



Overview

The need

To support Latrobe Community Health Service (LCHS)'s broad spectrum of systems, manage expanding data volumes and comply with stringent reporting requirements for healthcare, the company's IT team needed to increase the flexibility, reliability and speed of data backup and recovery.

The solution

LCHS automates and streamlines its physical and virtual data protection and reporting processes with IBM Spectrum Protect™ software (formerly Tivoli Storage Manager).

The benefit

LCHS improves data-backup and compliance while lowering its total cost of ownership by 27 percent and reducing backup volumes by 2TB.

Lowering total cost of data protection by 27 percent

Latrobe Community Health Service cuts backup volumes by 2TB with IBM Spectrum Protect software

As the IT manager at (LCHS), Wayne Twite and his eight-person IT department support over 500 employees and volunteers, 120 specialized healthcare-related programs and eight clinics operating in the state of Victoria, Australia. "It's my responsibility to set company direction in terms of how we provide services for multiple key business applications."

Managing big data, risk and compliance

The non-profit healthcare provider's programs address a wide spectrum of societal needs, from nutrition counseling and children's health to old age services and addiction treatment. These programs generate a massive volume of highly sensitive patient data daily; the handling and protection of which is heavily regulated. Moreover, some data is required to be retained for as long as 20 years.

IBM Spectrum Protect software's self-monitoring and alerting capabilities allow Latrobe's IT team to efficiently manage the backup environment. "We're a lean department, so we need to spread this responsibility throughout the team. Spectrum Protect's high degree of automation is critical to that effort," says Wayne Twite, IT manager for Latrobe.



“Spectrum Protect really checked the boxes for us in terms of providing consistency of backups at our primary site and also facilitating our ability to open a new secondary site.”

— Wayne Twite, IT manager,
Latrobe Community Health Service

Because of the critical nature of healthcare information, risk exposure in cases of data loss or corruption is a major concern for Mr. Twite and Latrobe executives. Full-system backups that routinely took up to 36 hours amplified that risk, but it was a coal mine fire—one that burned continually for months in the vicinity of Latrobe’s home office and server environment—that revealed the need for increased insurance against business data loss. “This gave the opportunity to review our disaster preparedness along with our data recovery capabilities using the tape-based backup environment,” says Mr. Twite. “With our existing backup solution we found some major concerns. In fact, there was a question of whether or not we could recover data within a week or two, which is significant, given the amount of data we generate daily.”

Beyond risk mitigation, data protection also affects Latrobe’s competitiveness as the company pursues government funding. “We are now finding that to maintain a competitive edge as a healthcare service provider we need effective solutions to improve reporting capabilities and compliance. This assists with securing government funding,” Mr. Twite says. “For example we maintain chronological history of each client’s care for full traceability across all their needs, creating a significant benefit to both the government and clients.”

Competition for clients continues to ramp up. Therefore providing tools to improve client service delivery while helping Latrobe and the Victoria government obtain the best client data is essential. “It’s very important that our client-facing staff have reliable, fast access to our systems,” he says. “We also capture accurate information about clients and their needs, which we can feed into our funding submissions to keep the government informed about what’s really happening on the ground.”

Transforming data management

Looking to increase flexibility, speed and performance of Latrobe’s physical and virtual data backup and recovery infrastructure, Mr. Twite also sought to transform the organization’s tape-based backup environment to disk. “Our current backup solution didn’t support the newer technology services we were implementing, so that gave us an opportunity for a significant upgrade,” he says. We really wanted to back-up particular systems every two-to-four hours and reduce risk by doing backups of other systems on a daily basis instead of just weekly. Disk-to-disk would give us that capability and a shorter recovery time objective for Virtual Machines.”

Solution Components

Software

- IBM® Spectrum Protect™
IBM® Spectrum Protect for
Virtual Environments
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— Wayne Twite, IT manager,
Latrobe Community Health Service

Latrobe deployed IBM Spectrum Protect software (formerly Tivoli Storage Manager) and IBM Spectrum Protect for Virtual Environments software (formerly Tivoli Storage Manager for Virtual Environments). “We were looking for the best cost-effective and performance efficient solution we could implement; with automation that provides simple and easy-to-manage reports of any problems. Spectrum Protect fits the bill,” says Mr. Twite. Administrators of Latrobe’s virtual server environment also endorsed the IBM solution.

Utilizing Spectrum Protect 4VE software has provided the flexibility to quickly recover files where required. Spectrum Protect’s ability to utilize VMware’s Changed Block Tracking (CBT) feature reduces time required to backup Virtual Machines and gives IT the ability to recover full VM’s in a very short period of time.

Another factor in the selection of Spectrum Protect software was Mr. Twite’s plan to implement a disaster recovery solution at a second site. “Spectrum Protect really checked the boxes for us in terms of providing consistency of backups at our primary site and also facilitating our ability to open a new secondary site. It will significantly reduce our recovery period in the event we have a major incident at our primary server environment.”

Reducing costs, increasing efficiencies

According to Mr. Twite, recovering files with Spectrum Protect software is now a matter of a couple clicks and couple of minutes, a time savings of two-to-three hours over the previous backup environment. “That’s a significant reduction in wait times for client-facing staff when providing answers to clients or managers,” says Mr. Twite. “Beyond that, because we’re consistently meeting backup requirements for various accreditation bodies we’re able to present that as a tangible value for the business, which helps with negotiating funding and acquiring new funding.”

Additionally, Latrobe’s total cost of ownership for its data backup environment has fallen by an estimated 27 percent, and due to the deduplication capabilities native to Spectrum Protect software, daily backup volumes have been reduced by 2TB. “That’s been a major benefit for us. Certainly it gives us a cost savings in terms of disk storage space and gives us some space for growth in the future, as our data environment continues to expand,” says Mr. Twite. “In the next three-to-five years I expect to see a 20 percent reduction in costs because we won’t have to put extra disk space in the backup solution.”

For more information

To learn more about IBM Spectrum Protect please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website:

ibm.com/systems/storage/spectrum



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Systems Group
Route 100
Somers, NY 10589

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