

Data De-duplication and Replication Gives AIG Better Backups and Enhanced Sarbanes-Oxley Compliance

COMPLIANCE NECESSITY

Any company needs secure and reliable data backups to preserve its business records and ensure uninterrupted operations. For financial services companies, there is also the need to comply with federal regulations for data retention and availability.

“Our major business challenge was the rapid access to archive data being governed by Sarbanes-Oxley laws, constantly interfaced with both internal and external auditors who needed fast access to the data,” said Joseph Masi, senior network engineer for AIG Investments.

By designing and implementing a strategy using Quantum backup solutions that combined data de-duplication disk, tape, and offsite replication, the company was not only able to enhance compliance with its regulatory requirements, but reduced its media costs by \$200,000 per year.

“AIG Corporate dictates very strict hardware standards; vendors are evaluated and a best-of-breed is selected,” said Masi. “Quantum has proved that they’re a value-added business partner with our company and has proved to be the standard for data backup and replication.”

LAYERING IN DISK-BASED BACKUP

AIG Investments is an American International Group, Inc.-owned company that manages \$750 billion in assets. Headquartered in New York City, the firm has 1500 users in 44 offices on six continents. Providing these employees with IT services are data centers in New York, Fort Worth, Texas and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Prior to going with the DXi-Series, AIG had been using a Quantum PX720 automated tape library. AIG was happy with its PX720 but as part of a planned site move, the company decided to expand its backup strategy to include disk and replication as an additional backup layer that would provide faster data access for recovery. Using conventional disk or VTLs as a backup medium was too expensive to give AIG the retention they wanted. ePlus Technology Inc., AIG’s value-added-reseller, recommended Quantum’s DXi-Series disk-based backup solution with data de-duplication technology.

“We were in the process of consolidating data centers when we discovered the DXi-Series and decided to take advantage of its data de-duplication and replication functionality,” said Masi. “We figured this would be a perfect solution for our infrastructure.”

SAVING TIME AND MONEY

Quantum performed a sizing exercise based on AIG’s data retention needs and recommended a solution: A Quantum PX720 tape library with 12 LTO-3 drives and two DXi5500 disk-based backup appliances (Texas and New York) with 6TB of storage each. The DXi5500 is a midrange disk-based backup system that offers 6TB to 18TB raw capacity, but its data de-duplication technology lets it retain 10 to 50 times more backup data than conventional disk systems, and allows it to support WAN-based replication.

AIG Investments™ *Investor to Investor.*

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SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- Two Quantum DXi5500 disk-based backup systems with data de-duplication and replication
- Quantum PX720 tape library
- Quantum Scalar i2000 tape library
- EMC Legato Networker backup software

KEY BENEFITS

- Reduced backup time from 8 hours to 4 hours
- Replicating 3.7TB of data between New York and Texas for DR protection
- Cutting tape media costs in half, saving \$200,000 per year
- 67% to 80% data reduction by using de-duplication technology

Masi reports that setting up the DXi-Series systems was painless. “The DXi-Series was installed and up and running within hours,” he said. “We really like the management interface; it is very easy to use and intuitive. All the features that you need to look at on a daily basis are right on the home page.”

The DXi-Series systems are connected to AIG Investments’ backup environment through a high speed Fibre Channel infrastructure. Full 4TB system backups that used to take 8 hours are now accomplished in little more than half that time, and the disk required to retain the backups has been reduced by roughly 80 percent. Data is written first to the DXi-Series system, and then, if it needs to be retained for extended periods, it is streamed from the DXi-Series to the PX720 throughout the day.

One of the biggest advantages for AIG’s backup strategy was the addition of the DXi-Series remote replication capability. With the DXi-Series systems’ data de-duplication technology, only changed blocks need to be transmitted so users can transmit more data and use less network bandwidth. In the old system, all the AIG data was backed up to tape and media was removed regularly—usually every day—to provide DR protection and compliance. In the new system, AIG backs up all the data that needs shorter term retention only to disk—and it protects that data against site loss by replicating 3.7 TB backups to the Texas facility every day over a DS3 connection.

The system greatly reduces the number of tapes needed and has saved AIG money. “We used to spend \$100,000 per quarter on read-only media,” said Masi. “Now we are spending \$50,000 by writing the data of the server operating systems to the DXi-Series. It has saved us about \$200,000 per year.”

“Not only does the system save us money but it also dramatically increases our restore performance. In the old system, tapes were off-site so restores were always delayed,” he said. “Now, there are local copies stored on the DXi-Series for fast restores, and there are always DR copies available in the remote location. Our data is available immediately, whether it’s for a local user or for one of the regulators.”

AIG Investments was pleased with the DXi-Series right from the start, and that has not diminished over time. Masi said that Quantum has continued to provide a high level of support for the entire backup system, disk and tape alike. Support calls were dealt with rapidly, and replacement parts were quickly shipped, installed and tested by a Quantum engineer before closing a case.

“I would definitely choose Quantum again,” Masi said. “They have great products, they are a great company to do business with, and they have solutions that would fit just about any IT budget.”

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ABOUT AIG

American International Group, Inc. (AIG), a world leader in insurance and financial services, is the leading international insurance organization with operations in more than 130 countries and jurisdictions. AIG companies serve commercial, institutional and individual customers through the most extensive worldwide property-casualty and life insurance networks of any insurer. In addition, AIG companies are leading providers of retirement services, financial services and asset management around the world. AIG's common stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange, as well as the stock exchanges in Paris, Switzerland and Tokyo.

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Quantum Corp. (NYSE:QTM) is the leading global storage company specializing in backup, recovery and archive. Combining focused expertise, customer-driven innovation, and platform independence, Quantum provides a comprehensive range of disk, tape, media and software solutions supported by a world-class sales and service organization. As a long-standing and trusted partner, the company works closely with a broad network of resellers, OEMs and other suppliers to meet customers' evolving data protection needs.