

Basler Zeitung Medien

Protecting Comprehensive Data for Leading Swiss Media Company with Symantec Data Center Solutions

Managing and securing a data volume of 10 terabytes is a considerable challenge for Basler Zeitung Medien, the leading Swiss media company. Keeping data up to date during the normal daily media routines is critical for success. Moreover, data needs to be constantly available—and rapidly retrievable in the event of a system failure. Using Veritas NetBackup™ from Symantec, Basler Zeitung Medien's IT department has been able to enhance the security of enormous data volumes. The extension of the existing Veritas Storage Foundation™ implementation through the Quality of Storage Service (QoSS) functionality has led to the optimum utilization of storage resources. Furthermore, with the introduction of Veritas Enterprise Vault™ later this year, the company will benefit from a powerful tool for archiving email data files.

Spiraling data throughput

As Switzerland's fifth largest media house, Basler Zeitung Medien brings together 15 companies under one roof and holds shares in three other companies. Apart from the Basler Zeitung newspaper itself, the Group also has interests in a number of smaller and mid-sized newspapers and journals, a radio station, and a host of print production companies.

More than 10 terabytes of data are stored on approximately 80 geographically distributed servers belonging to Basler Zeitung Medien, and data throughput is increasing daily. A significant proportion of this growth comes from picture data files, which are a crucially important aspect of the company's day-to-day operations. The security and management of this information represents a large challenge for the IT department. Up to 900 users from the various areas need to access their data rapidly at any time. Above all, in the media area with its strict editing deadlines, information must be quickly available. Once the deadline is past, the related news is already history. In the event of a problem, employees must be able to count on the data being rapidly restored and in its most recent form; otherwise, the crash quickly becomes a major disaster.

“In the media environment, constant data availability and rapid retrieval after system failures are absolutely essential. Knowing our clients' data is always safe and protected with Veritas NetBackup makes my work a lot easier.”

Frank Schilling

IT Infrastructure Manager
Basler Zeitung Medien

Company Profile

Basler Zeitung Medien is a Swiss media company comprising 15 independent companies and three substantial partnerships, with various operations that include newspapers and magazines, printing products, TV and film productions, the “Basel 1” radio station operations, and Internet services.

Industry

Media & Entertainment

Solution

Data Protection
Application Availability
Application Performance
Storage and Server Automation

Symantec storage management solutions provide the foundation for Switzerland's fifth largest media house to manage 10 terabytes of data.

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Excessive retrieval time

Frank Schilling, IT infrastructure manager, Basler Zeitung Medien, explains the problems surrounding the previous backup solution. “Data protection was difficult to execute; it's as simple as that,” he says. “On the one hand, the existing solution provided only a limited overview of the backup process. On the other, it took too long to restore data after a failure. Service Level Agreements (SLAs), which had been agreed with internal client companies or departments of the Basler Zeitung Medien, could often not be maintained. As a result, the IT managers had to devote around three hours of administrative effort each day to complete the various back-up processes.

He adds, “A further problem was that the accrued data often occupied expensive storage space. This not only resulted in poor capacity utilization of the storage facility, but also impaired the life-cycle of the storage hardware.”

PST data files: a nuisance for administrators

There were additional problems, as well. Basler Zeitung Medien had no archiving solution for its emails. When the available Microsoft Exchange Server storage space was full, mails were stored as PST data files on file servers. The IT administrators humorously referred to these as “PeST” data files, and they took up a lot of unnecessary storage space and were often not protected.

The objective was to create a storage environment that corresponded with the requirements concerning data availability and protection. The environment also needed to offer fast, easy data retrieval. A further important criterion was to take advantage of storage software solutions from a single source. Basler Zeitung Medien had been using Veritas Storage

Foundation for six years, and it fully corresponded with its requirements in relation to storage management. Based on this successful track record, it was decided to concentrate data protection, data restoration, and email archiving with Symantec as well.

