Quantum

CASE STUDY

Q-Cloud Protect

Quantum Q-Cloud Protect Service Provides Secure Offsite Backup and Disaster Recovery for Global Poverty-Fighting Organization

Replacing an older tape backup solution with Quantum's Q-Cloud Protect Backup-as-a-Service (BaaS) and a Quantum DXi deduplication appliance provided ACDI/VOCA with substantial savings in backup and recovery time as well as storage space, freeing its lean IT staff for more important projects.

TAPE'S HANDS-ON MANAGEMENT PUSHED SMALL IT STAFF TO THE LIMIT

ACDI/VOCA is a Washington, D.C.-based not-for-profit organization that fights global poverty by providing economic development assistance programs to low-income countries and emerging democracies. Despite having roughly 1,440 employees around the world, ACDI/VOCA's core IT team consists of just two people: one person to manage servers and applications, and a network engineer. The organization thus needs a data backup, archiving, and disaster recovery solution that works reliably, quickly, and with as little IT intervention required as possible.

ACDI/VOCA had relied solely on tape to meet its data protection needs, but as its data demands grew, the performance of the tape system taxed the resources of the small IT team.

"Even if everything went smoothly, just running our 4.5TB file server to tape could take 4-5 days," says William Ormond, Enterprise Systems Engineer for ACDI/VOCA. "And we had to spend a lot of time monitoring the tape system for problems; we constantly had to adjust our backup schedules because the nightly backups would fail or run into issues."

The organization's total backup exceeds 280TB, including data from physical servers, DFS shares, a SQL database, Exchange servers, and accounting and ERP systems. In addition, ACDI/VOCA uses Symantec Backup Exec to back up its physical assets and Quantum's vmPRO software for protecting its virtual environment.

ACDI/VOCA initially acquired a Quantum DXi6702 disk-based appliance for on-premise backups and deduplication while continuing to use its tape system for archiving, as well as offsite storage provided by Iron Mountain for disaster recovery. However, it soon became clear that the organization needed to go further.

"I would have had to get in my car and drive to the offsite facility myself or pay the data center $250 per incident," says Ormond, speaking about the archiving and disaster recovery challenges.

In addition, ACDI/VOCA found that the annual bill for its tape archiving and offsite storage was in the neighborhood of $25,000. As a result, the organization began looking for an alternative with better performance in roughly the same price range.

CLOUD-BASED BACKUP FROM A TRUSTED PARTNER

Because ACDI/VOCA had gone through an extensive evaluation process when replacing its tape backup system and was quite pleased with the performance and reliability of Quantum's DXi6702 for on-site backup, the IT team's first inclination was to acquire another DXi® appliance and host it in a remote colocation facility for data replication and disaster recovery. However, a Quantum representative suggested Q-Cloud™ Protect, Quantum's Backup-as-a-Service offering, for consideration. In effect, Q-Cloud Protect BaaS would allow ACDI/VOCA to have all the benefits associated with replicating from its on-premise DXi to a second DXi appliance that would be securely hosted and managed by Quantum.

According to Ormond, the idea of having a hosted end-to-end backup and disaster recovery solution was attractive.

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William Ormond
Enterprise Systems Engineer
ACDI/VOCA

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- Quantum Q-Cloud Protect Backup-as-a-Service
- Quantum DXi6702 appliance
- Quantum vmPRO™ backup software
- Symantec Backup Exec

KEY BENEFITS

- Speeds backups by up to 300%
- Decreases recovery time by a factor of 10
- Reduces capacity requirements by 30:1, saving hundreds of TB
- Boosts reliability by eliminating backup failures and configuration headaches
- Enables secure disaster recovery without need for additional equipment

"It's quick, it's clean, it's easy. I'd rarely have to go in and mess with it," he notes.

And the fact that it was from a single vendor, especially one with which he had long experience and trusted, made the decision to go with Q-Cloud Protect easy.

"Once we found out about Q-Cloud [Protect], it almost became a no-brainer for us," explains Ormond. "We didn't even need to consider a third-party service. We were confident that the combination of a Quantum device and a Quantum service would be the right solution, eliminating any worry about incompatibilities. And Quantum, in my experience, has always been great at resolving any issues that come up."

