Deduplication, easy integration and quick restores make HP StorageWorks D2D Backup System ideal for Vital Support Systems and SMB clients

HP

"I can foresee the HP D2D system working for almost all the small to mid-size clients we assist these days. They all have similar challenges, including increasing volumes of data and shrinking available backup windows."
– Phil Thayer, Systems Engineer, Vital Support Systems

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Industry: IT Solutions & Services

HP customer case study: HP StorageWorks disk-to-disk-to-tape solution for SMBs

Objective:
Reduce the time required to back up and restore demo systems following customer visits; provide a solution for the highest-priority storage-related challenges of small to mid-size business (SMB) clients

Approach:
Test and deploy the HP StorageWorks D2D4000 Backup System with dynamic deduplication to automate and accelerate backups and restores, reduce data volumes, and provide a disaster-recovery solution

Business technology improvements:
- Cuts restore time from two hours to 30 minutes
- Data reduction saves disk space and accelerates backups
- Allows full backups in same time previously required for incremental backups
- Sets up in less than two hours from box to backups
- Creates multiple, virtual tape libraries to run simultaneous backups and to reduce backup time
- Performs 40 percent faster than backing up to physical tape drive

Business benefits:
- Faster test center reset enables more demonstrations per day
- Easy integration for wide range of small to mid-size (SMB) clients
- Provides automated backup and restore solution to meet growing client needs
- Compatibility with leading physical tape systems and backup software protects existing technology investments

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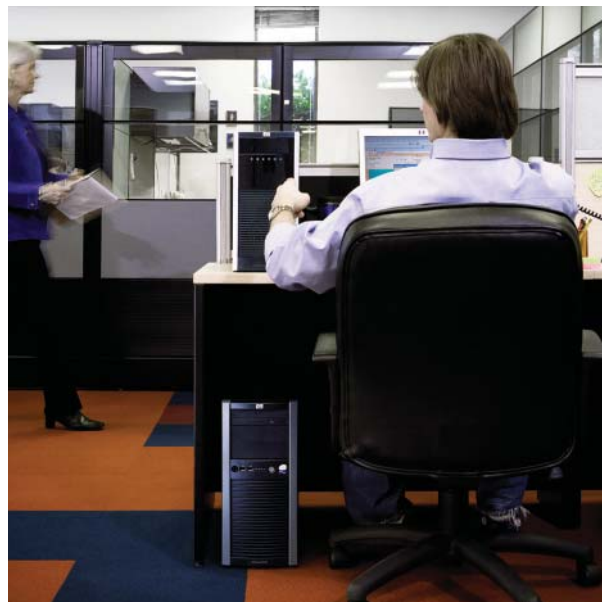
HP answers the call to help SMBs with growing storage challenges

When it comes to supporting hard-working small to mid-size businesses (SMBs), Vital Support Systems knows how to deliver cost-effective, high-impact solutions that meet the needs of their clientele. Since 2001, this HP Partner has been a leading provider of managed services, network systems and software solutions for SMB companies throughout the Midwestern U.S.

One of the most important services that Vital Support Systems provides is access to its demonstration center in Kansas City, Mo. There, the firm uses a predominantly HP infrastructure to demonstrate proposed solutions for clients, troubleshoot client problems and torture-test new products – before recommending them to customers.

When the firm's Systems Engineer Phil Thayer learned of the chance to test drive the new HP StorageWorks D2D4000 Backup System, he didn't hesitate: "We already had an HP StorageWorks Virtual Library System (VLS) in our demo center, so we were very curious about the new HP StorageWorks D2D Backup Solution. HP presented the system as a solution for the SMB market, which really piqued our interest. I would say almost every client we are working with right now faces similar storage-management challenges: too little time for backups and exponential data growth."

The HP StorageWorks D2D4000 Backup System is a disk-based virtual tape library that sits between networked servers and a physical tape library or tape drive, providing faster backups, improved data availability, and rapid restores. The system's dynamic "deduplication" feature can reduce the disk space required by backups by up to 50x, depending on the type of data. Put simply, data deduplication offers the ability to store more on a given amount of storage and replicate data using lower bandwidth links at a significantly reduced cost.

Less is better

"In our initial testing, we experienced a 10:1 data reduction, which is a pretty good start," Thayer observes. "We would expect that to increase over time as the system sees more and more repeat data. Customers with large database systems should experience even greater data reduction; up to 50:1 is possible."

Thayer also believes that integration of the HP StorageWorks D2D Backup System with customer environments will be a painless process: "The target server sees the system as just another tape drive. The system is extremely easy to set up. I had it out of the box, racked and running a backup in less than two hours. Given the set-up wizard, GUI control and high level of automation, we anticipate that many customers will be able to set up and use this system on their own without our assistance."

Just add tape for complete D2D2T solution

The HP D2D Backup System is now a permanent part of the Vital Support Systems test center. Thayer uses the new system to back up his network of HP Integrity and ProLiant servers and HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Array (EVA) storage arrays. The D2D system automatically transfers backups to an HP StorageWorks Enterprise Modular Library (EML) and HP LTO Ultrium data cartridges for offsite storage, providing an integrated disk-to-disk-to-tape (D2D2T) solution.

Explains Thayer, "We need to back up and restore our test center environment several times a day, after each demo session. We're working with everything from VMware and Microsoft® Windows® to HP-UX 11i and Linux environments. To restore the environment from physical tape takes about two hours. With the HP D2D Backup System I can do it in about 30 minutes. That's a huge improvement and means we can do more demos each week, which translates directly into better service and increased sales."

Vital Support Systems uses HP Data Protector software to schedule backups, as do many of its clients. "The StorageWorks D2D Backup System also works with all major backup software such as NetBackup, so integration will be easy," says Thayer. "We have already demonstrated the system for several clients. Increased storage for e-mail – and how to back it up – is a major issue for many customers; we can see the HP D2D system helping in those situations and several others."

About Vital Support Systems

Vital Support Systems (www.vitalsite.com) provides technology solutions to businesses throughout the Midwest that value secure, integrated, worry-free networking and managed technology solutions.

The firm's data services include the planning, design, installation and management of critical communications components – including business critical servers, security solutions, local and wide area networks, wireless, storage, and voice and IP telephony.

Customer solution at a glance

HP StorageWorks disk-to-disk-to-tape solution for SMBs

Primary applications:
- Network support services
- Storage management
- IT system design, management and support

Primary hardware:
- HP StorageWorks D2D4009 Backup System with 9 TB of raw storage
- HP StorageWorks EML 103e E-Series tape library with four LTO tape drives and HP LTO Ultrium Data Cartridges
- HP StorageWorks Enterprise Virtual Arrays, models 4400 and 3000
- HP StorageWorks 6000 Virtual Library System
- HP BladeSystem c7000 enclosure with four HP ProLiant BL460c server blades
- HP Integrity rx2620 and rx8620 servers
- HP ProLiant DL360 G4 server
- Cisco MDS 9216i Multilayer Fabric Switch

Primary software
- HP Data Protector
- Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 and 2007
- Microsoft Windows Server 2003

HP Services
- 4-Hour, 24x7 Same Day Hardware Support

Why HP?
- Long-time HP partner
- Predominantly HP infrastructure
- Immediate need for backup solution in-house and among clients
- Low-risk test opportunity
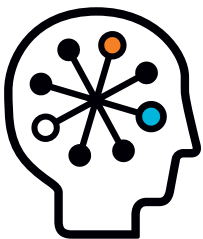
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