

Strengthening the Backup Infrastructure

Campbell Alliance turns to **NetApp Syncsort Integrated Backup (NSB)** to **consolidate and streamline** data protection, reduce backup windows, and accelerate data restores

When the world's top pharmaceutical and biotechnology firms need elite management to optimize their complex operations and business strategies, they turn to Campbell Alliance. With offices in North America and Europe, this 300-person consultancy is acclaimed for its specialized practice teams that focus on critical pharmaceutical and biotech industry functions, including brand management, business development, clinical development, medical affairs, pricing and market access and sales.

Of course, data is the lifeblood of the pharmaceutical and biotech industries and it presents two overriding characteristics. First, these are inherently data-intensive businesses that routinely generate terabytes of critical lab results, research studies, marketing analyses, and much more. Just as important, that information is among the most closely held, confidential, and valuable data sets in the world. As trusted inside advisors, Campbell Alliance consultants have access to and generate highly sensitive information that needs an ultimate level of protection.

For Juan Granados, Director of Information Technology at Campbell Alliance, that translates into rigorous requirements for a world-class data-protection infrastructure. In the event of a disaster or major disruption, the loss of its data could inflict a fatal blow to the business. Unfortunately, the time, costs, and resources needed to administer the company's enterprise backup solution were reaching unsustainable proportions. Previously, Campbell Alliance's backup solution consisted of a daily file-level backup that typically took 12-15 hours to complete. It also included writing to 45 backup tapes, usually taking two to three days every week to complete.

"We needed a product that didn't require significant IT time and resources," Granados said. "We also wanted to reduce backup times while strengthening our disaster-recovery posture. Ultimately, that meant eliminating the expense and administration of the tape backup portion of our process — which would improve the quality and reliability of the backups as well."

The tipping point for Campbell Alliance came when the IT team undertook a test-restore of its main Knowledge Management system — a test that took nearly three weeks to restore 10 TB of data. "Restoring from tape is just a bad proposition," said Granados. "We also wrote to disk — but we only keep 10 days on disk and then push to tape that gets vaulted for worst-case disasters. When we realized it would take weeks to recover our enterprise data, we knew we had to make a move."

"We can mount server backups in a virtualized environment, making them accessible within 20 minutes or less. So, if a server becomes partially or completely inaccessible, Syncsort mitigates the outage by providing a virtualized copy of the server in a fraction of the time it would take to restore from disk or tape. This is unlike anything any other competitor could provide."

— Juan Granados, Director of Information Technology

Campbell Alliance® Management Consultants in Pharmaceuticals and Biotech

INDUSTRY

- Pharmaceutical/Biotechnology consulting

CHALLENGE

- Accelerate backups
- Shift from file-level to block-level backups for more restore points and increased granularity
- Shrink the backup-infrastructure footprint

SOLUTION

- NetApp Syncsort Integrated Backup for "zero-impact" backup
- Data deduplication, instant restore, data replication and support for disk, tape, and physical and virtual servers

BUSINESS VALUE

- Cut backup time by more than 50 percent
- Cut weekend processing time from 30 hours to 10
- Reduced staff time from two-to-three days a week to just one
- Lower costs due to reduction (and potential elimination) of tape infrastructure
- Greater speed and reliability for restores

Making the Transition To NetApp and Syncsort

Campbell Alliance had previously purchased a network attached storage device from NetApp to help back up to hard disks. The increased space translated into faster restores of important files — including data that was more than one week old. Unfortunately, the inefficiencies of the existing file-level backups meant Campbell Alliance wasn't fully exploiting NetApp's features.

"We looked at the Syncsort solution for NetApp," said Granados. "We liked the tight integration of the two products. In addition, Syncsort's ability to simplify backup administration was another important differentiator."

The Syncsort server resides in a VMware ESX virtualized environment, creating snapshot updates on a NetApp FAS 2040 with 32 TB of storage. Syncsort also writes backups to a StorageTek SL500 dual LTO2 media changer.

With the Syncsort/NetApp combination, Campbell Alliance was able to reduce backup times by more than 50 percent while increasing the frequency of backups made to disk — thanks to the efficiencies achieved by snapshots and deduplication. What's more, Syncsort uses block-level snapshots for greater deduplication and mitigating the impact of any potential file corruption not typically uncovered until the time of a restore. It also means significantly less time and file-server resources are needed.

"Syncsort provides important added functionality, such as instant virtualization and Exchange mailbox recovery" said Granados. "We can mount server backups in a virtualized environment, making them accessible within 20 minutes or less. So, if a server becomes partially or completely inaccessible, Syncsort mitigates the outage by providing a virtualized copy of the server in a fraction of the time it would take to restore from disk or tape. This is unlike anything any other competitor could provide.

"The exchange mailbox recovery eliminates the need to perform individual mailbox backups. With the previous enterprise software, we had to backup mailbox data twice to get the granularity to recover individual emails from a user's mailbox. Syncsort opens up the raw mailbox file, so we can recover any mailbox item by just pointing and clicking. We save a lot of time recovering data because we don't have to mount a complete mail infrastructure."

"“With the efficiencies of the Syncsort solution, the potential downtime from enterprise backups is reduced significantly.”

— Juan Granados, Director of Information Technology

This functionality was extremely beneficial when Campbell Alliance was acquired by inVentiv Health and the IT team had to quickly integrate about 50 new employees. "Syncsort's mailbox recovery feature meant we could quickly migrate large mailboxes much faster," Granados said.

Better Performance, Better Uptime

Previously, enterprise backups significantly impacted the performance of Campbell Alliance servers. "With Syncsort, our long, resource-draining backup times are virtually eliminated," said Granados. "The IT team has a documented system uptime metric of 99 percent. With the efficiencies of the Syncsort solution, the potential downtime from enterprise backups is reduced significantly. Administration is so much easier as well. And since this is a simpler solution, any troubleshooting is quick and easy."

From a financial perspective, the Syncsort/NetApp solution has reduced the enterprise backup footprint by consolidating the backup to disk operation to one device. Also, deduplication and snapshots mean Campbell Alliance can store 90 days of backups on disk — and eliminate the costs of transporting tapes from off-site storage. "We're carefully looking at eliminating the entire tape backup infrastructure," Granados explained. "That's 600 tapes and a StorageTek tape library, as well as a monthly contract with our offsite tape-vaulting provider. That will further accelerate our ROI."

From Granados's perspective, that ROI has two primary components: staff time and infrastructure resources. "Previously, we had one IT technician spending two or three days a week administering backups," he said. "Now, it's less than one day. We had four master backup servers with two backups to disk locations, as well as the tape infrastructure. With Syncsort product, we've reduced the backup server environment and disk data locations.

"Syncsort support is also a big advantage for us. We've been extremely impressed with the knowledge and flexibility of Syncsort to demonstrate their product. They consistently maintain a high level of communication and support — a level much higher than competitors in the marketplace."

About Syncsort

Syncsort is a global software company that helps the world's most successful organizations rethink the economics of data. Syncsort provides extreme data performance and rapid time to value through easy to use data integration and data protection solutions. With over 15,000 deployments, Syncsort has transformed decision making and delivered more profitable results to thousands of customers worldwide.

syncsort RETHINK THE ECONOMICS OF DATA*

50 Tice Boulevard, Woodcliff Lake, NJ 07677
201.930.8200 | www.syncsort.com