

## Case Study

### QUICK FACTS

#### Industry/Solutions:

- Engineering/Technical Service Provider for DoD

#### Platform/File System:

- Microsoft Windows 2003

#### Applications:

- Microsoft Windows Server 2003
- Microsoft SQL Server 2003
- Microsoft Exchange 2003
- Microsoft SharePoint 2003
- VMware

#### Partner Hardware:

- EMC CLARiiON CX3-20 SAN
- EqualLogic IP SAN
- Quantum M1500 SDLT-2 tape library
- Dell servers, laptops and desktops

#### Challenges:

- Legacy Backup Exec platform couldn't keep pace with business growth.
- Even with excessive administration, could not complete daily or weekend backups within a workable timeframe.
- Wanted to extend e-mail archiving for compliance and best practices.

#### Solution:

- CommVault Simpana with Backup, Recovery & Archive for Exchange with Content Indexing and Simpana Deduplication.

#### Benefits:

- Simpana reduces full backups from four days to four hours, with point-and-click reporting and e-mail alerts for complete status updates.
- Restores now are possible in minutes vs. hours.
- E-mail Archive eases compliance requirements while enabling VSE to reduce overall mailbox sizes by up to 40 percent.
- Content Indexing simplifies universal search while Simpana Deduplication eliminates duplicates of files, allowing VSE to store more data on less disk.
- The ability to produce Exchange archive data in-house instead of outsourcing this effort will reduce search and discovery costs.

## VSE Corp. Salutes CommVault® Simpana® Software for Protecting Crucial Government Project Data While Supporting SOX Compliance

### Customer Profile

VSE Corporation is a broadly diversified company that provides engineering and consulting services, systems integration, infrastructure support and information technology solutions to agencies of the United States Government and government contractors worldwide. Formed in 1959, the Alexandria, Va.-based company's overarching mission is to reduce the cost and improve the reliability of Department of Defense systems and equipment.

The publicly traded company has been ranked among the top 100 defense contractors, top 10 foreign military sales contractors and top 50 Navy contractors in the nation. VSE relies heavily on leading-edge technology solutions to facilitate information access and sharing among its global project teams. The company also embraces corporate best practices to protect highly sensitive data and support Sarbanes-Oxley (SOX) compliance.

According to Dave Warburton, network manager for VSE Corp., keeping up with rapid data growth and maintaining corporate policies requires IT solutions that are flexible, scalable and reliable. "Aside from supporting SOX compliance, working with the government means we must continuously measure up to the highest standards," he says. "In addition to making sure all our data is protected, we must make sure it is readily available. We've been able to achieve that and more with CommVault Simpana software."

### Data Management Environment

VSE's IT staff of 30 provides and maintains state-of-the-art systems for approximately 2,200 employees. The team supports a full complement of Microsoft applications, including Microsoft Server 2003 and 2008, Office, SQL Server and SharePoint. Additionally, the team provides access to the full Adobe professional creative suite and Pro/ENGINEER CAD software.

Dell is the predominant platform for servers, laptops and desktop computer systems. Currently, VSE has more than 200 physical servers but is starting to work with VMware to add server virtualization to its rapidly expanding environment. In continually expanding capabilities to meet clients' needs, VSE has experienced a spike in data demands, leading to storage growth of more than 40 percent. As a result, the company recently augmented capacity on an EMC CLARiiON CX3-20 networked storage system by adding a smaller EqualLogic IP SAN to expand total storage to around 100 TBs of capacity. A heavy reliance on e-mail was one of the main reasons for expansion. "The ability to control the growth and costs of storing Microsoft Exchange data is a top priority for us," explains Warburton. "By deploying CommVault Simpana, we've optimized our backup and recovery environment while also taking advantage of e-mail archiving to improve mailbox management significantly."

### The Challenge: Broken Backups, Out-of-Control E-mail Growth

Before deploying CommVault® Simpana® software, VSE struggled to make daily incremental and weekly full backup windows as the company had outgrown its Symantec Veritas Backup Exec platform. "Our implementation of Backup Exec with disk-to-disk-to-tape data protection couldn't keep pace with our rapidly expanding business," recalls Warburton. "We couldn't complete backups within our daily and weekend windows and the entire process required a lot of babysitting, causing major headaches and persistent pain."

Full backups of about half a terabyte were kicked off Friday night but often didn't finish until Tuesday morning. Since a nightly incremental could not be initiated until the full was done, a three-person team was dedicated full-time to devising special scripts and workarounds to deal with problems. "We rarely had time to do anything else as we were so focused on coming up with alternatives, including a rotation of some incrementals and full backups every day of the week," adds Warburton. "It became complicated and nothing worked the way it was supposed to."

