



Case Study

Naugatuck Savings Bank Improves Backups, Bolsters Client Security

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Like many community banks, Naugatuck Savings Bank has had to maintain both its neighborhood friendly feel while still offering a wide range of competitive, state-of-the-art technologies—such as online checking, online e-statements and free loan calculators.

So, it only made sense that the same dual focus on technology and community would enter into this Naugatuck, CT-based bank’s planning when it came to building a new facility in the area. According to Network Manager Craig Wallace, one important role of the facility was to serve a new, off-site disaster recovery function to ensure the bank could always access critical operational and customer account data, even when faced with a local data center outage.

Daily full backups at the bank had grown into a fairly complex and time-consuming process as well and involved over 20 instances of Symantec Backup Exec software at two locations, with just as many tape drives and tapes needing to be changed each day or sent off-site. With backup jobs requiring more and more time to finish, and file restores often taking more than a day, Wallace and the bank’s IT team decided to look at investing in new backup technology that could offer a simple off-site disaster recovery option, better security, and all around faster backups and restores.

Goals

After seeing the recent spate of news headlines regarding banks whose sensitive backup tapes had gone missing, Wallace and the bank’s CIO were interested in finding a backup solution that would also let them encrypt sensitive backup data while allowing the bank to reduce its dependence on backup tapes needing to be sent off-site.

“We wanted to avoid the possibility of having our backup tapes go missing or get stolen, like what happened with banks that made big headlines in recent years,” says Wallace. During planning for the new facility, he and his team honed in on the specific areas they expected a new backup solution to address:

- Shorten backup windows and back up critical data more often
- Perform faster restores of single files or whole data sets
- Reduce tape reliance and encrypt sensitive member backup data
- Centralize backups and streamline daily backup management
- Accommodate data growth—without more tapes and tape drives
- Offer a fast, off-site disaster recovery option

Customer Snapshot

Name	Naugatuck Savings Bank
Line of Business	Banking — Regional Community Bank
Location	Naugatuck, Connecticut
Product	EVault InfoStage™ software, EVault InfoStage DualVault companion product, plus EVault Agent plug-ins for Microsoft Exchange Server and SQL Server
Configuration	25 servers – Microsoft Windows, Exchange Servers, SQL Servers and Windows file shares
Capacity	250 GB backed up each night
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent backups of critical data • Faster restores • Improved data security • Easier, more centralized management • A better plan for backup data growth • Fast, off-site disaster recovery
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tape logistics issues at multiple locations • Risk of exposing confidential data • Lengthy backup and restore times • Time-consuming daily backup management
Solutions	EVault’s unique DualVault functionality ensured immediate restores of both local and remote backup data while securing customer account data from inadvertent public exposure.

Results

File restores are instant, backups are now more frequent and less disruptive. Backup data is also inherently secure.

Challenges

In recent years, Naugatuck Savings Bank had grown to include 10 regional branch offices along with its Naugatuck operations center and corporate headquarters. Like many companies, its IT team now found itself backing up data on a host of distributed Windows-based servers that ran everything from Microsoft Exchange to Microsoft SQL Server and Office-based file shares.

The result, said Wallace, often meant managing as much as 20 server-attached tape drives and just as many tapes in two places at once. “Tapes at two main locations were being sent to one of our branches. Then every day, that branch would have to send back other tapes to be used for the next night’s backups.” He goes on to admit, “There were definite logistics issues: How do we know what tapes we have and where all the tapes are? Were tapes labeled correctly? How did we guarantee that data on tapes were not overwritten? With all the manual processing involved, there were multiple points during the backup process that could lead to problems.”

In the above arrangement, the bank opted to send its tapes off-site for both security and disaster recovery reasons. But, that had its drawbacks as well. If a user needed a file restored quickly, Wallace or another IT person often had to go get the right backup tape first, or have it sent back. In either case, they would be looking at up to a day’s delay before they could even try to recover the file in question.

