

BUYER CASE STUDY

Delphi Capital Easily Shifts to EVault's Cloud-Based Managed Backup Services

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IDC OPINION

The market for cloud-based IT infrastructure services delivered in a software-as-a-service (SaaS) model continues to grow. IDC research indicates this model of IT delivery is disrupting traditional licensed software markets and changing how functions such as backup and recovery are procured. Adoption of these services is also impacting how and where businesses consume their storage capacity. This IDC Buyer Case Study looks at the use of i365's cloud-based managed backup services (EVault Managed Backup Services) by Delphi Capital Management, a subsidiary of Delphi Financial Group Inc., to achieve improved operational backup and recovery, with lower cost, leveraging third-party IT skill sets. In addition:

- ☒ Given the current economic climate, budget-sensitive organizations are looking at the capital and operating expense relief benefits of cloud-based backup and recovery services.
- ☒ IDC research suggests end users are bullish on cloud-based IT infrastructure services such as backup and recovery due to the cost, budget, and out-staffing advantages over traditional on-premise approaches.

IN THIS BUYER CASE STUDY

This IDC Buyer Case Study — based on a March 2009 interview with Phil Montesana, director of information technology of Delphi Capital Management — examines the company's use of online and managed backup services across its IT infrastructure. In 2007, Delphi Capital Management deployed EVault Managed Backup Services as a means of protecting and recovering critical data while minimizing capital infrastructure and operating expenses.

This document provides an examination of Delphi Capital's implementation of the EVault Managed Backup Services and the firm's experience and opinions on the solution. End users can use this information to assess whether online backup services are applicable within their environment and what benefits can be expected.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Organization Overview

Delphi Capital Management is a subsidiary of Delphi Financial Group, a public insurance holding company with a series of subsidiary companies. Delphi Financial Group is an integrated employee benefit services company. Delphi manages all aspects of employee absence to enhance the productivity of its clients and provides the related insurance coverage: group life, long-term and short-term disability, excess workers' compensation for self-insured employers, travel accident, and dental. Delphi Financial Group has several major subsidiaries, including Matrix Absence Management Inc., Safety National Casualty Corp., and Reliance Standard Life Insurance Company. Delphi Capital Management operates as an insurance carrier. The company was incorporated in 1989 and is based in New York.

IDC recently spoke with Phil Mentasana, director of information technology for Delphi Capital Management, whose team is responsible for infrastructure and end-user support for 100 executive users. The IT infrastructure at the company includes 15 physical Windows servers running systems such as Microsoft SQL, Exchange 2007, and file and print servers. The company has two VMware ESX servers with approximately eight virtual machines per server. The organization has approximately 750GB of raw, active data. The main datacenter is located in New York; however, the firm leverages a subsidiary's datacenter for disaster recovery purposes. Data is continually replicated to this backup datacenter to ensure the firm can meet its recovery time objectives (RTO) for all mission-critical applications and data.

Challenges and Solution

According to Mentasana, when he first came to the company several years ago, "Our backup process was time consuming and in need of updating." The company was using Symantec BackupExec with three different tape jukeboxes, each locally attached to separate servers. An administrator was spending several hours every day to maintain the backup, which included switching and labeling tapes and scheduling tapes for offsite storage. Occasional failures added to the company's time expenditure, and escalation to Symantec tech support was both time consuming and frustrating due to the language barrier because Symantec's tech support is overseas. According to Mentasana, "Backups were not being thoughtfully done, and there is a better way. Our reliability was potentially at risk." In addition to these challenges, tapes were only being sent offsite once a week due to budgetary constraints. For Mentasana, "Switching to a more reliable media and moving away from tape was a critical part of the solution."

Prior to joining Delphi Capital, Mentasana was a partner and vice president of technology at Equinox Capital, a financial services firm with a peak of \$16 billion in assets under management. Mentasana had been successful in implementing online backup services using EVault's SaaS online backup service. He had seen this approach work successfully for his 100-user environment eight years ago. The EVault SaaS Online Backup Services at the time was cheaper than an on-premise approach (over a three-year period), maintained the data offsite, and eliminated large up-front

capital costs. He sought to deliver those same benefits to Delphi Capital and started to evaluate online backup service options. Mentesana also performed a cost/benefit analysis comparing the price of an on-premise approach with a SaaS approach. He looked at the costs associated with the purchase and maintenance of tape hardware, software, media, tape replacement and offsite tape collection, and storage services compared with online vaulting. The online vaulting option was more cost effective for the firm over a three-year period and provided additional time-savings benefits, allowing his staff to be more productive. Other SaaS implementations Mentesana's team has implemented include Dell MessageOne's suite of managed email services and Backstop Solutions Group's CRM and Fund of Fund accounting software.

