

CUSTOMER PROFILE

City of University Place

Overview

- The City of University Place is a residential community near Tacoma, WA. The local government provides many services vital to its populace. Data integrity and disaster recovery planning is important to ensure uninterrupted services, government regulation compliance, and data prevention loss.

Industries

- Government / Municipalities

Hardware

- Dell PowerEdge servers
- DLT2000 Tape Library

UltraBac Software Products

- UltraBac
- UBDR Gold
- SQL Agent
- Oracle Agent
- Exchange Agent
- Locked File Backup Agent

Other Key Software

- Windows server & desktop OS
- VMware ESX Server
- Microsoft Exchange
- Oracle
- Microsoft SQL Server

Benefits

- Guarantees up-to-date data is available for recovery when needed.
- Allows for quick recovery time of data from image backup.
- Enables migration of physical servers to virtual in minutes.
- The UI in Version 9 provides better accessibility to product features and functionality.

City Serves its Citizens with Data Protected by UltraBac Software

"The customer service they provide really sets UltraBac Software apart from other technology companies."

- Glenn Vallantyne, Network Administrator

The Challenge

The City of University Place is a residential community south of Seattle, near Tacoma, Washington. In the late 1800's the city was the site of a planned expansion of Puget Sound University. The economic conditions of the time halted the expansion plan, but the name "University Place" remained.

University Place became incorporated as a city in 1995 and is now a thriving suburban neighborhood of more than 31,000 residents. The local government has also grown to benefit its citizens and now provides many services including parks and recreation, public works, development, engineering, and many other resources vital to the community. Like any modern city, data integrity and disaster recovery planning is of utmost importance to provide uninterrupted services, compliance with public disclosure laws, and the prevention of data loss.

The Situation

University Place's data center has 15 servers and more than 60 workstations that are used to enter, store, and retrieve information pertaining to the city's operations such as planning and development, engineering, financial data, human resources, taxpayer records, and more.

Glenn Vallantyne recently transitioned from a contract position with the city's IT department to the city's full-time Network Administrator. In this new role, he became responsible for the city's data integrity and disaster planning as well as all other facets of the organization's information technology.

"A comprehensive backup and disaster recovery plan was at the top of my agenda when I was hired on full-time," said Vallantyne. "There were some previous methods in place for disaster recovery, but I wanted an organized and proven approach that would ensure uninterrupted operations for the city."

Vallantyne also began planning a server virtualization initiative to save space and energy requirements, hardware costs, and administration time. His goal included consolidating the existing 15 physical servers down to 6 physical servers by running multiple VMware ESX servers on each.

University Place required a dependable backup and disaster recovery solution that could also seamlessly provide P2V (physical-to-virtual), V2P (virtual-to-physical), and V2V (virtual-to-virtual) for the tasks at hand. It was also ideal for them to have proven products with an accessible and knowledgeable support staff to help implement the software in University Place's unique environment.

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UltraBac Software Advantages

- Seamless support of disparate hardware during restores.
- Powerful features available beyond standard feature set.
- Valuable technical assistance provided during implementation of solution in custom environment.



The Solution

Soon after Vallantyne took responsibility for University Place's IT systems, he evaluated the processes in place. UltraBac Software backup and disaster recovery solutions had been licensed, but were not being fully utilized for the situation. Originally stressed with the prospect of using unfamiliar software, his nerves were soon calmed after working one on one with his sales representative, Alena Coomes.

"I had not previously worked with UltraBac Software products before I joined the city. After a quick study of the situation I contacted the company and spoke with our representative. I shared our plan with Alena and requested she assist us with coming up with a strategy within the next two weeks that would work for us going forward. My goals were listened to and everyone was very responsive when I had questions. Working together, we came up with a solution for University Place's needs. We ran some preliminary proof of concept tests and I was very satisfied with the results.

"One test we submitted UBDR Gold to was our virtual lab. In the test environment I was able to use the solution to restore a physical server to a VMware ESX server within minutes. I was pleasantly surprised."

University Place now has UltraBac solutions schedule image-based and file-by-file backups of integral servers on a daily basis. These include backups of their SQL database to a NAS device, which is used for quick restores when needed. Full backups of the entire system are accomplished on a weekly basis, and all of the data is sent to DLT tape. The daily backups are kept in a secure onsite location, while the weekly backups are sent to an offsite vault to guarantee physical data integrity.

University Place also utilizes UltraBac's Oracle, Exchange, and Locked File agents to accomplish application specific backup tasks.

The Benefits

Now University Place's data is backed up and ready at a moment's notice in the event of a data disaster.

"We recently restored an entire server using UBDR Gold. It took only 15 minutes and that included the time to put the UBDR disk in, access the data on the network, and recover the drive," said Vallantyne.

UBDR Gold's seamless ability to support P2V, V2P, and V2V conversions has already been used successfully to migrate a physical server to a VMware ESX server, and will also be used to migrate others as part of Vallantyne's plan. He added, "It is a cool tool to have – being able to take an image of a physical server and stick it on a virtual server and have it work flawlessly."

Another item that met with Vallantyne's praise was the new user interface in UltraBac Version 9.0. He specifically mentioned it was quicker to find features and set up the software saying, "The new user interface adds a nice layer of accessibility to the product. It definitely made a huge difference, allowing for much easier navigation."

Not only have the solutions of UltraBac Software fulfilled the needs of University Place, but the support of its products has given them the big seal of approval. Vallantyne remarked that support, without a doubt, played an enormous role in how the project went. When he had questions, they were answered in a timely manner.

"I always felt as though support was available to me when I needed that go to person to get my questions answered or tasks I had completed. I also appreciated the follow ups to make sure things were going smoothly.

That may seem like a minor thing, but it's not. The customer service they provide really sets them apart from other technology companies.

"I have a lot of things on my plate, and UltraBac gives me some comfort during my day. It is nice not to have to worry about our data and recoveries in the event of a data disaster. There are no concerns that we have the right solution in place. I have a lot of confidence in UltraBac Software and its products," concluded Vallantyne.