



Center Parcs Europe NV

Adding an Extra Security Dimension to Vacations

Woodland, water, and a natural healthy environment are the essential elements of a Center Parcs holiday break. And now information security can be added to those essential ingredients. Using a blended Symantec Multi-tier Protection™ and Backup Exec™ System Recovery solution, Center Parcs is effectively protecting information at its Village holiday resorts in Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands. Besides offering rock-solid security, Multi-tier Protection has helped reduce antivirus administration time from 20 hours each week to one hour; and Backup Exec™ System Recovery—while delivering disk-based system recovery solution for the Windows environment—has cut system recovery time from four hours to 45 minutes. Happy holidays indeed.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Center Parcs Europe NV operates 20 Villages in Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands—each providing high quality accommodation in fully equipped villas, apartments, and lodges.

INDUSTRY

General Commercial

SOLUTION

Data Loss Prevention
Endpoint Management
Endpoint Security
Backup & Recovery
Disaster Recovery

Revolutionizing the Holiday Market

Center Parcs revolutionized the holiday market in the Netherlands more than 30 years ago, offering short break holidays on a year round basis. Center Parcs Europe NV operates 20 Villages in Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands—each is set in a forest environment and providing high quality accommodation in fully equipped villas, apartments and lodges. The Villages offer an extensive range of sports and leisure activities plus numerous restaurants, bars, and retail outlets and a superb spa facility. Woodland, water and a natural healthy environment are the essential elements of a Center Parcs break.

Until recently though, Center Parcs information security was put to the test with the existing McAfee antivirus solution. McAfee had been implemented locally at each of the resorts to protect the local network from computer viruses and similar threats. And that word ‘locally’ was the root of the problem, as Christian Kuttler, IT manager, Center Parcs Holdings NV explains. “The antivirus policy was de-centralized and that meant a significant workload for the administrators,” he says. “They were regularly on the road making updates to the antivirus software—and the question at the back of our minds was, ‘are the resorts managing computer protection effectively?’ Because we lacked a centralized view it was difficult to answer the question.”

It was an important question too. The company relies on its network of 1,400 workstations—running Microsoft Windows XP—for almost every critical application. Cash registers, retail outlets, restaurants, air conditioning systems, webcams—even the security locks—all relied on Windows XP-based applications. The result being that an attack could render this fundamental operating system redundant in seconds.

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IT Manager
Center Parcs Europe NV

Netherlands-based leisure company reduces antivirus administration time from 20 hours each week to one hour; and Windows system recovery time from four hours to 45 minutes.

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A Solution Based on Experience and Know-How

In response, Center Parcs shortlisted Symantec Multi-tier Protection™ (MTP) 11.0 against a Trend Micro solution. “One of the great advantages of the Symantec solution was that it is so popular. We felt confident we were choosing a solution that was based on experience and know-how. The other advantage was that Symantec supports so many third-party solutions.” Whereas previously the McAfee solution limited itself to protecting against viruses, the Symantec Multi-tier Protection solution now protects Center Parcs’ other domains. These include the SMTP gateway (via a Premium antis spam add on), the main environment where spam emails reside, the Lotus Notes environment, and antiphishing protection—in effect, a triple layer of protection.

“The main benefit of Symantec Multi-tier Protection is that it automates so many previously manual processes,” says Kuttler. “In the past we used to devote up to 20 hour each week to administering the antivirus protection; now we estimate that this has been reduced to one hour per week using Multi-tier Protection. Moreover, our staff are no longer troubled by spam emails. We’ve virtually eliminated spam now, and significantly reduced false positives to report.”

The comprehensive threat protection solution is complemented by Symantec Backup Exec™ System Recovery. This complete, disk-based system recovery solution for Windows-based servers, desktops, and laptops enables Center Parcs to recover Windows data in minutes to same hardware, dissimilar hardware, or even virtual environments. Centralized backup management also provides Kuttler and his team with at-a-glance management of all backup and recovery processes across the organization. The difference in recovery time compared with the previous CA solution has been astounding. “Using the previous CA ArcServ recovery solution, it took up to four hours to recover the data. With Symantec System Recovery, we’ve brought this down to about 45 minutes,” says Kuttler.

Meanwhile, content filtering has also had a dramatic impact on the manageability of Center Parcs’ Lotus Notes environment. By placing bandwidth control on the Notes servers, large and personal emails have been blocked—with the resultant improvement on storage efficiency and staff productivity. “When we performed the blocking, we saw a savings of at least 30 megabytes per day. When you bear in mind many fun personal emails are circulated possibly 100 times each, that’s a dramatic saving.

So does the Symantec infrastructure make a difference to people visiting the parks in Germany, France, Belgium, and the Netherlands? According to Tutttler it does. “In the unlikely event that a virus did penetrate our systems, it would have a detrimental impact on our business profile. Keeping them out helps Center Parcs maintain its reputation for pleasure in a safe and secure atmosphere. As an organization we are heavily dependent on IT—it runs everything from the cash registers to the lighting—so we want to partner with a security provider we know we can trust. And we trust Symantec implicitly.”

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SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Business Drivers

- Provide secure protection for leisure parks
- Reduce the cost and complexity associated with IT management

Technology Challenges

- Replace de-centralized, local antivirus solution
- Accelerate data recovery process

Solution

- Deployed business-wide endpoint security and backup and recovery solution to protect holiday villages and guests

Symantec Products

- Symantec Backup Exec System Recovery 7.0 Server Edition
- Symantec Multi-tier Protection™ 11.0

Technology Environment

- Operating system: Microsoft® Windows® XP
- Workstations: 1,400

Symantec Partner

- Centric

BUSINESS VALUE AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

Information security

- Protected various domains from threats, including the SMTP gateway, the Lotus Notes environment, and antiphishing protection—in effect, a triple layer of protection
- Helped significantly reduced spam and false positives

Data protection

- Enabled Center Parcs to recover Windows data in minutes to same hardware, dissimilar hardware or even virtual environments
- Provided at-a-glance management of all backup and recovery processes across the organization

Productivity

- Automated many previously manual antivirus management processes
- Reduced the time taken to administer antivirus protection from up to 20 hours each week to one hour per week
- Reduced Windows system recovery time from four hours to 45 minutes
- Enhanced content filtering is saving at least 30 megabytes per day in storage capacity

Customer Satisfaction

- Helped Center Parcs maintain its reputation for pleasure in a safe and secure atmosphere