

CommVault Galaxy Pays Healthy Benefits for Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund

QUICK FACTS

Industry/Solution:

- Financial Services

Platform/File System:

- Windows 2000

Applications:

- Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft SQL Server 7 and 2000
- Oracle 9i
- Pension administration, Pension fund management
- Web application

Partner Hardware:

- Dell PowerEdge servers
- Dell PowerVault 132 tape library
- Dell/EMC CX300 storage area network

Challenge:

- Need for trouble free backups and reliable support
- Need for fast recoveries of files
- Business continuity

Competitive Challengers:

- Veritas

Solution:

- CommVault Galaxy Backup & Recovery
- AUX Copy

Benefits:

- Message-level restores of Exchange email
- Time savings due to trouble-free backups
- Easy administration due to policy-based backups
- Easy system expansion due to modular technology and Common Technology Engine

Customer Profile

Serving more than 51,000 Ohio public safety officers, the Ohio Police & Fire Pension Fund (OP&F) provides pension, disability, survivor and health care benefits to its eligible members. OP&F also works with 900 police and fire employers across the state, collecting contributions from the employers and members. OP&F, which manages assets of \$9.5 billion, employs 175, including 26 in the Information Services Department.

Data Management Environment

The mission of the OP&F's IS department is to support internal clients, such as the Member Services and Health Services Administration Departments. These departments in turn perform the functions of the organization in support of its members. IS also develops applications used by internal clients to deliver member services. "For example," explains System & Network manager Jeff Breeckner, "we developed a Web application including a pension calculator that a member can use to calculate what his or her benefits will be on retirement."

OP&F's IS infrastructure includes a total of about 30 Dell servers and 210 Dell desktops. The servers are primarily Dell Power Edge 2650 servers, with more powerful Power Edge 8450 servers supporting the Pension Administration System. Each server has its own on-board storage. The department also has a Dell PowerVault disk array and a Dell/EMC CX300 Storage Area Network (SAN), with a capacity of one terabyte. Servers and the SAN are backed up by a Dell PowerVault 132 tape library with dual LTO2 drives and 22 media slots, for a total capacity of 8.8 TB.

CommVault Galaxy software backs up all 30 servers, including one Microsoft Exchange server. CommVault's Microsoft SQL database backup product backs up SQL 7 and SQL 2000 servers. OP&F is in the process of implementing a new Pension Administration

System. The old system ran on an AS400, but the new system will be a client/server system, running on an Oracle 9i database, which is backed up by a Galaxy agent.

Business Continuity Concerns

CommVault Galaxy was installed as a backup system in April 2004. Before that, OP&F was using Veritas Backup Exec. Concerns with support led them to make the change. "We had challenges with Veritas support," says Breeckner. "Back-up difficulties and response time from technical support became our main issues."

System Administrator Ryan Ferreri is responsible for backing up the OP&F's systems. "The problems we experienced became business continuity issues," he says. "If the IS department has an interruption of service and can't support our internal clients, are internal clients cannot be productive. Not having physical back up would prevent us from recovering from a data loss."

Choosing Galaxy Solves Support Issues

Knowing that they wanted a different solution, the IT team investigated a number of products before they determined that CommVault Galaxy was the right solution. "Turns out, it is the right choice," says Breeckner. Explains Ferreri, "CommVault's logical approach makes it easier to add backups, because we just add to an existing policy, versus having to identify individual servers and devices. The switch to Galaxy has solved the OP&F's support issues."

Backup Process

For their file servers and Exchange server, OP&F runs differential backups during the week and full backups on Friday. For their database servers, they do full backups every night. All backup tapes go off-site the next business day. They use AUX Copy to make an extra copy of the backups of specific types of data they want to keep on-site. For example, they keep some MS Exchange data on-site.

The e-mail message-level recovery capability of Galaxy has been useful. "It's our solution," says Ferreri. "If someone asks for a specific message, it is much better to be able to restore just that message, rather than having to restore the whole mailbox, find the specific message you want, and then delete all the rest. The granularity of single-message restore is great."

Excellent Documentation

"Galaxy is straightforward," says Ferreri. "It's user friendly. There are reports that show what has been backed up, etc. But the 'how it works' documentation that comes with the product is clear and concise. If we run into a problem, I know I can go into the

documentation and find the solution. I also like the way Galaxy integrates with the hardware. For example, the PowerVault 132 tape library has a bar code reader. Galaxy does a great job of managing the data using the bar code reader capability of the library. If we are recovering data, Galaxy uses the bar codes to tell us what cartridges to get."

OP&F Likes the CommVault Unified Approach

Ferreri says that the fact that CommVault products all have a common core, called the Common Technology Engine, is an important advantage. "Because all the products share technology, if you want to add something, you don't have to buy a whole new system,"

he says. "It's all modular, and the cost to add on is incremental." With the new Pension Administration System, OP&F will be imaging a large number of documents, which will generate a large amount of data. When that happens, they will use Galaxy's Synthetic Full backup capability to reduce the time required for full backups.

Breckner says, "CommVault has been responsive. If we are thinking about using a new product, they will tell us if they think it fits for us. As a result of CommVault support, it is costing us a lot less of our time to support the product. Management may see that as a soft benefit, but it's a huge savings for us."

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