Improved storage capacity utilization

Basler Zeitung Medien chose Veritas NetBackup to underpin data availability on its Intel- and Sun-based servers. Alongside full, weekly backups, data is also incrementally saved on a daily basis. To achieve this, data from Microsoft Exchange 2003, Microsoft SQL Server, various file servers, and Oracle database is stored on two geographically separate tape robots. Using this approach, critical company data is protected around the clock. In the unlikely event that one of the storage facilities fails, data can be retrieved from the second location at any time.

In parallel with the implementation of Veritas NetBackup, the media house has also extended its existing Veritas Storage Foundation solution. The Quality of Storage Service (QoS) functionality is an administrative model that identifies best practices for implementing and managing heterogeneous storage infrastructures. Using QoS, rarely used historical data is automatically stored in a more cost-effective storage environment. “It was important that this storage solution should not impact the work of the end users in any way. For the user it is transparent: there is practically no difference, whether he or she downloads data from an expensive or less expensive storage facility,” says Schilling.

To streamline the management, storage, and retrieval of email data files, Basler Zeitung Medien is also introducing a Veritas Enterprise Vault archiving solution later this year.

Quick and easy implementation

“The implementation of Veritas NetBackup, together with the extensions to Veritas Storage Foundation, was achieved without any complications and took only a few days,” Schilling explains. “Veritas NetBackup enables the IT department to adhere to the retrieval SLAs agreed with the internal clients. We can now be confident that company-critical data can be retrieved on time—and with the same number of administrators as before. In addition, the centralized administration with intuitive interfaces enables an optimum overview of the backup process. Furthermore, Veritas NetBackup has enabled the company to reduce the number of man-hours devoted to administration from around three to one per day. This has helped release scarce IT staff resources for other tasks.

“In the media environment, constant data availability and rapid retrieval after system failures are absolutely essential. Knowing that our clients’ data is always safe and protected with Veritas NetBackup makes my work a lot easier,” Schilling enthuses.

Cost savings thanks to the QoS functionality

With the extension of Veritas Storage Foundation through the QoS functionality, storage utilization has been considerably improved. Old data files, which had not been used for a long time, are now automatically moved to less expensive storage facilities. This way, the hardware lifecycle is noticeably prolonged, and this has a positive impact on costs. Moreover, with Veritas Storage Foundation, the administrators can adapt storage volumes in a simple, uncomplicated, and flexible way to meet the needs of individual applications.

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Business Drivers

- Effectively manage growth in digital media information
- Required solution for archiving emails
- Manage storage from a single, centralized source

Technology Challenges

- Continual increase in data throughput
- Unable to meet Service Level Agreements (SLAs) using existing IT staff resources
- Excessive data restore time

Solution

- Integrated high availability and data protection

Symantec Products

- Veritas NetBackup™
- Veritas Storage Foundation™
- Veritas Enterprise Vault™

Technology Environment

- Server Platform: Sun Fire V880 servers running the Solaris Operating System; various Microsoft Windows Server-based servers
- Storage Platform: IBM tape library
- Applications: Microsoft Exchange 2003

Symantec Partners

- SQL AG

Business Value and Technical Benefits

- Enabled the IT department to adhere to retrieval SLAs agreed with internal clients
- Improved storage utilization
- Enhanced ability to adapt storage volumes in a simple, uncomplicated, and flexible way to meet the needs of individual applications
- Facilitated the discovery of content within email, file system, and collaborative environments and helped to reduce storage costs
- Faster recovery runs
- Reduced storage administration time from approximately three to one hour per day
- Released scarce IT staff resources for other tasks
- Centralized administration with intuitive interfaces enables an optimum overview of the backup process

When Veritas Enterprise Vault is implemented, Basler Zeitung Medien will take advantage of an ideal means of archiving and administrating emails. Veritas Enterprise Vault offers IT administrators a simple means of management and control over email data. It also enables the discovery of content within email, file system, and collaborative environments, and helps to reduce storage costs.

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