

"Trust is Restored" When Automotive Lighting Manufacturer Switches on CommVault Galaxy Software

QUICK FACTS

Industry/Solution:

- Manufacturing

Platform/File System:

- Oracle over Red Hat Linux; Novell Netware; Citrix; Lotus Notes

Application(s):

- Inventory, pricing, sales management, production management

Partner Hardware:

- Dell servers
- Quantum DLTape tape drives and libraries

Challenges:

- Heterogeneous environment supporting multiple mission critical applications

Competitive Challengers:

- Computer Associates ArcServe

Solution:

- CommVault Galaxy Backup & Recovery

Benefits:

- Reliability
- Ability to support backups for all platforms on a single product
- Knowledgeable, available, understandable technical support

Customer Profile

Drivers all over the world depend on lights from North American Lighting, Inc., to keep them safe. And North American Lighting (NAL), the largest independent automotive lighting supplier in North America, depends on CommVault backup and recovery software to keep the lights on in their vital information systems. For over 20 years, NAL has been manufacturing lighting products for the majority of vehicle manufacturers in North America. Started as a joint venture, the company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Koito Manufacturing Co. Ltd. of Japan. With headquarters in Flora, Illinois, NAL has manufacturing plants in Flora and in Paris and Salem, Illinois, and a Sales and Technology Center in Farmington Hills, Michigan.

Data Management Environment

NAL's primary information systems center is at its Corporate IS Department at company headquarters in Flora. The mission of Corporate IS is to support and enable a wide range of applications in engineering, operations, and sales. In the fast-moving, highly competitive automotive market, "just in time" manufacturing requires information to be available around the clock. But in the Fall of 2003, Charlie Bruce, LAN/WAN Administrator in Corporate IS, was not feeling comfortable with NAL's ability to reliably back up and restore critical data.

"We have a unique environment," says Bruce. "We have a wide variety of applications running on a lot of different platforms. We have servers for inventory, pricing model, and sales. We have a Red Hat Linux server with Oracle running on top of it. Oracle mines data from our AS400 and presents it to the people who need it via an access front end. The reliability of the Red Hat Linux/Oracle server is critical. For example, take inventory. We are a 'just-in-time' operation, so we don't really have any inventory that is not already sold. But we do have inquiries from customers: 'Has it been shipped? Where is it now?' All the different servers support, in one way or

another, production and sales. The Citrix server directly supports sales, supports the sales forecast application. The Novell server is a file and print server that supports engineering, human resources, and the ISO application. We have to be able to demonstrate that we can reach the ISO documents in a timely manner; they have to be up and running and available."

Problems With ArcServe Backup

Reliable backups and the ability to restore lost or damaged files is critical for NAL. "We had been using Computer Associates ArcServe," says Bruce, "but it could not handle all these different environments. Everything had different interfaces. But more importantly, ArcServe was not reliable. It would just quit working in the middle of a backup. And sometimes we were unable to restore. We simply can not afford not to be able to restore." Frustrated with the poor performance of ArcServe, Bruce and the Corporate IS Team started looking at new backup software solutions in the last months of 2003. "First we had to go through the exercise of giving Computer Associates a chance to fix the problems," says Bruce. "But they ended up breaking my server with what they wanted us to do. They ended up abending the server. Abending means abnormal ending. We said, 'That's it, we quit!'"

Finding a New Backup Solution

After they gave up on ArcServe, the IS team started an evaluation of new backup solutions. "We looked in on on-line discussion groups," recalls Bruce. They found that Netware users talked favorably about a couple of solutions, including CommVault Galaxy. "The deciding factor for us," says Bruce, "was that Dell signed off on CommVault Galaxy. Our servers are Dell. We told Dell, 'If you recommend CommVault Galaxy, and it does not work out, we'll move our server business. So don't tell us this now and then change your mind in a few months.' They did not blink. They did not back off their recommendation of CommVault

Galaxy. So we went with it. Because buying CommVault Galaxy would be a new expense, first we had to do some politicking and ROI analyses to justify it. We did not do a trial run. I don't believe in running trials on production servers. The install went very well. The CommVault guy who came on site was extremely knowledgeable about Red Hat and Oracle."

