

## SkyLink Data Centers

### Deduplicating 3x Faster with Backup Exec 2014 compared to Backup Exec 2010

Florida's SkyLink Data Centers is a company that serves 4,000 businesses and 30,000 users with hosting, and hasn't raised hosting prices in nine years. Backup Exec 2014 contributes to that efficiency by backing up 20 percent faster and deduplicating at a 10 percent higher ratio than Backup Exec 2012, deduplicating 3x faster than Backup Exec 2010, and achieving 99% backup success and 100% recovery success with 20 recoveries per month.



#### ORGANIZATION PROFILE

**Site:** [www.skylinkdc.com](http://www.skylinkdc.com)

**Industry:** Technology

**Headquarters:** Naples, Florida

**Employees:** 35

#### KEY CHALLENGES

As it hosts 4,000 businesses and 30,000 users, Florida's SkyLink Data Centers needs to provide them with reliable, fast, cost-efficient backup and recovery.

#### SOLUTION

The company upgraded to Veritas Backup Exec 2014 to gain from faster backup, faster and higher yield deduplication, and a long, proven track record in backup and recovery reliability.

#### BENEFITS

- Up to 20% reduction in backup time for Backup Exec 2014 vs. 2012
- 3x faster deduplication time vs. Backup Exec 2010
- Up to 10% improved deduplication ratio vs. Backup Exec 2012
- 99% backup success and 100% recovery success with 20 recoveries per month
- 15 servers recovered to dissimilar hardware in three hours, minimizing disruption

#### A common goal

Every customer knows the feeling: it's great to find a service that's reliable, fast, and cost-efficient.

SkyLink Data Centers began in 1991 and has become all of these things for a growing number of people. It now serves 4,000 companies and 30,000 users. Another popular development: it hasn't raised hosting fees in nine years.

Veritas Backup Exec™ software plays a key role in SkyLink Data Centers' achievements, says Jacob Ackerman, chief technology officer at the company. Backup Exec has been in use since 1998 and its latest version, Backup Exec 2014, is adding to the company's competitive edge.

## “Backup Exec 2014 deduplication is about 3x faster than Backup Exec 2010”

### Jacob Ackerman

Chief Technology Officer  
SkyLink Data Centers

### 100 percent reliable recoveries

“Backup Exec just works every time,” Ackerman says. “The backup success rate is 99 percent, and any errors are typically on the client side and not the software’s fault. The recovery success rate is 100 percent. And when you’re serving 30,000 users and doing 20 restores a month, a 100 percent recovery rate is critical.”

Some customers accidentally delete files, and some have called in literally crying on the phone, Ackerman notes. “During one customer call, we restored 20,000 records,” he remembers. “It says a lot that we have a 100 percent recovery rate.”

Backup Exec 2014 also does recoveries quickly, and can restore entire servers to dissimilar hardware, which has proven critical. “Just a week and a half ago, during a Windows update, we had blue screens on 15 servers,” Ackerman explains. “With Backup Exec, I did bare metal recoveries and had every server back up and running in less than three hours. I can’t even begin to quantify the business repercussions of downtime—it’s not just loss of revenue, but impact on our brand and image.”

Many of the company’s customers operate businesses where any downtime, Ackerman notes, could result in potential losses of tens of thousands of dollars an hour.

“I can start Backup Exec doing a bare metal restore and just let it go—that’s how confident I am.” Ackerman says. “And virtual machine recoveries with Backup Exec 2014 are smooth and flawless. I have done 10 to 15 of them, and it takes less than half an hour to recover a 40- to 50-gigabyte virtual server. That’s as fast as our network allows—it maxes out the capabilities of our switches and the high capacity, slower drives we use for backup storage.”

Veritas Granular Recovery Technology (GRT) in Backup Exec is another important feature, Ackerman adds. “A lot of other backup solutions can restore a virtual machine, but especially in a multi-tenant environment like ours, it’s important to be able to back up an entire virtual machine image and as well as single files in a single backup pass.”

