Case Study

Datalink helps large nonprofit medical association implement DRaaS solution and increase processing power quickly and efficiently

The client

The client is a large nonprofit medical association that provides important news and resources to its members. It serves more than 125,000 medical professionals.

The challenge: Re-architect and move disaster recovery and communication infrastructures before the next data synchronization point

With a legacy disaster recovery (DR) site that was just 20 miles from its primary data center and that lacked adequate equipment and capacity, the association knew it was running the risk of losing critical data if both sites happened to be damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster. It needed to re-architect its DR platform at a safe distance from the data center.

As a longer-term goal, the association wanted to use the DR site to share growing production, development, and test workloads with its primary data center. They decided that high-performance virtualization and cloud technologies were the key.

Industry:
Nonprofit

Solution:
- Multicloud Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS)
- NetApp Private Storage for Cloud
- FlexPod Converged Infrastructure
- A400 All-Flash Storage Array 75-90 terabyte data repository
- Hosted in Equinix International Business Exchange™ (IBX®) data center

Datalink services:
- Field engineering
- Project management
- Managed services

Benefits:
- Decreased recovery time for mission-critical apps from 72 hours to less than 8
- Increased computing power by 5X
- Faster data processing reduced full snapshot capture and recovery from 12 hours to 2
- Improved storage optimization by 2.5X
- Reduced data snapshot and clone creation times by more than 200X
- Decreased physical footprint and associated overhead
- Freed IT staff to focus on business outcomes

The solution: Disaster Recovery as a Service and an interconnection-first strategy

With Datalink leading the design, planning, and deployment of the compute, storage, and multicloud technology, the client relocated its DR infrastructure into a cloud-friendly, vendor neutral Equinix International Business Exchange™ (IBX®) data center in Silicon Valley. The association implemented NetApp Private Storage for Cloud, FlexPod Converged Infrastructure, and an A400 All-Flash Storage Array 75-90 terabyte data repository. The move immediately resolved the DR/headquarters proximity issue, but there were other benefits as well.

The interconnection-first strategy has allowed the association to capitalize on its access to high-performance, cost-effective system and storage cloud technologies including Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Microsoft Azure/Office 365 cloud platforms. This hybrid cloud approach eliminates a number of overhead and maintenance costs that are necessary when redundant systems must be kept running in the event that a failure occurs by putting compute resources in the cloud. It also uses local storage for faster data access and greater security and privacy.

An additional challenge that Datalink faced in this project was that there was just one week before the next data synchronization point in which to move the entire DR (storage and backup and recovery applications) and communications (network security, firewalls, optimization, cloud interconnections, etc.) infrastructure and resume operations. The move went smoothly and the production-ready deadline was met.

The benefits: Fast, reliable backup and greater performance and operational efficiency

The association now has a DRaaS solution that is fast, reliable, and fully managed by Datalink. It is the best of both worlds, with private, secure dedicated on-premises storage plus on-demand cloud compute power. The successful project has decreased recovery time for mission-critical apps from 72 hours to less than 8 and reduced full snapshot capture and recovery from 12 hours to 2 thanks to faster data processing.

The initiative has also increased storage optimization by 2.5X and reduced data snapshot and clone creation times by more than 200X through the use of the higher-performance NetApp storage arrays with data compression/deduplication. What's more, the association has reduced its physical footprint and overall management overhead by deploying an integrated high-performance compute, storage, and multicloud DR infrastructure.

"We now have a significantly more resilient and robust disaster recovery infrastructure with five times more computing power, ultra-fast storage, and unparalleled interconnection to multiple clouds at a nominal incremental cost," says the association's VP/CIO. "This will give our developers an 'easy button' to create their own virtual environment on the fly to do development and testing with multiple clouds without losing control of our data."

200X

reduction in data snapshot and clone creation times

5X

increase in computing power

Recovery time:

72 ⇨ **<8**

hours

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