



ESKOM increases safety of data backup

HPE StoreOnce is foundation for new Backup-as-a-Service offering

Objective

Implement a safe data backup solution that would ensure continuity of operation for the business and its customers

Approach

Researched the market for an automated backup solution that would deliver short backup times and reduce errors

IT Matters

- Replaces time consuming traditional backup operations
- Provides central supervision for the execution of backups
- Reduces data restore times from days to hours or minutes

Business Matters

- Minimises the cost of backup operation and maintenance
- Supports introduction of a new Backup-as-a-Service business strand
- Provides scalability to support further new business



ESKOM is one of Poland's leading IT outsourcing companies. It wanted a safe and efficient storage infrastructure for its own data and one that would enable it to add Backup-as-a-Service to its customer offering. It found the answer with HPE StoreOnce Backup.

Challenge

Need for safe backup

ESKOM is an outsourcing company founded in 2003 to provide a comprehensive set of IT services, assistance and solutions to meet the needs of its individual customers. It has enjoyed market success, thanks to its use of the latest technology, expertise and competencies.

“ESKOM has a strong position on the Polish IT services market where it's a valued business partner and employer,” says ESKOM's chief executive officer, Sebastian Niklewicz. “We provide professional IT services including administration systems and implementation services either working alone or with our customers' IT departments.

“Implementation of a modern disk-based backup system on HPE StoreOnce is part of our mission to provide the highest quality IT service to our customers. Modern backup to disk provides more efficient and cost-effective data security for both ESKOM and its customers.”

– Sebastian Niklewicz, chief executive officer, ESKOM

“Outsourcing IT allows you to increase the efficiency of your business, because it provides professional IT solutions and services. In today’s world the use of information solutions is no longer a guarantee of success. Increasingly, the success of a business depends upon the ability to quickly customise advanced technology to the needs of the company and this is made possible through outsourcing.

“One of our outsourcing services is to replicate the customer’s backup to our backup centre. It’s aimed at customers who run their own server room and business critical systems that require daily backup but who can’t afford to have their own secondary data centres.”

Traditional tape backup requires a person who, every day, secures the tapes or removes them from the library and must carry them to a safe place. In some cases, tapes are transported to another location in case of a disaster such as fire. To streamline the process, ESKOM sought a solution that would allow its customers to perform simple and fully automated backup. Additionally, the new solution would also help customers to replicate data to Eskom’s data centre, ensuring that remotely stored copies of their backup data are held off-site.

“Polish companies are slowly starting to see the benefits of IT services outsourcing. IT service and in particular backup do not translate directly into profit and loss so outsourcing is the rational solution.

This trend is very popular in Western Europe and soon the IT market in Poland will also look this way. For the same price as backup based on a traditional tape library, we offer a modern solution for both backup services and remote replication,” adds Niklewicz.

Demand for such services is growing because corporate developments result in the dynamic growth of data which needs to be protected and archived. In addition, new ways of doing business and increasing competition require ever-shorter backup times, permanent protection for emergencies and opportunities for instant data recovery. Information from numerous audits carried out by ESKOM for their customers, has shown that such companies do not have sufficient budget to create a suitable backup environment alone.

ESKOM needed a solution that would provide safe data storage for itself and its clients, ensure continuity of operation in the event of a disaster and enable it to extend its service offering. It also wanted an application that would deliver short backup times and provide client’s systems with immunity from backup errors or intentional human actions.



Solution

Vital deduplication

ESKOM decided to purchase and implement the HPE StoreOnce Backup system. The decision was based on price, functionality, reduced maintenance costs, low power consumption, simple management and scalability. ESKOM was also impressed by the HPE Foundation Care support covering the equipment. This gives ESKOM one place to call when there is a problem, helping to keep their storage running.

HPE StoreOnce Backup ensures the protection of data from drives in data centres and branch offices. It enables companies to automate and consolidate backup processes for multiple servers in a single rack-mounted solution while increasing reliability through the reduction of errors that can occur during manual operations.

All HPE StoreOnce Backup systems feature software deduplication which can deliver a twentyfold reduction of the disk space required to store backups without impacting quality, enabling economic and long term storage of data on disk. They also provide effective replication of data over the network. Through HPE StoreOnce federated deduplication technology, data transfers across the network are reduced and only require low bandwidth links. This provides an economical method of transferring backup data outside the company for disaster recovery.

Storing a larger number of backups on disk for a long time creates a higher level of data availability. This facilitates the quick restoration of lost or corrupted files and reduces downtime. The HPE StoreOnce Backup systems used by ESKOM offer high performance multi-streaming with a maximum speed of 24TB/hour. Through the use of a disk-based system rather than sequential tapes or an autoloader module the time to perform backups and restores is greatly reduced.

Benefits

Efficient management

The HPE solutions allowed ESKOM to propose and deliver new services to their customers. HPE StoreOnce Backup offers the flexibility of backups to disk and also efficient replication of data over a network.

“HPE StoreOnce Catalyst enables customers to deduplicate data before sending it to a centralised HPE StoreOnce Backup system. When using the latest HPE StoreOnce Backup solution, centralised management of application-level backup supports a backup rate of 100TB/hour,” says HPE Service Delivery product manager, Aleksandra Posiada. “Today, the whole range of StoreOnce Backup solutions provides the same level of enterprise-class system benefits. The HPE StoreOnce appliances provide simplicity and high reliability to meet their needs of small and medium sized businesses looking for better data protection. At a low purchase price they provide rapid restore of lost data and easier backup device management, combining the best features of disk and tape technologies. They are specifically designed for small and medium sized businesses seeking affordable, reliable and easy-to-use data protection.”

HPE StoreOnce automates the process of creating backups, enabling a more efficient management solution for data protection.

“Customers using our solutions do not require an employee to handle a tape library, which means that it’s no longer necessary to transport tapes from the server to a safe place. In addition, HPE StoreOnce solves the problem of building a costly backup environment. Our replication data centre can serve many customers and has a strict security policy,” says Niklewicz.

Customer at a glance

Hardware

- HPE StoreOnce Backup

HPE services

- HPE Foundation Care Services

Data restore performance is also a priority. HPE StoreOnce Backup provides quick access to backup and the ability to immediately restore data. It can restore data at up to 119 per cent of the rate of the backup performance. HPE StoreOnce Backup can read data at speeds of up to 40 TB/hour, a rate that has since been increased with newer systems.

“In case of accident or error the restore times from drives are just minutes or hours. In the case of traditional tape backup systems this could be hours or days,” says Niklewicz. “It’s equally fast for backup. On drives all the information is immediately ready for use, but in the tape case, first tape must be recovered from the storage, put in the library, searched to find the corresponding section and then restoring can start.”

The HPE StoreOnce Backup system used by Eskom has the ability to scale capacity up to 72TB usable with increasing amounts of stored data and the newer system achieves

even higher results. Furthermore, there are simple and economic expansion options which allow for increasing the available space without the need to purchase additional systems.

“The new solution is safe, efficient and cost effective. Replication creates a second copy of each backup. As a result, the probability of losing both a production system and our client’s backup copies is close to zero. Therefore, more and more of our customers are switching from operating their own backup environment and choosing a solution based upon Backup-as-a-Service principles. At the moment we are in the process of expanding our HPE StoreOnce system. More disk space will allow us to offer backup services to an even greater number of customers,” concludes Niklewicz.

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