FASTER, MORE RELIABLE BACKUPS AND SPEEDIER RECOVERY WITH Q-CLOUD PROTECT

The network attached storage portion of the Q-Cloud Protect environment was up and running in just a few short weeks. Then Quantum went the extra mile to work through ACDI/VOCA's need for Virtual Tape Library (VTL) replication between the DXi appliance and Q-Cloud Protect, functionality that wasn't initially included. Once the entire environment was up and running, it provided immediate dividends.

The initial DXi backup used deduplication to protect more than 280TB of data in just 10.9TB of space, a reduction ratio of almost 30:1. And with the data deduplicated and replicated to Q-Cloud Protect, regular syncing of that data takes just a few hours.

According to Ormond, the on-premise DXi has produced a 300 percent increase in backup speed: file server tape runs that once took 4-5 days can now be completed in a day and a half at most, even with other backups running. Exchange servers can be backed up in 30 minutes or less. Even with data, the backups only take 5 hours. The once problematic nightly backups now happen as expected and on schedule.

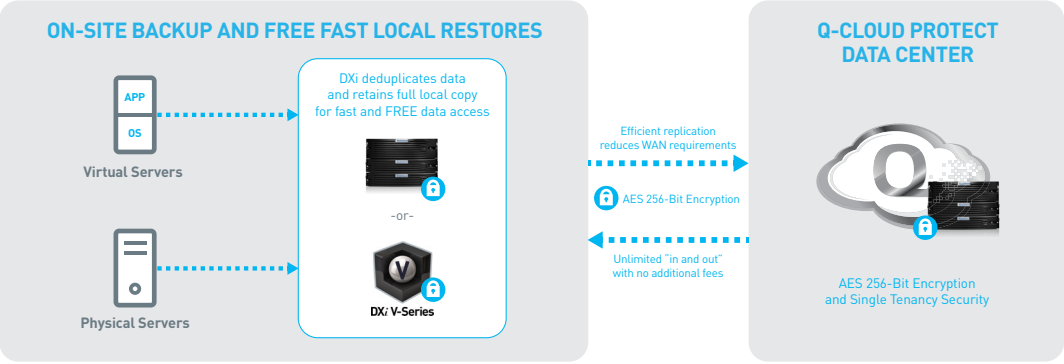
In terms of the dollar cost for archiving and disaster recovery, the Q-Cloud Protect solution is roughly on par with the old tape system, but Ormond points out that the savings in time and reduction of headaches far outweigh that consideration. For him, not worrying about the reliability of the backup environment or cost of tape has brought peace-of-mind.

"This has been a huge, huge change," he says. "I don't have to babysit the device any longer, or pay for someone to offsite tapes. I log in to check the status of the DXi system or Q-Cloud [Protect] replication a fraction of the time that was required with our old tape system. That frees me up to do other things. Overall, this is a fairly maintenance-free solution; you set it and forget it. Quantum handles the Q-Cloud [Protect] replication transparently, and the company even calls me when there are updates for our on-premise DXi."

Ormond also notes that the recovery speed improvement is almost as dramatic and valuable as the increase in backup speed. In a recent example, restoring several Lotus Notes databases from a previous date, comprising several hundred megabytes of data, took just 3 minutes with the new system. The old environment would have taken ten times longer.

Ormond's experience with Q-Cloud Protect and the DXi appliance has only reinforced his confidence in Quantum.

"I've been in the industry for more than 18 years. At nearly every job, we've relied on Quantum for our backup. Quantum in my mind is the proven and rock-solid backup solution."



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ABOUT ACDI/VOCA

ACDI/VOCA is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes broad-based economic growth, higher living standards, and vibrant communities in low-income countries and emerging democracies.

They provide sustainable solutions to the most pressing and intractable development problems. Their activities span the development continuum, from meeting basic needs to community stabilization, food security and nutrition, poverty alleviation, access to financial services and market integration.

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