

Extreme Server Virtualization

TACO accelerates cost savings by migrating servers in a few nights, instead of a few months

Organization Overview

Taco Inc., the well-established HVAC manufacturing and supply company headquartered in Rhode Island, knows that information sprawl, if not dealt with, could be as catastrophic as a burst steam pipe. Like many medium-sized businesses, Taco (pronounced Tay-co) relies on its IT infrastructure for numerous undertakings including resource planning, inventory control, customer service, shipping, payroll, and e-mail. But Taco's data center was reaching its physical limits, their processes such as backup and restore were getting noticeably slower, and their exposure to IT disaster scenarios was real. Taco, who is committed to green technologies, wisely took on an initiative to improve and consolidate its technology infrastructure – with scalability and application protection as top priorities. In addition to reoptimizing their SAN, they decided to “virtualize” many of their data and application servers.

Virtualization Drives Data Protection Decision

The backup solution Taco had in place really could not serve Taco's needs without additional purchases, so Senior Network Administrator, Dennis Rachiele sought other data protection products that would not only support virtualization, but also accelerate the migration path to get there. “Because we wanted to convert dozens of physical servers, the product's ability to provision virtual servers was a major deciding factor in our purchasing decision,” explains Dennis. At the same time, the product would need to be fully scalable – supporting exponential data growth, 24-hour a day applications, and the ability to replicate to a Disaster Recovery (DR) site on a frequent basis. Taco looked at two data protection products including Syncsort Backup Express (BEX).



INDUSTRY

- Manufacturing

CHALLENGE

- Information sprawl
- Data Center limitations
- MS Exchange backup & recovery not efficient
- Disaster Recovery process not 100% reliable
- Replication to DR Site taking 5 days

SOLUTION

- Virtualize Data Center to VMware
- Rebuild SAN
- Replace existing backup software with Syncsort BEX

BUSINESS VALUE

- Physical-to-Virtual migration was fast and easy with BEX Full Virtualization, providing faster realization of virtual machine savings
- Provided an easy to use solution that reduces costs by optimizing hardware footprint and scalability
- Critical data loss is averted with replication that completes in less than 6 hours

Though the first company Taco spoke with initially claimed they had an all-in-one solution, they eventually acknowledged that other products would be required for Physical-to-Virtual migration. Syncsort, on the other hand, met the Physical-to-Virtual migration requirement as well as all other data and application protection requirements. Syncsort worked with reseller, CBE, to demonstrate and ultimately install the disk-to-disk solution. “The engineers knew the product completely and the installation went perfectly,” reflects Dennis.

Virtualization Acceleration

Of utmost importance to Taco was the fact that Syncsort could be used to accelerate the server virtualization initiative. “The physical-to-virtual transition was very easy and worked flawlessly,” said Dennis. “We converted 17 application and data servers in just a few nights. Without BEX it would have taken weeks if not months.”

“We recommend Syncsort BEX for anyone who is looking for a good backup solution, DR implementation, and converting from physical to virtual with little effort.”

— Dennis Rachiele, Senior Network Administrator, Taco, Inc.

Rapid Backups with Fast and Flexible Recovery

Support of physical-to-virtual server migration was only one of Taco’s data protection imperatives. “At the same time, we were looking to replace our backup solution. BEX was able to do both – as well as give us a great DR solution.”

“We are very impressed with the performance of Backup Express and its user friendliness,” Dennis states. BEX backups ate very little CPU on the backup source machines and each backup (after the initial base backup) took up very little additional disk space on the backup destination disks. The CPU benefits are of particular value in a virtual environment since virtual machines residing on the same host share CPU. In addition, the disk savings result in assured scalability. “We expect that our new infrastructure is very scalable,” explains Dennis. “Because of Syncsort’s efficiency, future hardware purchases will be small.” The backups at Taco are used for multiple purposes – for everything from simple file restores to server level recoveries – all with multiple recovery points. Recovery Point Objectives and Recovery Time Objectives are both dramatically improved.

Application and DR Support

Additionally, the product’s application awareness was immediately evident. “Our Exchange e-mail backup and recovery is now very easy,” explains Dennis. This is a result of Syncsort’s integrated Exchange Mailbox Recovery feature. “We also did a Disaster Recovery test last month and used the BEX BMR solution to restore five of our servers in a remote site. The test went without a hitch.” Syncsort provides DR testing services, which Taco exploited to their advantage. Furthermore, before purchasing BEX, the replication process to Taco’s DR site was kicking off on Friday night and completing on Wednesday – a potential five-day data loss. With BEX, the replication process completes in less than six hours.

About Syncsort

Syncsort is a global software company that helps the world’s most successful organizations rethink the economics of data. Syncsort provides extreme data performance and rapid time to value through easy to use data integration and data protection solutions. With over 12,000 deployments, Syncsort has transformed decision making and delivered more profitable results to thousands of customers worldwide.

syncsort RETHINK THE ECONOMICS OF DATA*

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