"100% Reliability" With CommVault

NAL selected CommVault Galaxy backup and recovery software based on three factors: reliability, support, and versatility. "Reliability with Galaxy software has been 100%," Bruce reports. "I've tested restores on everything we back up. That is, after the backup, I've gone in and done test restores. I'm asking, 'Can I really restore from this backup?' With Galaxy, the tests have shown 100% reliability. With ArcServe, I did test restores daily, because I didn't trust it. And it did not work reliably. It would fail frequently, and for no discernible reason! Now, with CommVault Galaxy, trust is restored! The people who have taken over responsibility for backup now don't even do tests anymore. Should they? No, there's no need to do tests anymore."

Excellent Support

"Beyond the good experience we had with the initial installation, I have not had a reason to use it," says Bruce, "but one of our people who did gave CommVault support an excellent report. They told him what he needed to know, they were available, and they were understandable." In contrast, Bruce's experience with ArcServe support was frustrating. He says, "How can I put this

politely? They suck. CommVault gives us English-speaking support personnel. That was a very, very strong factor. We are part of an international corporation, but as a company, we don't like overseas outsourcing of support. All things being equal, we will pick a supplier who doesn't outsource their support. We don't want to depend on people we may not be able to understand clearly, and who may be working a third shift job."

"One Package, One System, One Console"

"The versatility of CommVault software was one of the things that made CommVault Galaxy so attractive to us," Bruce says. "The fact that we can back up all our different environments in one package, on one system, with one console. With Galaxy software, we have so many choices, so much control, so many ways to go. If a drive goes bad, I can just switch to another device easily. One of the good things about Galaxy is that we can specify a device to which we want to send the backup. For example, Oracle goes to a stand-alone tape drive, while the other servers back up to a tape library." Galaxy backup is closely integrated with the Oracle database, working in conjunction with RMAN, the internal Oracle process that handles backup. Galaxy's seamless integration with RMAN allows highly granular backup and great flexibility.

Backup in Transition

NAL does incremental backups Monday through Thursday and full backups on Friday, and retains the full backups for six months. The backup architecture at NAL is in transition,

and CommVault Galaxy has a big role in the transition. Today, Galaxy software is backing up a Netware server, a Domino Notes server, a Citrix server, and a RedHat Linux/Oracle server. Soon it will also be backing up a Cisco Unity 2000 Voice Over IP communications server. "We have budgeted a disk array," says Bruce. "When we get that in, we will back up first to the disk array, and then to the tape library."

Currently, they back up to a Dell backup server, which backs up to a Dell Powervault library with twenty tape drives. "The tapes are bar-coded," explains Bruce, "and the CommVault Galaxy software works very well with the bar codes. Bar codes make things much faster. The system doesn't have to read the tape to know what's on it, it just reads the bar code."

More CommVault in the Future

As a result of the good experience with CommVault Galaxy at Corporate headquarters in Flora, North American Lighting is going to roll out CommVault Galaxy to their other sites. "We had the requisitions for CommVault Galaxy for the other sites, but we wanted to see how it worked in Flora first," says Bruce. "This was a test. Will we replace ArcServe with CommVault Galaxy? Absolutely! CommVault Galaxy has met our expectations fully. In the next six months the other sites will be installed."

www.commvault.com | 888.746.3849 | E-mail: info@commvault.com

CommVault Worldwide Headquarters • 2 Crescent Place • Oceanport, NJ 07757 • 732-870-4000 • Fax: 732-870-4525
Regional Offices: United States • Europe • Middle East & Africa • Asia-Pacific • Mexico & Latin America • Canada • India • Oceania

