



Starwood Group cuts backup window from 26 hours to 30 seconds

Before installing StorageCraft ShadowProtect to safeguard 10 Australian five-star hotels, including the Westin, Sheraton and Four Points brands, it took the Starwood Group 26 hours to back up 4TB of data. Today ShadowProtect takes only 30 seconds to perform an incremental backup every 15 minutes, ensuring that no more than 15 minutes of data creation is ever lost.

This stellar performance was among spectacular before-vs-after results for data backup and retrieval in Australia that persuaded Starwood Group to choose StorageCraft ShadowProtect as the preferred solution for its 370-plus hotels across Asia Pacific, and possibly globally.

The Challenge

Lindsay Leigh, Director of Information Technology, Sheraton on the Park, Sydney, and Regional Director of Information Technology, Starwood Pacific Hotel, needed a solution that would deliver instant backup and retrieval, and protect the group against whatever disaster could possibly hit a hotel

The hotel chain has about 100 servers, or PCs acting as servers, across Australia, backed up to a server with 25TB of data which is replicated to a second server with another 25 TB that eventually will be moved off-site.

“We were looking to remove tape across the whole of Asia Pacific and achieve fast and reliable backup and restore,” said Leigh. “A key aim of this initiative was to increase our ability to recover data fast, and to have that data always available. In my opinion tape backups are slow and unreliable.”

In evaluating tape replacement, his highest priority was speed of both backup and recovery, in a data imaging solution.

The StorageCraft Solution

Leigh said: “We checked a number of backup solutions, but ShadowProtect won on price, support and ease of use and the fact that it focuses on recovery, not just backup. When we test a solution, we call the vendor’s support to see how helpful their people are. Then the solution must be easy to set up and easy to explain to our people, and it must recover data easily. StorageCraft ticked all the boxes.

Starwood Group

Industry:
Hospitality

Headquarters:
Sydney

Company Profile:
Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide, Inc., has 1,162 properties under nine different brands in 100 countries, and 171,000 employees.

Products:

- ShadowProtect Server Edition
- ImageManager ShadowStream

Benefits:

- Fast and reliable data backup and recovery
- Disaster-proofed
- Unreliable tape replaced
- 100 per cent confidence in data safety
- Days saved after server crashes
- Cost effective
- Risk-free VM updates
- Works across multiple apps

ROI:
Multiple hours saved in faster backups, faster restores after server crashes, plus huge potential savings from securing an international hotel chain against future disasters.

He added: "I needed a situation where I could say: here's the solution, it costs this much, this is what we need to buy, someone will come and show us how to install it. StorageCraft satisfied this wish-list, but our tape backup people and the other disk-based solutions we checked, could not do so. They would all have required us to buy different agents, different licensing, different this or that – it was all too difficult and expensive."

ShadowProtect automates backups to Starwood's main data server in Sydney every 15 minutes. Each backup takes 30 seconds, compared with 26 hours for a tape backup. Then individual servers around Australia are backed up every hour or two hours, depending on how critical their data is to operations. These backups are staggered throughout the day to avoid network congestion, which allows offsite replication through a relatively inexpensive internet link.

The Bottom Line

Before StorageCraft, a crashed server took up to 48 hours to retrieve – today ShadowProtect takes 1-2 hours for a full functional system recovery. Recovery of a single file that once took up to an hour, now takes less than a minute.

Lindsay Leigh says: "We are 100 per cent confident that ShadowProtect delivers our required levels of data security, and will continue to do so."

He adds: "Backup and retrieval are the most important priorities for any organisation. We test our ability to recover data every day – if you don't learn how to do a recovery, it's not going to save you when the fires are burning. So ShadowProtect gives me 100 per cent confidence that our hotel chain's data is protected from user error, systems failure, or disasters such as earthquakes, fires or floods."

Lost files pose no problems either. According to Leigh, users accidentally delete files almost daily, and ShadowProtect recovers these easily, usually within a minute. Using tape backup, the process would take an hour.

Whenever Leigh's team upgrade any part of the Starwood group's systems, they take a full backup, first building the whole system on virtual machine using ShadowProtect VirtualBoot.

He says: "We do the upgrade on a virtual machine, check that everything works, then upgrade in the production system. This eliminates the entire risk and reduces downtime since when we do the upgrade, we run the system in virtual concurrently. Downtime is reduced to almost zero."

Leigh cites another advantage of using StorageCraft technology: "One of the biggest pluses of ShadowProtect is its ability to work across multiple software applications. Whether it is Oracle or Exchange, it doesn't really matter because ShadowProtect uses the same methodology.

"All the other products I know require a different methodology to recover a different type of database or system. ShadowProtect makes our life a lot easier, and makes training an IT manager a lot easier, because you need to train them only once."

He says the Starwood Group of hotels in Australia plans to migrate to StorageCraft's new cloud service later this year.

"Then we are looking to use ShadowProtect across the whole of Asia (where Starwood has more than 370 hotels), and then across the entire world if we can get it off the ground. Now the Australian implementation has gone so well, we will begin targeting Asia."

starwood
Hotels and
Resorts



STORAGECRAFT

Backup Fast, Recover Faster



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Lindsay Leigh,
Director of Information Technology,
Sheraton on the Park, Sydney, and
Regional Director of Information
Technology, Starwood Pacific Hotel



Microsoft Partner

Gold Independent Software Vendor (ISV)

vmware
PARTNER

TECHNOLOGY
ALLIANCE

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