

Apptix Chooses AppAssure as their Exchange Backup Solution

Background

Apptix is the leading provider of business-class communications services for SMBs. Apptix services include hosted Exchange email, business VoIP services, and SharePoint collaboration. The company's 19,000 customers are located around the world. Within that customer set are 200,000 Exchange mailboxes that Apptix manages, protects, and guarantees at the 99.99% uptime level. The value proposition for hosted Exchange is clear for the customer; their subscription gives them reliable email operations with no management overhead. For Apptix, the value proposition comes from satisfying and building a customer base by affordably meeting the SLA. AppAssure makes that possible.



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VP of Engineering and Operations, Apptix

The Challenge of Hosting Exchange

Network administrators know that managing Exchange services for any size business is a significant amount of responsibility and work. Exchange is a mission-critical application that experiences tremendous amounts of transactional volume. Add to this the growing size of the mailboxes on the server (they get bigger every day) and there's a lot for the Exchange administrator to worry about. Now, more than ever, it is important to realize how dependent all employees are on e-mail. E-mail is pervasive; used for sales transactions, contracts, communications, scheduling and any day-to-day communication. Backing up mailboxes to protect against data loss, and providing business continuity is becoming more challenging each day. Backups that used to take an hour now take the better part of a day or more; and recoveries can take even longer, especially when it's an issue of corruption or operating system failure.

“Exchange backup was certainly a challenge for us,” remembers Jose Uribe, VP of Engineering and Operations at Apptix. Apptix is the leading provider of communication services for the SMB market. Operating around the world, Apptix serves 19,000 customers and manages 200,000 Exchange mailboxes.

“We were using traditional tape backups which were very slow. We have to keep up with demand for Exchange services and we have to guarantee a service-level agreement of 99.99% uptime,” says Uribe. Full backups were conducted over the weekend as they took “days” to complete. Incremental backups that were performed during the week took three to four hours. Any outage or inability for a customer to access Exchange puts the SLA in jeopardy, so quick restoration in the case of failure is essential. “Tape backup just wasn't keeping up.”



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Beyond Tape Backup and Manual Recovery

Uribe and his team at Apptix looked for an Exchange backup solution for two years before finding AppAssure through a recommendation. “There are a lot of companies that provide Exchange backup solutions,” says Uribe, “but we needed something that was fast.”

AppAssure was tested for three months before a gradual, phased roll-out began. Just partway into its full implementation, Apptix is already realizing tangible benefits. “We now do backups every 15 to 30 minutes,” explains Uribe. “We can also restore mailboxes and messages on the fly. That process used to take hours. With AppAssure, it takes minutes.”

According to Uribe, AppAssure has “eliminated about five hours of restore processes,” a task that used to require creating a new server with a tape backup, searching through the data to find a message, then copying the message back into the current Exchange mailbox. Now Uribe’s team restores messages or mailboxes right from AppAssure. To restore a message, they simply send it back to the person who requested it or to a target mailbox.

With AppAssure, Apptix has moved away from tape back-up in their Exchange environment. “We’ve eliminated the cost of tape – we used to use two full sets of tapes for a complete backup.” We’re also saving real dollars when it comes to storage costs. We use to require twice the amount of storage that AppAssure requires. Our backup storage requirements have been reduced by 50%.”

More importantly, Uribe says that his staff can be a lot more efficient and take on other tasks that increase the Exchange hosting value proposition for Apptix and its customers. Just think of how efficient they’ll be when AppAssure is fully rolled out.

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