Backup Exec enables SkyLink to guarantee a certain level of success. “In mixed environments—with Windows, Linux, and Mac—I can use a single backup platform and deliver a higher level of SLA at a lower cost,” says Ackerman.

### Faster backup and deduplication

Upgrading is paying off in another way. “With Backup Exec 2014, we’ve seen as high as a 20 percent reduction in backup times vs. Backup Exec 2012,” says Ackerman. “We’re also seeing a better deduplication rate—and that’s money.”

SkyLink has 15 terabytes of deduplicated data and a deduplication rate of 11.6 to 1. “We’re saving 159 terabytes of storage because of deduplication,” Ackerman says. “Backup Exec has enabled us to avoid purchasing another \$15,000 to \$20,000 storage array, saving us another \$2,000 a year in warranty costs.”

As the deduplication rate improves, the total savings increase even more. “A 9 to 10 percent additional deduplication improvement means an 8.6 to 9.8 percent decrease in our storage consumption, saving us \$2,200 per year,” he says. The annual total increases from there. “Data is like a snowball rolling downhill, and for that reason, a little savings can have a huge impact down the road.”

## TECHNOLOGY ENVIRONMENT

- **Server platform:** 75 Dell rack-mounted and blade servers running Windows Server 2012, 2008 R2, 2008 64-bit And 35 VMs using VMware vSphere 5.1
- **Applications:** Caterease, Exchange, Citrix XenApp Desktops, Microsoft Office, Custom CRM, Adobe Creative Suite 6, Adobe Acrobat, AutoCAD, QuickBooks, Sage 50, Delphi, Visual Studio, and others.
- **Database:** Microsoft SQL Server 2012 and 2008 R2
- **Storage:** Dell EqualLogic

## SOLUTIONS

- Veritas Backup Exec™ 2014

## SERVICES

- Veritas Essential Support Services



**“With Backup Exec 2014, we’ve seen as high as a 20 percent reduction in backup times vs. Backup Exec 2012.”**

**Jacob Ackerman**

Chief Technology Officer  
SkyLink Data Centers

There’s another gain: “Backup Exec 2014 deduplication is also faster,” says Ackerman. “I felt that Backup Exec 2010 deduplication was slow. It got 50 percent faster with Backup Exec 2012, and it’s another 10 to 20 percent faster with 2014.”

“Backup Exec 2014 is a great upgrade to 2012,” Ackerman continues. “And if anyone has Backup Exec 2010 or earlier, they need to upgrade, as the deduplication is so much faster!”

Because of deduplication, SkyLink Data Centers keeps hardware needs lean. “I have Backup Exec running on one Dell PowerEdge R720 server and eight drive bays are open—I have the backup capacity I need for years,” Ackerman says.

**Cost-efficient backup in 45 minutes a week**

Ackerman appreciates Backup Exec’s interface. “I wear multiple hats in IT—we all do—and with Backup Exec 2014, I can scroll down and see green indicators,” he says. “That’s the beauty: It’s easier to see individual job logs than in Backup Exec 2012. Instead of having to double-click and go through three to four pages to see individual VMs, I can see the green for all of them by quickly scrolling down. I spend only about 45 minutes a week administering backup.”

Staff count stays low. “When we lost 15 servers a week and a half ago, I could do all the restores myself,” says Ackerman, who does 90 percent of SkyLink’s backup administration. Two other IT staff shadow his backup work and do individual file restores for customers.

Confident of backup, the SkyLink Data Centers IT team has more time to add value for customers. “We have hosting customers who come on board and ask for some other backup solution,” says Ackerman. “I tell them that with Backup Exec, we have restored thousands of times, and we have successfully recovered terabytes of data. I can’t put my name behind other backup software.”

**For more information**

Contact your local Veritas Sales Representative or Business Partner, or visit our website at [www.veritas.com](http://www.veritas.com).

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