

United Distribution Corp. Protects the “Whole Shootin’ Match” with Replay Appliance

Background

(This story is true. The company and staff names have been changed by AppAssure at the company’s request.) United Distribution Corp. is a global distribution company with annual retail sales over \$1 billion. United Distribution stays ahead with strong operations and technology tuned to excellent customer service. Of course, e-mail is central to that strategy and protecting an environment recently upgraded to Exchange 2007 is mission-critical. United Distribution counts on Replay Appliance to protect its entire Exchange environment and speed recovery from any level of outage. And, Replay Appliance’s ability to restore e-mail components is adding extra value.

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— Hank
LAN Administrator,
United Media’s

A New Solution for an Old Problem

At the end of 2007, United Distribution upgraded its email system from POP3 to Microsoft Exchange 2007. The POP3 data backup processes that were in place were not going to work for Exchange. Hank, United Distribution’s LAN Administrator, began researching new solutions on-line and then received an e-mail from AppAssure that prompted him to evaluate Replay Appliance.

“I’m tough on evaluations,” reports Hank. “First I read all the marketing information. Then I download the product and read through the manuals. I like to run the evaluation on my own without help from the vendor to see how easy it is to use. I test out technical support if I have questions. I ran that kind of evaluation for Replay Appliance and got hooked.”

Hank’s evaluation was thorough, including tests of bare metal, database, mailbox, and single e-mail message restores. Now in use for six months, Hank feels that “Replay Appliance’s real value is that it lets us restore the whole shootin’ match.”



The Other 99% of the Time

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While United Distribution hasn’t, knock on wood, suffered from any major outage since implementing Replay Applmage, Hank is using it to focus on a common everyday problem – lost e-mail components. “Being able to look at a specific mailbox condition at a specific point in time satisfies 99% of our problems,” estimates Hank.

“Replay Applmage comes in handy everyday as end-users misplace or delete folders and messages or mess up their calendar,” says Hank. “It takes data snapshots every 15 minutes. I use the Data Store Manager to peer into the mailbox at a point in time, pluck out the needed component, and restore it for the user. It’s easier for me to use Replay Applmage to find missing components than to search through Exchange. You don’t need an Outlook profile or password. It’s the best forensics tool. Replay Applmage has quickly and painlessly bailed us out a number of times. It’s great to deliver without fanfare.”

Like many LAN administrators, Hank has to keep up with personnel comings and goings and Replay Applmage is coming in handy there too. “A manager might need some information or want an old mailbox to go to a new hire. We can quickly find it in Replay Applmage, export it to a PST file, and let the person who needs the folders or messages find what they need.”

Into the future

United Distribution maintains a mixture of both physical and virtual servers on VMware. Hank is looking to a future that includes virtual standby through Replay Applmage. “At this point we are still getting familiar with and testing the virtual standby, and it looks very promising”.

“Their VMware-style tools and features should provide great benefit for us. I like that a virtual machine can be automatically created and maintained on an ESX server,” says Hank. “Employees all over the nation hook into our datacenter for email,” explains Hank. “One problem hurts everyone and we can’t afford to fail them”.

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