Results

Mentesana evaluated several online backup providers, including Iron Mountain and i365, A Seagate Company (formerly EVault). Moving to an online backup solution along with other indicatives allowed him to keep Delphi's onsite IT staff small while increasing productivity and network reliability. Mentesana was looking for a support model that was offsite but could be internally managed and provided responsive United States-based technical support. He also wanted the firm to have its own dedicated vault instead of the shared vault he had used previously. Because of these requirements and the amount of data, he chose EVault's Managed Services product. However, he also performed a high-level price comparison with Iron Mountain's offering and ultimately selected the EVault Managed Backup Services offering. Given his previous positive experience with EVault, he said it was an easy decision.

In 2007, Delphi Capital deployed the EVault's Managed Backup Services. According to Mentesana, "We perform full backups every night but only send the net change (delta), after it has been compressed and encrypted over the line to EVault. This amounts to less than 2GB of change on average for 750GB of data. We still have full control of what we back up and its schedule, but we don't have to worry about the back-end hardware. Since EVault's datacenters are located within a SunGard facility, we are confident that our data is physically safe. We do not own the equipment, so we do not need to maintain it or pay for maintenance and upgrades. If we need to add capacity, we make a phone call. David Tang, our dedicated i365 vault manager, monitors the health of our vault, sends us biweekly reports, and assists when technical support is needed. Our backup has also been configured to email us when faults occur, so my team doesn't have to spend all day looking at logs. Since EVault is already offsite, we were able to eliminate the offsite tape collection service. EVault has done a spectacular job for us. I am not saying there have not been issues, but they have always met or exceeded my expectations."

Future Plans and Requirements

Going forward, Mentesana would like to investigate the future possibility of using EVault's software across the enterprise. According to Mentesana, "The beauty of EVault's technology is that it can grow with you. As our data expands and our needs change, we can purchase the software and use it on our hardware to back up from one subsidiary's datacenter to another. The data from our current vault can be moved to this alternative configuration, and EVault can continue to manage it, or it can be

done internally. This is possible because EVault's software is hardware agnostic and will work on any SAN. It gives us the flexibility to tailor our backup and its storage location to meet our needs."

Mentesana is interested in the eVault System Restore Bare Metal Restore product. Rather than adding to the time necessary to rebuild the server at the time of failure, the use of eVault's Bare Metal Recovery capability would allow Delphi to recover the server and data without having to reinstall the operating system or specific drivers. This would save time when there may not be any to spare.

ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

For end users considering a cloud-based backup and recovery service, Delphi Capital suggests users consider the following:

- ☒ **Internet reliability.** Before selecting any online service, make sure that your Internet connection is reliable. As you begin to leverage your Internet circuit for SaaS services, add redundancy to your circuit by adding a backup circuit. Prior to implementing SaaS services at Delphi, Mentesana configured BGP with two circuits, a primary 100mbps fiber circuit and a 10mbps microwave backup circuit.
- ☒ **Supplier core competency.** In selecting an online or cloud-based backup provider, considering the supplier's core competency is essential. According to Mentesana, "We would love to see one vendor do everything, but most vendors are unable to do everything well. We look for vendors that are 'best of breed' in one focused area and have found EVault to be the best at what they do."
- ☒ **Cost/benefit analysis.** There has to be an economic advantage to outtasking your backup and backup infrastructure to a third party. Delphi not only performed a cost/benefit analysis comparing an on-premise approach with online or cloud-based approach but then also did a cost/benefit analysis of several providers of online backup services.
- ☒ **More than pricing comparisons.** Delphi found that online providers have some marginal pricing differences, but functionality varies. It can be difficult to do an apples-to-apples pricing comparison because of some of the differences in their pricing models. For example, some charge by raw capacity whereas others charge by compressed capacity. So, in addition to pricing comparisons, also evaluate functional differences.
- ☒ **Virtual machines requirements.** What functional recovery requirements do you have for your virtual machines? Do you need only image-level recovery or do you also need file-level recovery — or do you need both?
- ☒ **Accessibility and security.** Do you need direct access to the vault for your own data? Some solutions provide a portal for direct access, while others have a workflow where the help desk conducts the restore on your behalf. Also consider who should have access to the vault. Another factor to consider is a dedicated or shared vault. This is often a function of your legal or compliance policies and overall comfort with your corporate data being commingled with another firm's data.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- ☒ *Storage-as-a-Service: A Personal Consumer, Home Business, and Telecommuting Perspective* (IDC #215097, December 2008)

- ☒ *Storage-as-a-Service: Commercial Opportunities* (IDC #215096, December 2008)

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