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CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Integrated Control Corporation

Serving up Success in the Food Industry by Protecting Information

Growing fast because of innovative monitoring and control solutions, Integrated Control Corp. needed an infrastructure makeover that would improve data protection and endpoint security, so they standardized on Symantec solutions. Results include almost 100 percent successful backups and recoveries, file recovery in minutes instead of hours, no significant disruption from malicious code, and a projected \$5,000 a year in storage savings. In addition, almost a full day per week of IT staff time is now available for more important projects.

Measuring, monitoring, and managing success

“You can’t manage what you can’t measure.” That’s an old management principle—and a challenge for the food service industry.

Running food service operations often means managing multiple sites. That makes it difficult to ensure that food safety and quality standards are consistent and also compliant with Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) regulations at every site. For a large restaurant chain with thousands of sites, the challenge is especially difficult.

That’s why food service executives at restaurants, schools, and hospitals turn to Integrated Control Corp. (ICC). Founded in 1987, ICC designs, manufactures, and installs innovative, easy-to-use, and affordable control devices that enable non-technical personnel to monitor cooking and preparation time, temperature, cleanliness, and product management in each kitchen.

These devices help teams deliver consistent quality, increase food safety and preservation, comply with regulations, boost productivity, and minimize food loss.

ICC is a leader in user-centered design. Their monitoring devices for food preparation, cooking, and storage systems are designed to be simple enough that non-technical food service employees can easily use them. As a result, ICC is a market leader and its solutions have been installed in over 24 countries.

“Regulations are getting stricter and stricter,” explains Julian Cooper, senior IT administrator at ICC. “Organizations such as mom-and-pop grocery stores, restaurant chains, and recently hotels, hospitals and school districts see that our monitoring and control products are innovative, ahead of the curve, and easy to use.”

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Website: www.goicc.com

Industry: Technology

Headquarters: Huntington, New York

Employees: 55

SYMANTEC SOLUTIONS

Data Protection

Endpoint Security

Why Symantec?

- Proven effectiveness
- Solutions save IT staff time for more important projects
- Superior reporting enables backup and IT security optimization

Since Cooper joined ICC three years ago, the company has more than tripled in staff size. He and one other IT colleague now provide IT services to 55 employees. This kind of growth and efficiency would not have been possible when he started, however. There were major IT challenges to solve first.

Transforming IT and data protection

From his first day, Cooper realized that a complete IT overhaul was required. The infrastructure was outdated and there were almost no centralized IT policies and processes in place.

“I discussed with top management that we needed to rip everything out and replace it, which would cost about \$50,000,” Cooper recalls. “After much discussion, they agreed that this was necessary, so we put the equipment and best practices that we needed in place.”

For new servers and storage infrastructure, ICC turned to Dell, a Symantec Global Strategic Partner. Says Cooper: “I knew Dell was going to be our top choice because of their extensive technical support and knowledgeable account management. They’re our one stop shop for everything, including all software and accessories, and they deliver strong cost savings. That makes them our number one choice each year for IT purchases.”

One area Cooper focused on was improving the way company data was protected. When he started, ICC data was being backed up to tape—but not effectively. Only 25 percent of backup jobs and 10 percent of recoveries were successful.

“There were major issues,” Cooper observes. “They had Symantec Backup Exec, but it wasn’t set up right. There were no processes in place. Employees didn’t ask for files to be recovered because there was little chance that they could be recovered.”

Cooper had used Symantec Backup Exec at prior positions with other companies for the past seven years, so it was his first choice. “ICC just needed the right centralized backup policies,” he explains. Cooper chose to eliminate tape and uses Symantec Backup

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Key Challenges

- Provide consistent, centralized data backups
- Minimize endpoint security threats
- Minimize IT staff time dedicated to data protection and security
- Reduce storage costs

Symantec Products

- Symantec Backup Exec™ 2010
 - Agent for Windows Systems
 - Remote Media Agent for Linux Server
- Symantec™ Endpoint Protection

Symantec Services

- Symantec Basic Maintenance Services
- Symantec Essential Support Services

Symantec Global Strategic Partner

- Dell (dell.com)

Technology Environment

- Server platform: Dell PowerEdge R805 servers running Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2 Standard and Microsoft Hyper-V2, and CentOS Linux
- Applications: GoldMine CRM software by FrontRange Solutions, Intuit QuickBooks Enterprise
- Databases: MySQL and Microsoft SQL Server 2005
- Storage: EMC CX300, Dell Power Vault MD1000

BUSINESS RESULTS AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

- Nearly 100% successful backup and recovery success rates
- Recoveries in minutes instead of hours
- Projected \$5,000 annual savings from 50% space reduction through deduplication
- No significant disruption from malicious code
- Almost 7.5 hours/week of IT time reclaimed for more valuable projects

Exec™ 2010 to take snapshots of data that are stored on a Dell PowerVault MD1000 direct-attached storage array.

Recoveries in minutes—not hours

“Backup and recovery success rates are nearly 100 percent,” Cooper says. “Recoveries happen in minutes from disk, instead of hours that we used to spend searching through tapes. The integrity’s there.”

