

IBT resolves backup and recovery issues with Starfire and IBM Tivoli software.



IBM Business Partner

Starfire Technologies, Inc.

Client

IBT, Inc.

IBM Tivoli solution components

- Tivoli Storage Manager
- Tivoli Continuous Data Protection for Files

Competitive replacement

- Veritas

“I used to spend hours checking individual machines. Now, I get reports. If I’m not available, my colleagues can use the reports and take care of the problem. Now, it’s not ‘Rushdy has to do it.’ Now, anyone can do it.”

– Rushdy El-Ghussein,
Technical and
Administrative Manager,
IBT, Inc.

The challenge

IBT Inc. is an industrial distributor with 38 branch service centers in ten states. IBT also provides the support their customers need to keep operations performing at peak efficiency. But who helps IBT keep their IT operations performing to that same level?

Backup and disaster recovery procedures can be a big drain on IT operations. System backups can take hours to perform and longer to manage. When IBT needed to solve a basic backup issue, they turned to Starfire Technologies, Inc. of Lawrence, Kansas, a provider of enterprise IT solutions to customers in North America, western Europe and Australia.

Jim Grant, Business Development Executive at Starfire, explains the challenge at IBT. “Their key requirement was to integrate their IBM System i™ and IBM AS400® with their Microsoft® Windows® platforms, as well as some UNIX® systems, into a single backup and recovery solution.”

The solution benefits

Starfire offered the only solution that actually solved their problem and gave them some unexpected benefits, such as offsite backup and disaster recovery, IBM Tivoli® Storage Manager.

IBT’s installed solution was based on Veritas, but it did not work across all their systems. Grant noted, “The advantage of Tivoli Storage Manager is that it comes with features that most other vendors consider ‘extras.’ The disaster recovery function and operational reporting were benefits they weren’t expecting.”

The daily reports help IBT manage the offsite storage of backup tapes. Since Tivoli Storage Manager indicates to the operator which tapes to



cycle for backup and which to set up to go offsite, the manager can now delegate this task to an operator. The reports also let the manager know if there are any problems during the backup process. It gives management a single report, each day, to track which systems are backed up and if any problems occurred during the backup process.

Starfire helped in other ways. Grant said, "We designed the architecture, did all the capacity planning and systems discovery, helping them decide what needed to be backed up. We did the implementation. And we're still assisting them on a regular basis with operational questions and documentation."

Grant added, "We recommend Tivoli Storage Manager as, by far, the most mature product. Features like hierarchical storage management, going to disk first, then tape, things other vendors are just now starting to advertise, have been part of Tivoli for years. Features that are built into Tivoli are add-ons with other solutions. We have experience with most of the major competitors and we always recommend Tivoli, or switching to Tivoli."

It used to be that only large enterprises could afford sophisticated backup systems. Now, small and medium-sized businesses find themselves with large amounts of business-critical data that must be stored and organized in a reliable manner and on a regular basis.

IBT couldn't afford to allocate any more money or manpower than what was essential to get the job done. With Starfire and IBM Tivoli, they found partners who can help them with the complete backup process — from planning to implementation and maintenance.

For more information

To find out more about IBM Tivoli software products, visit:

ibm.com/tivoli

For more information on IBM Business Partner Starfire Technologies, Inc., visit:

www.starfire.net/

For more information on IBT, Inc., visit:

www.ibtinc.com/

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