



Protecting RelayHealth's business for over 15 years

HPE Data Protector longevity testifies to quality of engineering and support

Objective

Provide data protection ensuring continuous operations to enable improved patient outcomes.

Approach

Leverage HPE Data Protector to enable efficient backup and recovery of 1.2 petabytes of business-critical data

IT Matters

- Automated backup and recovery of 2,200 filesystems and 1.2 PB of data
- Enhanced productivity and business continuity through centralized management and replication across data centers
- Reduced backup footprint by 60 percent through integrated storage optimization

Business Matters

- Assured business continuity for business-critical environments
- Improved SLAs with optimized environment
- Reduced network congestion with federated deduplication



RelayHealth enables the trusted exchange of clinical, financial, and administrative information between patients, providers, payers, pharmacies, pharmaceutical manufacturers, and government agencies. Since 1998, HPE Data Protector has been used to protect RelayHealth's data and business by enabling business continuity and disaster recovery.

Improving patient outcomes

"I've been at RelayHealth—a McKesson business—for 11 years," relates Dan Hoyt, Storage Engineer at RelayHealth. "But HPE Data Protector has been in use for much longer than that—at least 16 or 17 years. It's a critical tool for managing our environment, and its longevity is proof of its value to our organization."

Founded in 1833, McKesson is the oldest and largest health care services company in the U.S. serving more than 50% of American hospitals, 20% of physicians, and 100% of health plans, in addition to being the largest pharmaceutical distributor in the country. RelayHealth's intelligent network is a critical component within McKesson, connecting

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– Dan Hoyt, Storage Engineer at RelayHealth

patients, providers, pharmacies, payors, and financial institutions for the trusted exchange of clinical, financial, and administrative information for improved care, faster access, and lower costs.

Managing growing volumes of data

“When I first arrived here, we were using previous versions of HPE Data Protector to back up 80 file systems constituting 2.5 TB of data stored on an HPE XP512,” reflects Hoyt. “Since that time we’ve acquired and retired many HPE storage arrays, but Data Protector has been the one constant that hasn’t changed. Today we use it to back up over 1.2 petabytes of data stored in 2,200 file systems—including VMs—running on various versions of Microsoft Windows, HP-UX, Red Hat Linux, and Sun Solaris.”

HPE Data Protector is the industry’s first solution that enables Adaptive Backup and Recovery through an intelligent approach to data protection and management.

Advanced integration with applications and infrastructure, operational analytics to optimize backup and recovery process, and integration with HPE StoreOnce for federated deduplication help improve business continuity and boost IT uptime. By standardizing backup and recovery across locations, applications, formats, storage platforms, operating systems, and hypervisors, Data Protector provides assurance for business critical information from the core to the edge, across physical, virtual, and cloud infrastructures.

Taking advantage of one vendor, many solutions

HPE Data Protector is used daily at RelayHealth to back up over 60 TB of data as either incremental or full backups during a 5pm to 7am backup window, with rolling full backups staggered throughout the week. The data is backed up to and encrypted on HPE 3PAR StoreOnce 6200 and 6500 Backup appliances which offer scalable, disk-based backups at speeds of up to 139 TB

per hour. The data is then deduplicated and replicated between RelayHealth's Atlanta and Sacramento data centers to ensure business continuity and disaster recovery.

"We've eliminated tape completely and all of our backups are kept on the StoreOnce appliances," explains Hoyt. "We have some data that we need to keep for seven years to ensure compliance with HIPAA regulations, but that's a relatively small amount compared to the rest of our backups that have a 14-day retention period after which they expire and the space is released."

Together, HPE Data Protector and HPE StoreOnce solutions simplify business protection for both physical and virtual environments through advanced automation and unified recovery. Integration with StoreOnce offers significant cost savings in terms of storage efficiency by eliminating redundant operating system information across backup images and guest profiles by up to 95%, accelerating recovery.

