

INVESTMENT GIANT PICA SAVES \$60,000 A YEAR AND GAINS 5X FASTER BACKUPS WITH SILVER PEAK SOFTWARE



Prudential Investment Company Australia (PICA) has improved security, achieved backups that are five times faster, and is saving \$5,000 a month on bandwidth costs it no longer requires. All achieved by implementing Silver Peak WAN optimisation software.

With more than 500 staff at 25 locations from Port Douglas to Melbourne, PICA generates substantial amounts of critical data.

When Technical Services Manager Neal Krempin joined PICA, he found that hourly backups between the company's data centre site in Ultimo, Sydney, and the disaster recovery (DR) site in Port Melbourne often failed to complete on time, exposing the company to the risk of serious data loss.

PICA replicates up to 600 GB of data each day, depending on the rate of change, between its production and disaster recovery sites. This is de-duplicated down to a transfer size of about 170 GB.

Neal said, "It quickly became apparent that we were having some issues getting all the data down to our DR site in Melbourne effectively. We run NetApp's SnapMirror SAN-to-SAN replication and at first it worked quite well, but I found the process had to be monitored very closely to make sure each snapshot did not exceed the given timeframe.

"We run hourly backups, and when the images failed to get through in time we would end up with a serious backlog. Sometimes I arrived on Monday morning to find a 24-hour queue of data had formed – it was like peak-hour on George Street."

PICA's network operates mainly Citrix servers and switches, and all data ties back into the main DC in Ultimo. From there,

virtual images captured by SnapMirror's storage-to-storage replication and the company's i-Series mainframe data is backed up to the company's DR site in Port Melbourne via a 20 Mbps link.

Realising the need to streamline PICA's backups, Neal looked at increasing WAN capacity. Quotes for 20-30 Mbps of extra bandwidth came in at more than \$5,000 per month (\$60,000 a year), so he began to explore other options.

He invited IT Consult, a NetApp and Silver Peak consulting firm, to assess the problem. Steve Parsonage from IT Consult recommended a Silver Peak trial, which he was confident would solve PICA's off-site replication problems.

"I shopped around, but quickly found that Silver Peak's software-based solution fitted into our VMware virtual structure very well, since it is also built on a virtual platform," said Neal. "It would allow us to speed up our WAN link and save us from having to invest in extra hardware, as well as saving on additional rack space, power and cabling."

He was also drawn to Silver Peak's 30-day trial. "The team at Silver Peak was great," he said. "They stayed with us throughout the trial, ensuring that we got the most out of the solution and were happy with it, then they helped us throughout the set-up phase."

He said, "The software does a lot of de-duplication for us in the background, so it reduces what we're transferring down to Melbourne. Once synchronised, it started to build on the initial platform and run faster and faster. Pretty quickly we ended up getting some impressive speeds. Our peak throughput is now about over 100 Mbps."

Customer: PICA

Business Objectives

- Replicate data faster to meet RPO
- Improve performance of hourly backups
- Avoid additional WAN infrastructure investment

Background

- 25 locations from Port Douglas to Melbourne
- SAN-to-SAN Replication to Port Melbourne using NetApp SnapMirror
- 600 GB of data replicated daily
- 20 Mbps WAN connection
- VMware virtualized environment

Results

- 500% WAN performance improvement
- \$60,000 a year in WAN infrastructure savings
- RPO easily met with hourly replication workloads

Previously the WAN achieved about 18 Mbps on a 20 Mbps link. After deployment of Silver Peak's software, Neal reports speeds of up to 100 Mbps – an improvement of more than 500 percent.

PICA's IT team have also been impressed with Silver Peak's easy user interface, and general usability. "We haven't needed much interaction with the team at Silver Peak since deployment. It has really been a case of set-and-forget, which leaves us time to focus on other things," said Neal.

Currently PICA is on an aggressive acquisition path, looking to double its size over the next few years. At present the company holds about 20 TB of data. Neal is confident that Silver Peak's optimisation solution will allow him to continue running backups efficiently despite the projected increase in data flow.

He said, "I wouldn't hesitate to deploy Silver Peak in other areas of the business to help with the expansion. The performance and value for money is pretty hard to beat when it comes to getting the absolute most out of our WAN."

PICA of Australia Pty Ltd. is a national property and financial services company, focused on the Property Services industry.

PICA was established over 50 years ago and has had many interests in a wide range of businesses, our core being in the professional strata, community title scheme, and company title management industry in which we are the market leaders.

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