution

“When the opportunity arose to improve Accident Exchange’s IT infrastructure, we didn’t hesitate to shortlist CommVault,” explains Ray Ford, CTO at Accident Exchange.

The team considered Hitachi Data Systems and EMC products, but Ford’s prior experience with CommVault swung the decision.

"Being familiar with CommVault and Simpana instantly made CommVault my preferred choice. We have a predominantly Microsoft house, so knew CommVault could piece it all together," he added. During the review process only CommVault® Simpana® software had provided Accident Exchange with a truly resilient solution that offered further scalability as and when the company needed it. Moreover, CommVault could be synchronised across both data centre sites to aid disaster recovery, which was fundamental if auto failover was to be sustained.

Ford was also impressed with the CommVault customer service's quick and timely responses to the few technological issues that arose during installation. The supporting documentation in particular was of a very high quality and came in very useful during the handover phase. Since finishing the installation process, two members of Accident

Exchange staff have been trained on, and are now qualified to use, Simpana at an advanced level. By taking a route of total ownership, Ford's team have quickly embraced the power of the entire Simpana platform, with backup for SQL, Exchange and AD, single instance storage and a capacity to use archiving and encrypt tape data all now being managed centrally.

The Results

The rise in efficiency Accident Exchange has experienced has been hugely beneficial: failover is smoother and backup times have shrunk enormously.

Backup had always been considered to be an "absolute nightmare" for Accident Exchange, but it is no longer an issue. "The danger of losing the original data is always frightening but this has been mitigated since introducing CommVault," continued Ford. "The daily reporting mechanism

that Simpana offers has revolutionised the efficiency of how Accident Exchange backs up its data, and the advantages are recognised by the whole team. We all now have a greater confidence in our system to continue delivering a market leading service to all our customers."

Steven Rose, VP for EMEA at CommVault concluded, "The unique unified storage management approach that CommVault offers has enabled Accident Exchange to increase flexibility and efficiency but more importantly become compliant and when Accident Exchange is ready to expand it's business further, the infrastructure already in place, and CommVault, will support it all the way."

For more information, visit www.commvault.com & www.accidentexchange.com.



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