

Manufacturer Saves \$25,000 with a 20x ROI after Switching from Symantec's Backup Exec and Tape Backup to AppAssure

Background

Since the 1930s, Smith Brothers of Berne has built a reputation for crafting fine residential furniture that is solid, comfortable, and stylish, combining combine old world craftsmanship – including Amish craftsmanship – with modern technology. Located in the heart of rural

Indiana, in Berne, Smith Brother Furniture is home to nearly 250 employees and sells to retail stores in over 30 states and in Canada. Each year since 1976 —with the exception of 2001—has been more successful than the year before for Smith Brothers.



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Derek Augsburger, Systems Administrator at Smith Brother Furniture is absolutely clear about IT's role at Smith Brothers Furniture: “We support production. That's why we're here,” says Augsburger. But this simple statement of fact belies the huge responsibility that Augsburger and his team of programmers have at Smith Brothers.

“We practice “lean manufacturing” here at Smith Brothers,” explains Augsburger. “What that means is that we have on hand only a four- hour inventory. We have what we need to build that day.” Lean manufacturing has helped companies around the world, including Toyota, identify and reduce waste and expenses for consumers, but as Smith Brother's knows, the challenge for IT in this environ-ment is enormous. “Things are so tight that if any part of the data systems goes down, it literally stops production, says Augsburger. “We would have maybe only a couple of hours before everyone had to stop working. So we really mean it when we say, “time is money.” If systems are down, we lose money.” With production loss calculated at \$10,000 per hour that systems are offline, down-time is not an option.

Which soon became apparent to Augsburger and the senior management at Smith Brothers – their traditional nightly tape backups with Symantec's Backup Exec were woefully insufficient. Not only was it prohibitively expensive to backup the amount of data they needed, but when one of the owners learned it would take 1-2 days to get a down server back online, management balked. They knew that unacceptable downtime meant almost a half a million dollars of production risk. They said to Augsburger: Come up with something cost effective and make that downtime exposure go away.



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So Augsburger chose AppAssure.

Smith Brother’s SQL server was the most important server they had up and running. Augsburger and his team did a demo with AppAssure precisely focused on their SQL server, and once they saw what AppAssure could do, they knew they had exactly what they were looking for:

- Continuous backup with a 15 minute recovery time objective
- Recovery time reduced from days and hours to just minutes
- Fast and easy object level recovery
- Ability to set any time interval for backup snapshots
- Easy, intuitive user interface

“Without AppAssure, data recover would have been about 3 hours, pulling tape,” notes Augsburger. With AppAssure, we recovered the necessary data in 30 minutes total. You could say AppAssure saved us about \$25,000 just over the last year alone – with much more savings to come. We got about a 20x ROI with AppAssure.”

Augsburger loves the fact that creating a test environment is a snap with AppAssure. “I used to work for a really big company that did \$2 billion a year in revenue, and we never tested our backup, mainly because of time and the cost of a test environment. But with AppAssure, I’m creating a virtual machine image every night and I don’t have to worry about anything. If something goes down, I can bring it back in no time.”

In fact, before Augsburger arrived, the team had a situation of restoring a corrupt server for over 1.5 days. Now, he says, he can do it in minutes (“and that’s taking my time,” laughs Augsburger).

With AppAssure, Augsburger can now meet his main objective to support production uptime and business continuity. “This is a great product! It does exactly what it’s advertised to do, and it’s absolutely cost effective. I know it’s something that will save us in the future.

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