Morgan County achieves dramatic 7-year retention with HP LiveVault

HP and trusted Partner, RDBU, provide "better together" disaster recovery solution

Industry
County government

Objective
Provide onsite and offsite storage and disaster recovery for legally required 7-year timeframe on SQL server
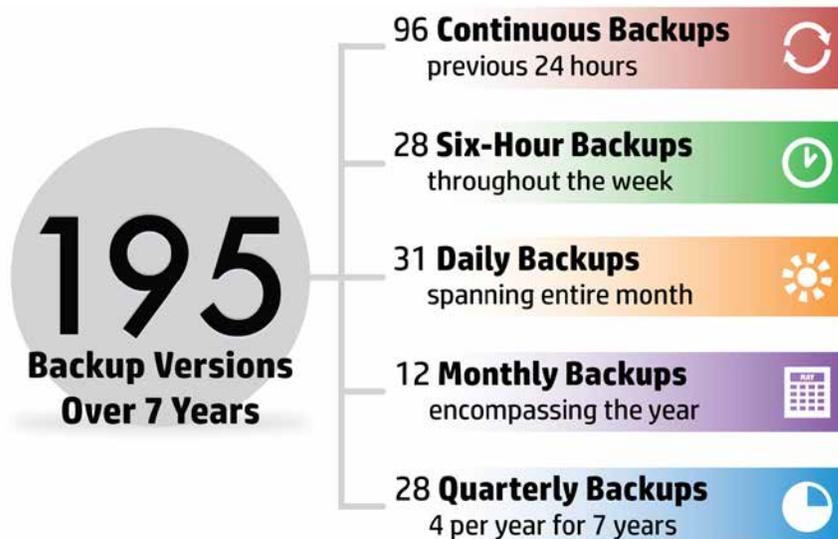
Approach
Engage HP Partner RDBU to provide cloud-based managed services as well as onsite HP storage

IT matters
• HP LiveVault's cloud storage provides 7 years of retention
• HP LiveVault provides up to 195 versions
• Greatly reduced restore time leverages IT and user productivity
• No need to maintain decommissioned servers to restore old data

Business matters
• Total Cost of Ownership dramatically lower than other vendors
• Satisfies onsite/offsite and 7-year legal storage requirements
• HP Partner managed service provides offsite mirrored disaster recovery

195 Backup Versions Over 7 Years

96 Continuous Backups previous 24 hours

28 Six-Hour Backups throughout the week

31 Daily Backups spanning entire month

12 Monthly Backups encompassing the year

28 Quarterly Backups 4 per year for 7 years

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– Karol Kopetzky, Information Systems manager, Morgan County Government

Morgan County Government, based in Fort Morgan, Colorado, needed an automated onsite and offsite disaster recovery and backup storage solution to comply with 7-year archiving regulations for its SQL database. The County chose an HP LiveVault/HP StoreEasy solution from Remote Data Backups (RDBU), a trusted HP Partner and Managed Service Provider, due to its 7-year retention archiving ability and low cost per gigabyte of storage pricing (per month of cloud backup).

HP and RDBU managed services secure governmental data

Morgan County, formed in 1989, measures 36 square miles, and is the kind of place you might wish you came from. Fort Morgan is the seat of the Morgan County Government with a population of 11,034. Glenn Miller grew up there. Kids love the antique locomotive on the main street. But even the most peaceful of towns has its share of IT problems. Not usually in tornado territory, a tornado came close enough to expose the need for a remote disaster recovery and archiving system.

Saddled with an old technology tape storage system and no offsite disaster recovery solution, Karol Kopetzky, Information Systems manager, Morgan County Government, and her IT staff decided to go out to bid to remedy the situation. At first response, it appeared there was a wealth of solutions to consider. But the responses were sidestepping some of the requirements, specifically 7-year retention.

One of the benefits of working with HP, is its broad portfolio of hardware and software solutions, coupled with a plethora of HP Expert Partners that ensure a best fit solution. HP hardware and software divisions coordinated a full business analysis of the Morgan County RFP, and recommended a very powerful "better together" solution. HP decided that bringing in Remote Data Backups (RDBU), its trusted partner and expert Managed Service Provider for HP LiveVault storage solutions, would provide Morgan County with the best solution to fulfill its SQL-based 7-year retention requirements. Once engaged, RDBU jumped right in and proposed a storage solution consisting of its HP's LiveVault cloud-based backup managed service (for offsite recovery), and HP StoreEasy/HP LiveVault TurboRestore Appliance (for onsite storage and recovery).

"Remote Data Backups, an HP specialist partner, presented the only disaster recovery solution that supported 7-year retention," recalls Kopetzky. "The closest any other vendor could come was 30-day retention. RDBU proved to us that HP is the only solution that can provide incremental daily restores on SQL, a claim the competition made, but couldn't support. Considering the benefits of SQL incremental versioning support and 7-year retention, it was a no contest choice."

Although the solution looked solid, Kopetzky didn't take anything for granted. She carried out responsible due-diligence and checked up on existing RDBU customers to make sure the solution worked in the real world.

"When you have a limited budget in a small county like ours, you can't afford to make any mistakes," admits Kopetzky. "You get one shot. RDBU customers were universally satisfied with the company's integrity, quality of solution, and results achieved. That has also been my personal experience with RDBU since day one."

