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## HEALTHCARE: OHIO HEALTH

CASE STUDY

## **STORServer Virtual Machine Backup improves OhioHealth's virtual machine backup windows and success rates: From 24 hours and 75 percent success to 4-6 hours and 99 percent success**

Part of upholding OhioHealth's superior image is protecting the incredibly valuable data produced by the organization's 21,000 associates, physicians and volunteers, not to mention the hundreds of thousands of patients it serves annually.

In order to improve the efficiency and availability of resources and applications, OhioHealth made the decision to virtualize its data environment. In 2010, Celeste Grone, backup and restore administrator for the storage team at OhioHealth, was put in charge of managing the virtual environment backups. As she became responsible for ensuring optimized performance of backups and restores, she knew a major change needed to be made from the previous system.

### **The Challenge**

The VMware backup product used at the time made it very difficult to re-run the backups and determine which failed and which were successful. There was never a clear list of the backups that Grone was supposed to be performing. Reporting logs did not easily export into the Aptare reporting software. Backup error reports provided limited explanation and issues were often left unresolved. Deduplication processes were not efficient with compressed data, and the backup solution did not support uncompressed differential backup data to Data Domain NFS mounts. It was obvious that the backup product was meant for much smaller environments.

Fortunately, Grone's colleague, Paul Roth, had worked with Dataedge, a strategy reseller for STORServer, Inc., a mid-market data backup provider. He had used other backup agents from STORServer with great success and suggested that Grone look into the company's Virtual Machine Backup software, which controls backups of VMware virtual environments through an easy-to-use graphical interface.

VMB uses the new VMware vStorage APIs to control the movement of data directly to and from disk storage into TSM storage pools without the use of agents or the VMware servers, eliminating the impact of backup on production servers. The software also eliminates the cumbersome tasks of writing scripts or managing TSM schedules and option files, which enables management without TSM expertise.

### The Solution

“I went to the STORServer website and discovered that they had agents available for backing up large VMware environments, so I requested a demo,” said Grone. “The demo worked great and I would suggest that anyone running TSM with a large VMware environment should demo this software.”

Grone was sold on VMB for a few reasons: 1) it integrated with IBM Tivoli Storage Manager, 2) it made data backup and restore easy, and 3) the software made it clear what data was supposed to be backed up and what data actually did back up.

With the help of Dataedge, OhioHealth employed about 500 guests of VMB in January 2010.

The implementation of STORServer VMB shrunk TSM capacity for VMware image backups from 90 terabytes to 36 terabytes, and full image restores are now easier than ever. Image backups with change block tracking have had a significant reduction in time on the second and subsequent backups—from 30 minutes down to just a few seconds.

“One of the best features of VMB is its ability to replicate the disks and restore the whole virtual machine in a matter of minutes,” said Grone. “I love that you can manage the whole environment in one big picture, and don’t have to log in to each machine individually. With VMB, everything you need is right in front of you, and is so easy to work with.”

Since implementing VMB, OhioHealth’s VMware environment has more than doubled with a number of physical machines being moved to the VMB space. Today, they have 1,200 virtual machines, and are backing up 900 of them each night with VMB. Nightly, OhioHealth backs up 13 terabytes total with approximately 3-4 terabytes from VMware clients.

Prior to VMB, the backup window for OhioHealth was 24 hours with a success rate of 75 percent (at best). Today, the backup window is down to 4-6 hours on average with a 99 percent success rate.

### Results

The three biggest benefits of VMB are its ease of installation, backups and restores,” said Grone. “I like to call it the ‘kindergarten version’ of VMware backup, meaning you don’t have to know much about VMware to be able to use it. For anyone who is responsible for managing backups at their organization, they know what I mean when I say I just don’t have the ability to dedicate a lot of time to backups. In the mornings, I just want to get through the backup re-runs, so I can move on to my other projects. VMB has been a big time saver.”

In some circumstances, Grone has used VMB to recover entire virtual machines. OhioHealth had one virtual machine decommissioned, so Grone took it off backup completely. When the VMware administrator asked for the machine to be recovered, it had thankfully not gone out of VMB, so she was able to recover it in spite of it already being shut down and decommissioned.

“VMB has saved me many times, and made recovery much easier and quicker,” said Grone. “If you’re stressed out and someone asks you to do a recovery, it is important to have a product that is quick and easy and doesn’t require a lot of thinking to get the job done.”

### ABOUT STORSERVER

STORServer is a leading provider of data protection solutions and offers the only enterprise data backup appliance that is built to order. Each backup appliance solution is tailored to the customer’s unique environment to simplify management of complex backup, archive and disaster recovery needs. STORServer’s appliances feature enterprise class data backup, archive and disaster recovery software, hardware, services and U.S.-based customer support. For more information on STORServer, please visit our website.

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