"It's important for us to be able to back up both physical and virtual servers with one solution," states Hoyt. "HPE Data Protector allows us to back up both file systems and VMs, and that simplifies our operations—from a recovery standpoint as well as from a backup perspective. We've been able to reduce complexity and enjoy significant cost savings by not having to acquire and learn different tools to handle our backups."

Meeting the needs of the business

To simplify management, HPE Data Protector includes a cell-based architecture with each cell managing multiple backups and backup devices, and multiple cells being controlled by a Manager of Managers or MoM.

"One of the things we've appreciated most over the years is the way Data Protector has evolved to meet the needs of our business," says Hoyt. "With the previous version of Data Protector we used five cell managers in one data center and multiple in the other. The latest version of Data Protector can now scale to support 5,000 clients in a single cell environment. That's a 10 times increase in the number of clients supported by a single cell manager! We now have one cell manager in Sacramento and two in Atlanta: one for database backups only and the other one covering all of our other systems. That's had a huge impact on our operations in terms of reducing administration overhead."

Leveraging HPE expertise to optimize backup operations

"We're also always looking for ways to speed up and optimize our backups," adds Hoyt. "For instance, we had one native SQL backup that was taking over 15 hours to run. Augmenting the environment with HPE StoreOnce Catalyst reduced the backup time to 8 or 9 hours, but we wanted even better performance so we called in HPE Support Services to have a look at the problem. They duplicated the problem in the lab using data similar to ours and found that by balancing the database and streaming the backup to multiple drives, they could improve performance significantly. When we implemented their recommendations in our environment, we reduced the overall backup time from 15 hours to 35 minutes!"

Using HPE StoreOnce Catalyst software, HPE Data Protector and HPE StoreOnce Systems dramatically improve backup and recovery performance and storage efficiency. Since both Data Protector and StoreOnce Systems use the same deduplication technology, the combined solution delivers the flexibility to run deduplication on an appliance server, media server, or dedicated appliance. The

Customer at a glance

Application

RelayHealth leverages HPE Data Protector and complementary HPE technologies to enable efficient backup and recovery of 1.2 petabytes of business-critical data

Hardware

- HPE StoreOnce 6200 Backup appliance
- HPE StoreOnce 6500 Backup appliance

Software

- HPE Data Protector
- HPE StoreOnce Catalyst

HPE Services

- HPE Support Services

Catalyst software deduplicates VM backup images at the backup server, and Data Protector copies the VM backup images to a Catalyst store. A common deduplication technology globally allows data to be moved between Catalyst Stores on different platforms without rehydration, enabling more efficient utilization of advanced, disk-based storage solutions while increasing efficiency and performance.

Partnering for success

“The longevity of HPE Data Protector at RelayHealth testifies to the value we place on it as a critical component of our environment,” states Hoyt. “It’s very unusual for a team to use the same tool for 17 years so that indicates the value that we get from Data Protector.”

“It’s also greatly simplified our operations and reduced costs,” adds Hoyt. “When you think that we have just two FTEs managing eight enterprise storage arrays—1.2 petabytes—along with 2200 filesystem backups each week, a lot of that is due to the tools we use. HPE Data Protector saves us time and effort and enables us to get our jobs done more efficiently while meeting our SLAs

successfully. We also save money. And with additional FTEs costing up to \$125,000 per year, those savings can add up very quickly. You can’t ask for much more than that.”

And when it comes to HPE support? “We may have an issue and I’ll be all over them about it,” reveals Hoyt, “but it’s a great relationship. They’re always there to help us and it’s really more of a partnership than a customer/vendor relationship. We’ve invested a lot of time and effort in HPE Data Protector. We’ve never been given any reason to look at any other tool.”

Hoyt sums it up: “We’ve relied on HPE Data Protector for more than one and a half decades. During the 11 years that I’ve been here we’ve deployed all the different versions of Data Protector and grown from 80 systems and 2.5 terabytes of storage to 2200 file system backups and 1.2 petabytes and Data Protector has kept up with that. That tells you something about Data Protector itself as well as the support that we’ve enjoyed from HPE.”

Learn more at
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