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Clint Scott
System Administrator



Mount Aloysius College

Situation

Mount Aloysius College's backup software had become overly complicated to achieve the necessary backups the College required. The software was at a point where it needed to be renewed, so the College's IT Department decided to see what else was out there in terms of full range backup solutions that would support their current and future environments.

“With our old backup software, we were using two backup servers in order to get double the through-put to make the backup windows because one server wasn't able to handle everything. There were times when managing the backup software was really inconvenient because there were so many backups running at once on two servers, finding the specific backup you needed meant bouncing back and forth to find what you needed. It was also becoming a challenge to get the backups to complete within our backup window,” recalled Clint Scott, Systems Administrator for Mount Aloysius College.

CHALLENGE

The College's environment consists of a combination of virtual and physical machines. They currently run a four VMware ESXI cluster host virtual environment with 45 virtual machines on the cluster. The cluster runs on HP ProLiant hardware and backs up to four Cybernetics boxes and a 20TB Nimble Storage array. The College plans to expand their cluster with two more VMware hosts, which enable them to virtualize more servers. They plan to utilize SEP's deduplication technology to move all of their data backups from the individual Cybernetics boxes to the Nimble hardware to backup everything to one centralized location.

Their environment utilizes Windows 2012 R2 and 2008 R2, Linux SLES 11 SP3, MS SQL databases, NSS Novell shares and a multitude of education applications. The largest and most critical database, Jenzabar, houses all student records and must be routinely backed up and protected. The College's IT Department runs daily incremental backups during the week and full backups on weekends. For backup retention, the College needs to abide by a two week SLA requirement, but wants to keep backups longer whenever space allows.

SOLUTION

The IT Department decided to take a look at SEP. “SEP was priced at a point we could afford and after meeting with SEP, we were very impressed with what they had to say. So we installed SEP in a test environment and it seemed to work for our needs. I definitely liked the layout of SEP better than our old solution. It's much easier to manage everything from one central server location,” Scott mentioned.

SEP Software is the premier technology leader providing high performance backup and disaster recovery solutions for professional IT infrastructures of all sizes. SEP delivers seamless solutions with one central interface to easily manage backups for heterogeneous environments.

SEP's software ensures that data security for both virtual and physical environments can be easily and cost-effectively achieved. SEP is the ultimate expression of German engineering and attention to detail. Design and programming originate from SEP offices in Weyarn, near Munich, Germany, where overall performance and reliability are of the utmost concern.

SOLUTION (cont'd)

"The SEP GUI is a great product to use. It's self-explanatory. It displays information where it needs to be and that is one big improvement switching from our old solution. Our old backup provider tried to add so many different buttons and tabs to their GUI with things that didn't need to be there. It became convoluted and the simplicity of the SEP interface is definitely a preferred method," said Scott.

RESULTS

"The installation of SEP was fantastic. I was very impressed with the amount of support that was provided on the technical side. Any time I had a question or needed help, the SEP team always had the answer I needed. The SEP support team was very knowledgeable, very thorough and always went above and beyond to get us to where we needed to be," remembered Scott. "I can definitely say that SEP backs up our environment at least twice as fast, uses only one server instead of two, and our backups complete well within our backup window, so it is much faster than our old solution," said Scott, who continued to add, "The Last Backup State feature is one of the best features of SEP. You simply open a tab for the last backup state and it shows you the state of all of your backups. It auto-updates for backups as they run during the day so you can open up the tab and check them at any point. We are very pleased with the ease of use of SEP. We have four datastores for four different Cybernetics boxes and adding each one was easy to do and was something I was able to do on my own from the beginning. SEP's ongoing support has been phenomenal as well. Their Online Support Portal makes opening up a case very easy and I always have a response within a very reasonable window of time, one to three hours at the most."

Scott went to an in person training at SEP's U.S. headquarters in Colorado. "Everyone was professional and informative and it was just an all around great experience, both professionally and technically. My experience working with the company as a whole has been great. I would highly recommend SEP to anybody I could, those in the industry or friends. One of the best ways to compare SEP to other backup solutions, is the competitiveness of the backup market itself. There are a lot of products out there and I have no intention of switching away from SEP any time soon and I think that itself speaks to how good of a solution it is."

ABOUT MOUNT ALOYSIUS COLLEGE

Established in 1853, Mount Aloysius is a comprehensive, liberal arts and science-based institution with a commitment to career-directed study. Rooted in Catholic tradition, Mount Aloysius College is one of 18 Mercy-sponsored colleges and universities in the United States and is a member of the Conference for Mercy Higher Education. Mount Aloysius College is a caring and just learning community with deep traditions of hospitality and compassion. Approximately 2,500 students are enrolled. The College offers more than 70 academic program in Health Sciences and Nursing, Humanities, Education, Social Sciences, Natural and Applied Sciences, Business Administration and Pre-Professional Study. Students may choose from more than 20 concentrations and minors. Today, Mount Aloysius College is a vibrant leader in higher education.