

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Mitre 10 NZ

Backing Up Nearly 3x Faster By Upgrading to Veritas Backup Exec™ 2014

To support rapid growth, streamline backup of 16 terabytes, and simplify protection of a nearly 100 percent virtualized environment, New Zealand-based home improvement chain Mitre 10 turned to Veritas to upgrade its approach to data protection. Results include up to 3x faster backups, 67 percent less backup administration time, more than 400 hours per year reclaimed in productivity, and projected five-figure annual savings by essentially eliminating tape operations.



The right tool

New Zealand is remote—900 miles from Australia, and 600 miles from other islands. That made it the last major land mass on earth to be settled by humans. And it put the spirit of DIY into the country's DNA.

That helps explain why Mitre 10, New Zealand's independent home improvement chain, has grown to more than 100 stores since 1974, about twice the size of its nearest competitor.

Many Mitre 10 stores are big enough to have cafes, play areas for children, and drive-thru service for both trade and retail customers. Yet Mitre 10 is also a cooperative, so almost every store is a local, family-owned business. "Everyone has a say," says Paul Flatt, Infrastructure and Support Manager at Mitre 10, "We're a close-knit group."

With the spirit of DIY, Flatt recently tackled a project at Mitre 10's Auckland headquarters. As Infrastructure and Support Manager, he wanted to shrink the task of administering backup and speed up backup time for 16 terabytes of corporate data. Like any project, the key to making it easier was finding the right tool.

MITRE 10

Organization profile

Website: www.mitre10.co.nz

Industry: Retail

Headquarters: Auckland, New Zealand

Employees: 4,500

Key challenges

New Zealand-based home improvement chain Mitre 10 needed to support rapid growth and simplify the backup of its almost 100 percent virtualized server environment.

Solution

The company turned to Veritas for a data protection solution upgrade that unifies virtual and physical backups and restores entire virtual machines or applications as well as granular data.

Benefits

- Up to 3x faster backups
- 67% less backup administration time, reclaiming 400 hours per year in productivity
- Projected five-figure annual savings by essentially eliminating tape operations
- More than 95% backup success, and 100% recovery success
- Recovery time objective (RTO) reduced from days to hours

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Paul Flatt

Infrastructure and Support Manager
Mitre 10 NZ

Cutting a big job down

A primary requirement was to simplify virtual backups. Mitre 10 has 155 virtual machines (VMs) running on VMware—a number that grows every month, according to Flatt. Three years ago, the company began virtualizing by consolidating 42 physical servers onto three physical hosts. Now five physical servers host the 155 VMs, saving money, space, and power and gaining the agility to add new services in hours instead of days. Just one standalone server remains, dedicated to telephony.

Flatt wanted a single backup tool that could give him a unified view of physical and virtual backup. That’s why he liked the V-Ray technology in Veritas Backup Exec™ 2010 software, which the company had been using for several years. And it was a key reason why he chose to upgrade to Backup Exec 2014.

“The ability to back up virtual machines from the outside is great,” Flatt says. “But even more important, Backup Exec software can also extract the contents from the inside as well, in one pass. It means that we can restore the whole virtual machine if we need to, or restore an individual file if that’s what’s required.”

Flatt has tried alternative tools. “I’ve used other backup solutions on a virtualized environment with varying degrees of success. But for me, the ability to back up a virtual machine image as well as the files inside it—or restore an entire virtualized application or the granular data in it, whether it’s Exchange or SharePoint or SQL—that’s what makes Backup Exec 2014 far more compelling than its competitors.”

Upgrading to Backup Exec 2014 was easy, Flatt reports. “It went very smoothly and took about four hours,” he says.

Up to 3x faster backups

The biggest payoff of upgrading is improved backup speed. “Backup Exec 2014 is nearly three times faster than Backup Exec 2010,” Flatt explains. “We do three full backups—one to an open storage device, then we replicate backed-up data to a second off-site storage device, then we run it to tape. And we get all three backups done in about the same time over the weekend that we used to complete just one full backup with Backup Exec 2010.”

The backup success rate is more than 95 percent, Flatt adds, up from the 80 percent range with the company’s prior version. And recovery success, then and now, has been 100 percent.

“By being faster, Backup Exec 2014 helps us reduce risk to the business,” notes Flatt. “The longer a backup takes to get from the server to the remote site, the greater the risk that we may lose data if there’s a disaster.”

Because Mitre 10 replicates data to an off-site storage device, it will soon be able to eliminate tape operations, except for a once-a-month tape backup for compliance purposes. “Our new backup solution will save us tens of thousands of dollars annually in tape and staff costs,” Flatt notes. “And because we can recover from disk instead of from tape, we have reduced our recovery time objective (RTO) from days to hours.”

Technology environment

- **Server platform:** Five IBM hosts running Windows Server 2008 and 2012 and VMware 5.5 (155 VMs)
- **Applications:** Microsoft Exchange Server 2013, Microsoft SharePoint Server, Kronos Workforce Analytics, Microsoft Lync, Veritas Enterprise Vault
- **Database:** Microsoft SQL Server
- **Storage:** Dell DR4100

Solutions

- Veritas Backup Exec™ 2014
 - Agent for Applications and Databases

Services

- Veritas Essential Support Services



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Reducing backup staff time by 67 percent

Flatt appreciates the Backup Exec 2014 interface. “The Backup Exec 2010 interface was good but 2014 is laid out more logically,” he says. “I can see all of the associated stages under each major heading, so it’s faster for me to check status.”

Backup administration has been streamlined with Backup Exec 2014. “I can manage it in about three to four hours a week—about one-third the time our previous version required,” Flatt states. Saving eight hours per week makes more than 400 IT staff hours per year available for more valuable projects such as designing the new disaster recovery architecture.

Integrated archiving enhances eDiscovery

Mitre 10 uses the Backup Exec Agent for Applications and Databases because it includes integrated backup protection for Veritas Enterprise Vault™ software. Enterprise Vault enables Mitre 10 to store, manage, and discover archived email messages. Integration with Backup Exec gives Mitre 10 new flexibility in its ability to support eDiscovery.

“We have a retention period of three years for one of our archive stores within Enterprise Vault, and then we purge it,” Flatt says. “Before we do that, we use Backup Exec to make a copy, and in the event of litigation or if requested by a government agency, we can restore the data.”

Building trust over time

Mitre 10 contracts with Veritas Essential Support Services for 24x7 access to Veritas experts if needed. “Ever since Backup Exec 2010 Service Pack 3, Veritas has earned our trust,” Flatt says. “The support has been fantastic. I had no issues with putting the beta of Backup Exec 2014 into production because the beta team at Veritas told me it was production ready. That reflects my confidence in the professionals at Veritas.”

For more information

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