As Wallace points out, files could only be recovered if they had already been created and backed up the night before. However, if a file had been created after the last backup, and then become inadvertently erased or corrupted, he and his team had no way of restoring it and the data was permanently lost.

The issue of sending tapes off-site also left Wallace and his team feeling that the bank was still too vulnerable to a future security breach involving its confidential customer data. Given the new facility currently in the works, Wallace’s focus began turning to disk-based options that would allow the bank to back up across a wide area network (WAN). “We wanted to always have two copies of the data in two locations at the same time,” he says.

Solutions

Several months earlier, Naugatuck Savings Bank had begun to discuss the prospect of disk-based backup with a local area IT integrator and reseller now known as Innovative Information Solutions. In view of the bank’s upcoming facility and its need to invest in several new servers, Wallace contacted the reseller to learn more about disk-based backup solutions that would help the bank avoid buying more tape drives while allowing it to meet pressing needs for more frequent backups and faster restores.

Having heard of EVault as a provider of an off-site backup and recovery online service, Wallace was surprised to learn EVault also offered a range of robust disk-to-disk backup and recovery software that came highly recommended by Innovative Information Solutions. This software included EVault InfoStage™ and the EVault InfoStage DualVault companion product that would allow the bank to back up its business-critical data to a second storage device (or Vault) at a second location. Application plug-ins for Naugatuck’s critical applications, like Microsoft Exchange and SQL Server, also would allow backups to occur in the background, during normal business hours, without having to take down application servers or interrupt end user access to the applications themselves.

After hearing what Naugatuck had in mind for its backups, and developing a firm understanding of their requirements for shrinking the back-up window and meeting recovery time and recovery point objectives, Innovative Information Solutions recommended Wallace take a closer look at what EVault had to offer. “They had multiple products we could look at,” says Wallace. He ultimately chose EVault InfoStage, along with EVault InfoStage DualVault, based in large part on how well he believed EVault ultimately “met our needs for the most critical issues, while offering a lot more flexibility in terms of what we could do with it after the fact.”

Several areas stood out during Wallace’s evaluation of EVault. He especially liked the fact that he could do multiple backups to multiple vault locations throughout the day, instead of backing

up to a single location, then replicating the backup elsewhere. “It truly was two separate backups that I could customize to best meet our needs,” he says.

Another benefit, he says, was the fact that everything was encrypted. “Even if anyone intercepted the packets or got their hands on the full [backup] vault, they couldn’t read the data because it was all encrypted,” he says. “That was huge for us. It just allowed us to have a better insurance of the data.”

Also a plus was EVault’s low cost of entry. “Initially, we opted to buy the EVault InfoStage DualVault system with a limit of 500 GB of disk space. That fit our needs at the time, but also gave us flexibility to upgrade later as our data requirements changed and grew,” says Wallace. This option allowed Naugatuck Savings Bank to make the move to disk-based backup and recovery right away, instead of waiting.

Results

Today, Naugatuck Savings Bank now backs up to two vaults at two separate locations, while staggering the timing of backups for different applications throughout the day. Wallace has also been able to increase back up frequency of the bank’s most critical data—backing up to a local “vault” every two hours and to a remote vault every four hours. Thanks to EVault’s patent-pending DeltaPro technology that backs up only block-level data changes made since the last backup, more frequent backups across the network or WAN also make little impact on available bandwidth or application performance.

“Before EVault, one of our bigger servers would have taken four to five hours to back up to tape. After only about two hours of initially ‘seeding’ the backup data for EVault, backups now take just half an hour,” he says. He’s happy he no longer needs to spend what he estimates amounted to about 45 minutes each day checking all the backup logs and correcting prior backup problems. “Now, it just takes a few minutes to check the logs and make sure everything’s running properly.”

In all, Wallace is very pleased with how well EVault has been able to meet the bank’s needs. File restores are now often completed while he’s still on the phone with a user and he and the CIO are assured of better protection of confidential customer data. “I’ve been quite happy with the decision to go with EVault. It definitely met all those goals,” he says, noting, “Implementing something like this has also been a huge weight off our CIO’s mind from a security standpoint.”

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