RDBU dedicated resources to helping Kopetzky with the implementation, which was fully deployed in May, 2014. During the first few weeks, after going live, she checked in frequently, to monitor efficacy, and found that the RDBU staff was very responsive and the solution operated exactly as advertised.
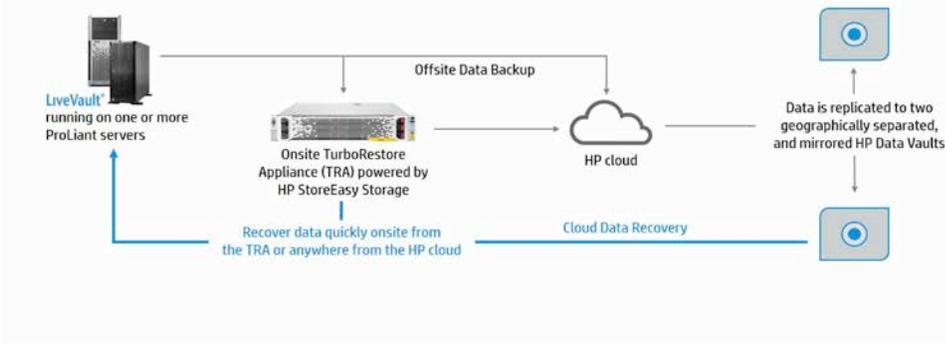
"RDBU impressed me with its HP LiveVault and storage expertise," she expands. "They took the time to understand our business functions and schedules and are very proactive. It was one of the more simple installations I've dealt with, and we've never had a single problem."

Backing up in the old days

Prior to deploying its new HP storage and recovery solution, Kopetszky's staff relied on a tape library backup, which was time-consuming and required storing and maintaining decommissioned servers (for restore continuity). If a server with financial data was retired due to obsolescence, the IT staff had to keep it and its tape drives handy for seven years. If, for example, critical financial data was needed from six years back, the old server platform would have to be reinstalled, rebooted, and the data restored from tape. In addition, the only disaster recovery in place consisted of tapes stored in a safety deposit in the local bank. Having the stored tapes located so near, left the data vulnerable to a local disaster.

HP StoreEasy + HP LiveVault

TurboRestore Appliance Deployment Model

Thanks to RDBU and its managed service offerings, all that is now ancient history. RDBU currently provides the Morgan County Government a complete, hands-free, managed service, using HP LiveVault, for the entire 7-year legal life of its data. The HP LiveVault/ HP StoreEasy solution encrypts and securely transmits County information to two highly secured, ISO 27001 certified, mirrored, geographically separated HP-operated data center facilities, ensuring that mission critical data is readily available, anytime, with U.S. based 24/7 technical support from RDBU.

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>
> – Dan Dugal, CEO, Remote Data Backups

"Providing we didn't have to stand up a decommissioned server, it would have taken us about 30 minutes to restore a file with our old tape library, much longer if we had to reboot an ancient server," explains Kopetzky. "Now the whole restore process is so quick that sometimes I don't even think that it's done, but it is. Restoring a 500 MB database took only seconds. Our IT time-savings result in a significant productivity gain for my staff."

By law, government regulations demand up to 7 years of data storage imposing stiff penalties for those who cannot comply. HP LiveVault is designed to address these long-term storage regulations by offering predictable costs with 7-year retention and continuous offsite backup. Remote Data Backups, an HP Partner and Managed Service Provider specializing in storage for small, medium, and enterprise-sized companies has supported the HP LiveVault platform since 2001.

"HP LiveVault, in concert with HP's broad portfolio of storage solutions, allows RDBU to offer increasing value to our customers while making the adoption of leading-edge technology simple and seamless," says Dan Dugal, CEO, Remote Data Backups. "HP boasts best-in-class data protection and deduplication technology, which maximizes data protection onsite, offsite, and in virtualized environments. Our HP LiveVault Managed Service, combined with HP ease-of-use, leverages the IT staff's ability to spend more time on critical issues, instead of chasing after data hidden somewhere on a tape in the bank."

Customer at a glance

Application
Utilize Managed Service Provider (RDBU) and HP storage solution to provide required onsite and offsite disaster recovery

Hardware
• HP StoreEasy 1430
• HP LiveVault
• HP LiveVault TurboRestore Appliance

Software
• SQL
• Windows Server® 2008 R2

HP services
• 24/7 support from RDBU

HP Partner and Managed Service Provider
Remote Data Backups (RDBU)
(970) 420-3744
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HP storage solutions save IT time and restore peace of mind

Even though HP LiveVault provides the unique ability to provide 7-year data retention, regulations mandate that Morgan County have both onsite and offsite recovery capability, as well. For onsite compliance, RDBU implemented HP StoreEasy, for storage, and HP LiveVault TurboRestore Appliance, for replication and recovery.

The automated reliability, the flexibility, and the ease-of-use of the new HP storage solution enables Kopetzky to deliver restore services at a granularity and speed previously unavailable to grateful government employees. Whether onsite, or offsite, she can now easily restore up to 195 versions of data spanning 7 years for the County's Finance Department SQL database, on demand.

"With our HP solution, we find ourselves restoring more than ever before, and have a lot of happy users because of it," she notes. "A user accidentally wrote over a file needed for an impending key meeting, and we just dialed up her previous version and restored it. It's a good example of how our new system helps increase both IT and end-user productivity. We now restore peace of mind, as well as data."

Anything that saves time for the IT department is worth its weight in gold, according to Kopetzky. She and only three other IT professionals are responsible for all the County departments and must service eight

separate facilities located throughout Fort Morgan. Whereas restoring a server from a tape library took two days previously, with the new HP storage solution it takes under two hours. Kopetzky cites a power outage that took the previous tape backup offline for its regular weekend backup. The first order of business on the next Monday was to run last week's backup and bring it up to date, in her "spare" time.

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"It took us two working days to get the system current again and we had to do this while also accomplishing all our regular daily tasks." she concludes. "Restoring data from our tape library was a slow and daunting process. I wish we had this system in a long time ago. I can't express how happy we've been with this system and RDBU's expertise. I've recommended its many benefits already to our school district."

Learn more at
onlinebackup.com