# READY HOSTING

## SUCCESS STORY

*Web Hosting Company Accelerates Delivery of Reliable, Around-the-Clock Website Access with Integrated Backup and Recovery from Overland Storage*

## CHALLENGES

- *Aggressive business growth created a 40 percent spike in storage*
- *Lack of a comprehensive backup and recovery infrastructure raised risk profile*
- *Around-the-clock operations require continuous backups*
- *Dynamic, mission-critical environment required modular, scalable storage solutions that could be expanded on-demand*

## THE SOLUTION

*REO 4000, NEO 4000, NEO 2000*

## BENEFITS

- *Flexibility to back up to tape or disk provides both near-line and longer-term storage*
- *Disk-speed recovery improves ability to proactively respond to hard-drive failures without losing any customer data*
- *Tight integration between Overland tape libraries and D2D appliance facilitates additional automation and customer service innovations*

## RESELLER

*Peripheral Products, Inc.*
*www.ppitexas.com*

Ready Hosting empowers e-commerce and small-to-medium business websites with a user-friendly and automated offering that streamlines system set-up while reducing start-up costs and complexities. Business has been brisk for the Kenosha, Wisconsin-based company, which now supports nearly 90,000 websites, including high-profile sites for Chicagoland Speedway; the Arca Re/Max Racing Series; and Clay Aiken, the 2003 "American Idol" runner-up. Collectively, Ready Hosting supports more than 145-million page views each day from its state-of-the-art data center in Richardson, Texas.

According to Russ Vaughn, CTO at Ready Hosting, custom automation software tightly integrated with back-end systems enables the company to expedite and ease customer deployments. "We rely on the latest technology tools and strong web expertise to speed the set-up process considerably," he explains. "Typically, our customers can establish email accounts, upload content and conduct a test in approximately five minutes."

Since many of Ready Hosting's customers are e-commerce businesses with no corresponding brick-and-mortar stores, delivering always-on web services while protecting online corporate assets is critical. A nine-person IT department provides around-the-clock support of Ready Hosting's tier-one data center operations to ensure 99.9 percent system availability and integrity of data residing on over 40 mail servers, 190 plus web servers and 12 SQL servers, representing nearly 20 TB of vital information.

## THE CHALLENGE

When a surge in business caused storage requirements to jump by more than 40 percent, the IT team found it increasingly difficult to safeguard customer data. "We went from signing up 10 new customers every day to 180," recalls Vaughn. "Ready Hosting didn't have the proper storage infrastructure in place to support this major increase, making us more vulnerable to any system malfunction or failure." Disk drive failures and other catastrophic system downtime led to lost data and ultimately lost customers, prompting a complete overhaul of the company's backup and recovery strategy.

Unlike most organizations seeking to reduce their daily or weekly backup windows, Ready Hosting needs to maintain continuous backups without a window. Essential customer data is backed up two times a day. Moreover, the IT department can't take web servers offline in order to conduct backups and therefore needs a robust solution that is powerful enough to handle live web servers with lots of traffic.

In addition, Ready Hosting also wanted a solution that would remain 'online' continuously but also could scale quickly, enabling the IT

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> Russ Vaughn
> CTO, Ready Hosting

team to allocate storage for new equipment and servers as needed-without bringing systems down to make changes.

## THE SOLUTION

In mid-2002, Ready Hosting embarked on a thorough investigation of different backup and recovery software and hardware. The evaluation commenced at the fundamental software layer with an in-depth analysis of leading offerings from Veritas, UltraBac Software and BakBone Software. The IT team selected BakBone Software's NetVault 7 data backup and recovery software, since it met all the selection criteria while outperforming Veritas and UltraBac by 15 to 20 percent.

The team next embarked on a review of tape libraries and disk-to-disk (D2D) storage platforms. In evaluating tape libraries, Ready Hosting assessed the features and functionality of mid-range systems from IBM, HP and Overland Storage. Capacity, scalability and modularity topped the selection criteria. The team then considered a variety of complementary D2D solutions from HP, EMC, Network Appliance and Overland Storage. In the final analysis, Overland's NEO 2000 tape libraries edged out all other products while its REO 4000 offered the greatest flexibility in offering disk-speed data recovery to improve the overall reliability of Ready Hosting's backup operations.

"Overland's well-engineered NEO tape library and highly versatile REO D2D appliance surpassed other products in its class-and at a price point that was 15 percent less than its high-end competitors," notes Vaughn. "Moreover, Overland's products worked hand-in-hand with our backup and recovery software to deliver the highest levels of performance, flexibility and scalability. In the final analysis, we deployed the best products at the optimal price-reinforced by the most responsive service and support we encountered."

With the assistance of Peripheral Products Inc. (PPI), a reseller based in Plano, Texas, Ready Hosting finalized and implemented its backup and recovery strategy. "We were up and running relatively fast and immediately began reaping the benefits of this integrated backup and recovery approach," adds Vaughn.

## THE BENEFITS

Ready Hosting now has much greater control over restores as evidenced most recently when the IT team used its integrated backup and recovery solution to reduce the risk of exposure to a new virus called the Santy worm. When several of Ready Hosting's web servers were infected, the technology group was able to expedite a full backup, upgrade the affected servers and then restore data without any disruption or degradation in service.  "Any level of downtime is unacceptable to our customers and can immediately trigger several hundred complaints," explains Vaughn. "We were able to quickly pinpoint the affected servers, conduct the upgrades and restore data without missing a beat or generating one objection."

About a year after implementing its full-featured backup and recovery solution, Ready Hosting added another tape library, a NEO 4000, for greater capacity as well as two more REO D2D appliances for enhanced near-line storage. Vaughn notes, "The modular nature of Overland's NEO and REO products makes it very easy and affordable to accommodate our real-time and longer-term data protection requirements."

With REO, Ready Hosting can back up data to disk more than 30 percent faster than using its tape library alone, which is a distinct advantage for responding to unforeseen problems such as hard drive failures. "As a web hosting company, we push our hard drives to the limit and it's not uncommon to experience a lot of failures," notes Vaughn. "Now as soon as we get an inordinate amount of read/write errors, we conduct a D2D backup on the REO. When the drive fails ultimately, we're ready and can respond quickly, dropping in a new drive and restoring data from the REO transparently and seamlessly—before anyone knows we experienced a problem in the first place."

Ready Hosting plans to help its customers become more active participants in managing their own backups and restores through a web-based interface. "At some point, we'll involve our customers in the backup and recovery process by leveraging the seamless integration between our backup and recovery hardware and software and resulting ease of use, capacity and flexibility," concludes Vaughn. "As part of that effort, Overland's REO and NEO will play a pivotal role in supporting our continuing service innovations at Ready Hosting."

## About Overland Storage

For almost 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™ 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.