In addition to missing backup windows regularly, VSE had problems with Backup Exec working with multiple tapes. If a tape broke during a backup, the entire process had to be started over. Failed backup jobs couldn't be restarted easily, so the team had to redo the entire process. According to Warburton, anywhere from six to 20 hours were lost if a backup failed.

Meanwhile, VSE was challenged by the ever-increasing expansion of the company's Microsoft Exchange data. "We grew increasingly concerned about controlling the growth and costs of storing our Exchange data while also being able to respond quickly and efficiently to legal discovery actions," Warburton adds.

### **The Solution: CommVault Simpana Delivers User-Friendly, Enterprise Data Management**

Since VSE was familiar with Backup Exec, the team looked at the next product in the line-up as well as other enterprise-class software platforms. While the team liked the addition of more powerful features, they thought some products were too complicated. In particular, one contender cobbled together myriad point products using a common interface that was cumbersome and not at all user friendly.

In contrast, CommVault Simpana stood out for ease of use and its singular approach to backup, recovery, archiving, discovery and resource management. "CommVault is head and shoulders above the competition when it comes to user-friendly operation," adds Warburton. "Every vendor portrays their solution as easy to use, but only CommVault provided a simple yet powerful enterprise-class platform that met all our data protection and compliance needs."

CommVault also was the only solution with a common platform to support its various software modules as well as centralized management that provided an all-encompassing view of VSE's data management infrastructure. In particular, VSE liked how the CommVault's software components worked together seamlessly, instead of forcing the purchase of disparate

third-party tools for capabilities such as reporting, discovery and content indexing.

Being publicly held, VSE was interested in adding archive, find, search and discovery to meet increasing demands for e-mail retention and retrieval. "One of the real advantages of CommVault was the ability to conduct universal searches of archived e-mail messages and attachments for litigation and compliance requests," Warburton says. "By streamlining this process, we can greatly enhance our ability to meet corporate policies and SOX compliance."

### **The Benefits: Unified Data Protection, E-mail Archiving and Content Indexing**

In early 2008, VSE deployed CommVault Simpana software as part of a storage infrastructure overhaul, which included the EMC SAN deployment. Almost immediately, the team took advantage of its upgraded data protection to bolster backup and recovery efforts. The addition of the SAN gave disk-based backup speed a 100 percent performance boost. With Simpana, the team now can conduct a full backup of more than one terabyte in about four hours—a huge improvement over the four days it often took previously to backup half that amount.

Recoveries also have been streamlined, taking only seconds and minutes to restore a file instead of the previous hours and days. "Switching to CommVault was a very smart business decision," notes Warburton. "The difference in our backup and recovery process is like night and day." Moreover, VSE has eliminated the need for special scripts and workarounds as the Simpana's automated, policy-driven operation simplifies the entire process. "Simpana software is very straightforward so we no longer need three people to manage backups," Warburton adds. "Reporting is spot on, so all we do is monitor progress, which requires one person to check e-mail alerts and status updates on our 200 servers. My backup administrator is like a kid in a candy store with all the things Simpana software can do."

Among the things Simpana software does for VSE is meet corporate goals for e-mail archiving. The team is in the process of rolling out CommVault Archive to control data growth by addressing common capacity management problems such as user quotas, .PST file proliferation and Exchange database growth. "Our goal in rolling out Simpana's e-mail archiving is to have greater flexibility in retaining e-mail for whatever time period best meets our corporate policies while also reducing overall mailbox sizes by up to 40 percent," explains Warburton. "In doing so, VSE can save a significant amount of disk capacity by shrinking the size of active primary data stores and move archived e-mails to secondary, less expensive SATA storage."

VSE also is taking advantage of Simpana software's content indexing with universal search of archived e-mail messages and attachments as well as distributed deduplication to eliminate duplicates of files and attachments in backups and archives stored on disk. "We'll be able to store more data on less disk, which will greatly simplify search and discovery," says Warburton. "If we had to outsource search and discovery to comply with a legal action, it would be a costly and burdensome task. Instead, we can easily find and produce Exchange archive data along with Exchange backup copies to reduce our risk and cost related to electronic discovery."

To wring out even more costs from its current environment, Warburton plans to take a closer look at CommVault's global, embedded deduplication software. The first deduplication software to reduce the amount of data across all storage tiers, from primary storage through to tape, this could reduce the footprint of VSE's long-term vaulting or compliance copies by up to 90 percent. "With CommVault's Simpana software, we've taken VSE's data protection and compliance to a new level while reducing costs and management overhead," concludes Warburton. "It's the most powerful data protection and archiving tool we've ever had."



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