



Customer Success Story

"Everyone realizes that backup is a problem, but I don't think many people realize just how big a problem it is. With F5 Acopia we set policies that reduce our active data set to files less than 90 days old. Just pulling out the old .PST files cut our backup environment from 400TB to 4TB. The differential is huge."

—Managing Director

Highlights

Industry

- Financial Services

Challenges

- Backup environment was unable to scale to support 60 – 80% growth rates
- Maintaining current approach would have required a \$1.65 million storage investment over the next year
- Aged data and .PST files on home directories was consuming 60-75% of tier 1 disk

Solution

- Clustered Acopia ARX6000 devices
- F5 Acopia migration and tiered storage policies

Benefits

- Immediately saved \$800,000 by reducing the need for new storage purchases
- Cut daily incremental backups by 70%, resulting in significant savings in real and virtual tape
- Reclaimed ~40TB of NAS capacity and ~200TB of VTL
- Data is moved between tiers without impacting users

Financial Institution Profits with Policy-based Data Management

This leading global financial services company is headquartered in New York City and has offices around the world.

Challenges

Reducing the Backup Burden Created by Rapid Data Growth

With data growth rates ranging from 60 to 80% a year, the IT organization knew the backup environment had reached its limits. Monthly backups had grown to almost 100 terabytes (TB), even though, on average, only around 15% of the data was actually currently relevant. In addition, many terabytes of e-mail archive (.PST file) data was backed up every day – much of it unchanging.

Digging deeper into the problem, the IT organization discovered that home directories were consuming almost 40TB of tier 1 (NAS) and growing rapidly. A significant amount of the capacity in the home directories was devoted to .PST files, and just 5% of all the files were less than 90 days old.

"As the environment grew, we needed to add more servers, more engineers, and more network components to support it, but we were simply spending money and time to backup information we didn't have to backup," said the firm's Managing Director.

To resolve this problem, the company initiated a policy-based data management initiative for its NAS environment. The goals were:

- Dramatically reduce the data footprint in backup environment to support current growth rates and change rates of the environment;
- Improve backup efficiencies, which would decrease recovery times and benefit the helpdesk and end-users; and
- Reduce costs by eliminating or postponing some portion of the \$1.65 million planned in for new storage and backup capacity.

The Solution

Intelligent File Virtualization with F5® Acopia™ ARX® Devices

The financial services institution investigated several options before deploying a pair of ARX6000 devices to virtualize its NAS environment.

"F5 Acopia was the only solution that offers a holistic approach to this problem," the Managing Director said. "Some products can help with one piece, but only F5 Acopia manages the movement of data in a way that allowed us to address the entire problem."

Initially, the firm had expected to spend \$1.65 million in new storage and backup capacity to support its current environment and the expected data growth. However, with the F5 Acopia solution, the firm was able to postpone planned tier 1 purchases in favor of less expensive NAS filers to archive aged or stale data, and .PST files.

Using the Acopia migration policies, the company automatically migrated multiple terabytes of .PST data to a tier 2 storage platform, which the firm refers to as its archive tier. In addition, more than 20TB of non-.PST data that was older than 90 days was also moved to the archive tier. This action freed up much needed tier 1 disk space, which the company refers to as its performance tier, and removed about 70% of the data from the daily incremental backup environment.



Because the Acopia devices create a single consistent mount point, users' current drive presentation did not change and access to information was never interrupted.

Today, network-based policies automatically control the movement of data from the performance to the archive tier, and back again.

The Results

Dramatic Cost Savings and Significant Management and Operational Efficiencies

By implementing the Acopia solution as part of a broader policy-based data management initiative, this financial services organization was able to:

- Reduce its investment in new storage and backup capacity by \$800,000 - even after factoring in the investment in F5 Acopia;
- Realize additional savings by eliminating hundreds of tapes and approximately 200TB in virtual tape every month;
- Reduce daily backup times by close to 70% and full monthly backups by 30%; and
- Reclaim ~40TB of NAS capacity for other uses and tier 2 expansion.

Summary

File Virtualization Simplifies Data Management to Control Storage Growth

Policy-based data management using F5 Acopia has enabled this financial services company to resolve one of the most challenging issues for businesses today: managing backups in the face of rapid storage growth. Backup and restore windows have been decreased, and storage growth has actually become manageable

"Before F5 Acopia, our active data set for home directories was almost 40TB, with an annual growth rate of 60%. Now, our active data set is just 2TB. Sixty percent growth on 2TB is so much easier to deal with."

—Managing Director



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