

SUCCESS STORY

Integrated Disk-to-Disk-to-Tape Solution Reduces Law Enforcement Agency's Data Backup Window by 70 Percent

CHALLENGES

- ▶ *Cumbersome, inaccurate backups limited ability to protect vital data*
- ▶ *Exponential storage growth strained existing backup and recovery systems*
- ▶ *Faulty backups created management headache*

THE SOLUTION

REO 4000 and NEO 2000

BENEFITS

- ▶ *Backup windows reduced from 15 hours to less than four, with near-instantaneous restores*
- ▶ *Integrated D2D2T solution for the price of most stand-alone tape libraries*
- ▶ *Straightforward set up and operation required no special training or expertise*
- ▶ *Flexible, scalable system can handle expected rapid storage growth*

RESELLER

*West Coast Technology
www.wctstorage.com*

The Sacramento Police Department serves California's Capital city with more than 700 law enforcement officers and an underlying commitment to technology that provides access to the latest crime-fighting tools and information. Over the years, the department has built a stellar reputation as an early adopter of new and innovative technologies, which are now embraced by officers and a growing team of more than 1,100 administrative and support staffers dispersed across 20 buildings in 14 locations throughout the city.

The department's combined technology roster includes 850 personal computers, 220 mobile laptops, and a number of servers that house custom law-enforcement applications, including records management, computer-aided dispatch applications and typical Microsoft Office applications. With the encouragement and support of a forward-thinking Chief of Police, the IT team is challenged to continually seek out the latest technology and applications that will increase productivity and efficiency. As a result, the department's data backup and recovery needs have continued to climb at a rapid pace.

According to Lance Hawkes, senior systems engineer for the Sacramento Police Department, a reliance on new tools and databases has driven a growing demand to ensure that system backups are reliable and accurate. Over the past two and a half years, the Sacramento Police Department doubled its nightly backup requirements as new applications and tools were deployed. The surge in demand strained an

existing Exabyte seven-tape changer, which impacted the integrity of regular backups. "Our aged system became exceedingly unreliable, slow and harder to use effectively," he recalls. "The department needed a much more secure and efficient solution that would safeguard our crucial information."

THE CHALLENGE

Nightly backups became increasingly problematic with frequent failures slowing the process considerably, which in turn encroached on production hours and affected network performance. Server lags, incomplete backups and plans to implement a new leading-edge application that could triple backup requirements in less than six months escalated the search for a new solution.

"Complete backups took 15 hours at best, if there were no timeout problems," Hawkes recalls. "Restores also were a problem on several levels. For example, restoring individual files could take 15 minutes or more, but first finding the proper tape could take hours."

Armed with the knowledge that the department had to protect its investment in state-of-the-art technology while improving overall backup speed and reliability, the technology team

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Lance Hawkes
Sr. Systems Engineer, Sacramento PD



set out to select a new tape library system. Along the way, they discovered a much more powerful, flexible and affordable disk-to-disk-to-tape (D2D2T) solution.

THE SOLUTION

In mid-2004, the IT team began working with value-added reseller West Coast Technology to evaluate leading tape libraries on the market, including those from ADIC and HP. Then while reading a weekly IT publication, Hawkes learned about Overland's REO 4000™ disk-based backup and recovery appliance. After additional research on the REO and competing products, Hawkes concluded that he could deploy the REO in conjunction with a NEO 2000™ tape library for a complete D2D2T system - all for about the same price as competing libraries alone. As a result, the police department purchased two REO 4000 units and one NEO 2000 system.

"Overland's REO and NEO products surpassed all others in terms of price and performance, giving us the ideal combination of powerful, flexible and affordable disk-based backup as well as tape automation," Hawkes says. "We were able to deploy a complete D2D2T solution for the same price that other vendors were charging for tape backup alone."

With the help of West Coast Technology, the D2D2T system was installed and the first backup completed in a matter of hours. "The REO was amazingly easy to configure," Hawkes says. "The system was completely intuitive and required no special expertise or additional training. We were up and running in virtually no time at all."

THE BENEFITS

The most tangible benefit from the Sacramento Police Department's REO/NEO integrated deployment was slashed backup and recovery time. "The department reduced its backup and recovery window by more than 70 percent—from 15 hours to less than four," explains Hawkes. "We were amazed at how fast and easy it was to reap such a significant time savings while lowering costs and alleviating some major management headaches."

According to Hawkes, complete disk-to-disk (D2D) backups now take less than 90 minutes, with full backups to tape being completed in less than two hours.

Recovering data has gone from a flawed and inaccurate process to near-instantaneous, highly reliable restoration of files.

In addition, the department has amassed a considerable savings in both the time and costs of managing large volumes of tapes. In fact, with the IT team freed from most of the administrative tasks associated with the old backup process, some staff members have been redeployed to more strategic projects, such as the implementation of Digital CrimeScene, a system from Greenville, S.C.-based DataWorks Plus that captures, stores and protects crime scene photography with digital security. The Sacramento Police Department and the County Sheriff are the first agencies in the region to utilize an enterprise-level management system to automate forensic photography. By using Digital CrimeScene, the police department gains web-based retrieval capabilities for accessing native digital formats and scanned film images.

The integrated REO/NEO solution will play an integral part in backing up and archiving the files kept by Digital CrimeScene, which will effectively triple current storage requirements. Still, Hawkes says the flexibility of the REO/NEO systems to set up, modify and manage volumes on-the-fly will ease expected rapid storage growth. Plans are in place already for linking Digital CrimeScene to all the other agencies involved in the prosecution process, including the county coroner's office, investigators and detectives at the sheriff's and police department as well as fingerprint examiners and the district attorney's office.

"Digital CrimeScene is an excellent example of how the Sacramento Police Department adopts state-of-the-art systems to solve crimes and protect our citizens," says Hawkes. "However, we wouldn't be able to deploy these leading-edge solutions without a flexible and scalable storage foundation."

A second REO unit is being implemented to store "ghost" images of critical data that take place prior to system upgrades and migrations. If the IT team encounters any problems during a system upgrade, they now will be able to rely on accessing existing data or older photos and emails with the D2D solution. According to Hawkes, the Sacramento Police Department plans to add a third REO to its lineup in an effort to further strengthen the department's disaster recovery plan and backup data during the upcoming move to a new communications center that is under construction. ○



About Overland Storage

For 25 years, Overland Storage has delivered world-class data protection solutions designed to ensure business continuity. Focused on backup and recovery, Overland's data protection solutions include the REO SERIES™ family of disk-based backup and recovery appliances and the award-

winning NEO SERIES™ of tape libraries. Overland sells its products worldwide through leading OEMs, commercial distributors, storage integrators and value-added resellers. For more information, visit Overland's web site at www.overlandstorage.com.

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