“The Symantec solutions pay for themselves because the less I have to do, the more time I have for other projects.”

Julian Cooper

Senior IT Administrator
Integrated Control Corporation

“No other vendor I’ve seen offers the depth of reporting that Symantec has. It’s given me the ability to tweak backups and make them even better—which is a long way from the old days of just having to buy a bigger backup server.”

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Cooper and colleague Nathaniel Caldwell, ICC’s IT Director, perform about five recoveries a month for employees. Symantec Backup Exec 2010 takes a full backup snapshot of 350 gigabytes within a three-hour backup window, and 15- to 25-gigabyte differentials snapshots daily.

“The feature I like most about Backup Exec is the reporting,” Cooper says. “It gives me the information I need to determine where I should make changes if I want to optimize backups. I can also use the reporting feature to see how the backup will change if I switch to a different storage area network or direct-attached storage unit, or if I add more memory.”

Cooper likes to tune the backup process to keep improving performance. “I can easily figure out the cost/benefit of making changes to the order of backup jobs so the server’s not being hit at the same time,” he notes. “No other vendor I’ve seen offers the depth of reporting that Symantec has. Backup Exec has given me the ability to tweak backups and make them even better—which is a long way from the old days of just having to buy a bigger backup server.”

Reducing disk use by 50 percent with deduplication

Cooper has tested the integrated deduplication capability of Symantec Backup Exec 2010 and looks forward to deploying it. “I’ve seen a minimum disk space reduction of 50 percent in testing,” he reports. “I expect deduplication will enable us to delay purchasing additional storage. Because we’re growing at about 500 gigabytes a year, we estimate that we’ll save about \$5,000 a year.”

The most important use for deduplication will be in email backup, Cooper says, followed closely by reducing the amount of data backed up for the art department. “Our artists end up copying graphics and image files that are enormous in size, and they eat up our disk storage space,” he notes.

Cooper is also enthusiastic about testing the integrated archiving technology of Backup Exec 2010. “Our engineering department produces many files, documents, and manuals for our products,” he explains. “When a product is no longer sold, its documentation still stays on the server, so we need a process for archiving that data and moving it to less expensive storage. The deduplication and archiving technologies in Symantec Backup Exec 2010 will help us get even more benefit out of the storage we’ve already invested in.”

Reclaiming nearly a day a week of IT time

Information protection solutions at ICC not only need to protect, they need to save time.

When Cooper joined ICC over three years ago, the company was also using Symantec™ Endpoint Protection, “but like Symantec Backup Exec at that point, it hadn’t been deployed correctly or effectively,” Cooper recalls. “It was only on some endpoints, and configuration was left up to the users.”

Again, establishing centralized control and proper processes made all the difference. “When I first joined the company, I was spending about eight hours a week remediating security problems,” Cooper remembers. “Then I set up the right centralized policies for Symantec Endpoint Protection. Since then, I only need to spend 15 to 30 minutes a week on security administration. We’ve had no significant disruption from malicious code. And I’ve reclaimed almost a day a week of my time for more valuable projects.”

The feature Cooper likes most about Symantec Endpoint Protection is that “everything I need is in the dashboard of Symantec Protection Center. Reporting is strong. If something goes wrong, I can see it right away. I get rich, useful information in the debugging log that helps me get to the bottom of any issue quickly.”

Cooper plans on deploying the device control feature of Symantec Endpoint Protection. “Our product engineering team experiments with many devices, and I don’t want to lock them out from access to USB ports,” he says. “Symantec Endpoint Protection enables me to set device control policies by department, system, or user. That kind of flexibility means I won’t have to worry about unexpected hardware attaching to our systems.”

He also plans to test the application control feature of Symantec Endpoint Protection. The ability to blacklist or white list applications, Cooper says, “will minimize concerns about what software employees might run on their PCs. That will help us spend less time on maintenance, and give us more time for projects such as migration to thin clients, which we’re exploring.”

Support that doesn’t get used

“Symantec stuff just works; that’s what I like,” Cooper says. “When I do have an issue, Symantec has substantial documentation in Symantec Connect on the Web. I don’t feel that calling tech support and having them fix things is helping me out. So I don’t like to call; I prefer to fix things myself and become more knowledgeable. And that’s why I love Backup Exec 2010. It has even more self-healing features and debugging utilities. I’d say that 95 percent of the time that I might have had to call tech support, I’ve been able to fix the issue on my own.”

If Symantec security and data protection solutions didn’t work as well as they did, Cooper observes, “we’d have to add another full-time IT employee.”

The most important thing that ICC offers customers besides its solutions is confidence, Cooper sums up, and that’s what Symantec solutions bring—as well as extra time. “The Symantec solutions pay for themselves because the less I have to do, the more time I have for other projects,” he points out. “Symantec is taking care of itself. And I get reports or emails that show me the solutions are running the way they’re supposed to.”

The reliable IT foundation that Cooper sought when he joined ICC is now in place, he says, and the company continues to grow, helping to keep food quality and safety standards high at tens of thousands of food service sites.

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