

> Asahi Kasei Homes Becomes Disaster-Resistant by Speeding Up Backup and Establishing a Flexible Data Protection System

Standardized Protection and Operation of Nearly 100TBs of Data in Their File Servers Throughout Japan Succeeded in Cutting Backup Time to Less than Half, and the Next Initiative is Remote Backup



CLIENT PROFILE

Industry : home, home-improvement industry
Company : Asahi Kasei Homes Corporation

AsahiKASEI

Challenge

Asahi Kasei Homes, a major housing manufacturer known for "Hebel Haus," has many branches and housing exhibition sites throughout Japan. As their business grows, their data volume had been increasing, reaching close to 100TBs in total throughout Japan. As a result, there is an increasing risk of failing to take full backup to tape within the allowed time. To enhance the data protection system, they started to discuss how to improve their backup operation.

Circumstances

When they replaced Windows Server 2003, they started a project to review their backup operation. Their requirements for the backup products were:

- Increase backup speed
- Continue to operate tape backup
- Add a disaster recovery function in the future

They examined multiple products based on the points above, and chose a new product, Arcserve Unified Data Protection.

Solution

In addition to functionality requirements, there was an important after-purchase need for lifecycle alignment with the hardware. When the depreciation period is not aligned, the asset/cost management becomes complicated. Using Arcserve UDP, they would be able to align the period, and a free upgrade to new versions would be available under a valid maintenance contract. Further, they welcomed the flexible Arcserve licensing.

Benefit

Asahi Kasei Homes started to use the new OS fileserver and found the time required for full backup to tape was cut by more than half while their backup operations remained the same. Their data loss risk diminished. The next challenge was to enhance their disaster recovery measure, that is, data transfer to remote sites to establish a solid system of swift data asset recovery.



Challenge

Great Concern about Backup Timeout Due to Increasing Data Volume Reaching to 100TBs

Asahi Kasei Homes is a major housing manufacture known for its detached houses, of which brand names include "Hebel House," along with its rental houses, "Hebel Maison." Since its establishment as one of Asahi Kasei's group companies, Asahi Kasei Homes has been pursuing safe and comfortable houses in Japanese cities under the banner of the group philosophy, "We will contribute to the 'lives' of people throughout the world." In addition to its new construction contracting business, the organization now has a comprehensive structure to support their customers from real estate-related businesses including rental management, real estate brokerage, and condominium development to renovation businesses. Their management principle is to offer housing where their customers are able to live comfortably.



Asahi Kasei Homes was challenged with managing important corporate assets, such as image/CAD housing data, which was unique to housing manufactures, as well as their day-to-day operation data. What was unique to them was that they had numerous relatively small data sets, and the volume had been increasing every year to about 100TBs in Japan. They were using different backups for their server disks every day, and later, using full backups for their tapes every week, but the tape backup began to take more than the specified time. At this rate, the data volume would continue to increase, leaving their important data at risk in the event a failure/disaster happened before a backup could be completed. They needed to improve their backup processes and disaster recovery measures across the company.

Circumstances

Selected Arcserve UDP Because of Its Backup Speed and Data Protection Flexibility

The opportunity to improve their backup and recovery systems came in 2012 when the organization started a migration project to Windows Server 2008.

Seiichi Akeno, Section Head of Information System Department said, "The system needs to be usable for our staff with decent computer literacy levels. Fortunately, we have not had major system failures so far, but if it happened, we should be able to recover the data right away. If the operation is too difficult for us to do that, there is no point in using backup."

Asahi Kasei Homes began researching multiple backup software and hardware appliances in the summer of 2013, and selected Arcserve Backup as a strong candidate because of its strong tape backup performance and operability. Then they got the news of a new product, Arcserve Unified Data Protection (hereinafter referred to as Arcserve UDP), to be released in the spring of 2014, and Mr. Akeno validated it promptly. Arcserve UDP is backup and recovery software based on Arcserve D2D, an image-based backup product (the sales ended in December 2014), and Arcserve Backup and Arcserve Replication/High Availability functionalities were also available with some editions. They had been using tapes as secondary backup, but were considering the option of replicating their primary backup data to remote sites in the future, as a disaster recovery measure. Mr. Akeno started to consider this option when he saw an implementation case where Arcserve Replication was used to transfer data from a data center to the 47 prefectures throughout Japan. Using Arcserve



UDP, the lingering problem of backup speed would be solved, and at the same time, tape backup would also be possible. Furthermore, the company sought to implement data replication in the future, and liked the smooth transition that Arcserve UDP would allow.

"We had been using Arcserve's products from long ago, so we were used to the interface and found it easy to understand. The functionalities are also very reliable, so we chose Arcserve UDP without any anxiety," said Mr. Akeno.

Another key factor in choosing Arcserve UDP was the transparent licensing options that charge to backup objects only. With flexible licensing, the organization would not need to pay additional costs for transferring backup data to remote sites as a disaster recovery measure. This was a great benefit as they wanted the flexibility for future alternative system configurations.

Solution

Simple Blanket License Enables Synchronization of Lifecycle to Hardware

One of the major benefits of Arcserve UDP is the simplicity of the implementation. Daily and weekly backup settings can be completed by simply designating what (source), when (schedule), and where (destination) to backup, using wizards (dialogue boxes). In the case of a few servers, the implementation time may not matter, but for complex environments, there's a significant time savings.

In addition to improving their backup operations, Asahi Kasei Homes needed to align their software's lifecycle with those of their new hardware. If the depreciation periods were unaligned, the asset/cost management would become complicated due to the unsynchronized occurrence of maintenance costs. Further, they did not want to pay additional costs for software during the period of use, so they welcomed Arcserve UDP which includes annual support and free upgrades when new versions are released during the valid support period. Arcserve UDP customers are able to get annual support in advance for the time with which the hardware is being used, as they are able to select multiple annual support years. Thus, all the costs are incurred only when servers are replaced.

Benefit

Full Backup Time is Cut by more than Half to Diminish Data Loss Risk

With Arcserve UPD, Asahi Kasei Homes was able to slash their backup time significantly while keeping their backup operations unchanged. As a result, it now takes less than four hours to complete a full weekly backup to tapes, even for servers with large data set. Their full backup time was cut by more than half, and daily incremental backups to server disks were shortened to less than an hour, diminishing the risk of data loss caused by timed-out backups.

Also, the introduction of Arcserve UDP brought about unexpected positive impacts. Asahi Kasei Homes now has a backup and recovery solution that will grow with their needs. In the event they separate or consolidate fileserver data to accommodate organizational change, Arcserve UDP can keep their data protected. Before using Arcserve UDP, it often took two days to migrate data, but now they can complete a migration in a day.



Establish Disaster-Resistant Business Continuity that is as Sturdy as the Houses They Produce

The next challenge for Asahi Kasei Homes is the enhancement of disaster recovery measures. Currently, they are validating a remote transferring function that will enable them to send backup data to remote sites through their network, as well as Arcserve Replication that will allow them to replicate data in real time. Even if major disasters happened, they would be able to recover their important assets, including CAD data, images/photos, and customer data more swiftly than ever.

This initiative is backed by their corporate philosophy, "Producing safe and good lives by producing good homes." Data management is essential for living up to this philosophy, as IT systems are becoming increasingly important. With Arcserve, they will keep assuring their customers' security from the side of system management.

The challenges of backup operations and the benefits of adopting Arcserve UDP

