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Produce World Improves Cloud Flexibility with Silver Peak

Silver Peak helps major produce grower and supplier reduce SnapMirror replication to meet RPO and switch private cloud providers.

A growing business with locations across the UK, Produce World found it impossible to move data between its primary data centre in Peterborough and the disaster recovery (DR) location hosted in a private cloud provider's premises just 90 miles away. "It was taking a whole weekend for the replication to catch up," says Richard Billington, infrastructure manager at Produce World.

Billington deployed Silver Peak's wide area network (WAN) optimisation software at the data centre and private cloud provider's location. Produce World increased data throughput, and reduced traffic by 80 percent and bandwidth consumption by 50 percent. "Silver Peak performed far beyond our expectations and requirements, and is enabling us to easily meet our RPO," he says.

Missed RPOs

Produce World provides a wide range of conventional and organic products to leading retailers, food service and manufacturing customers within the UK and Europe. The company relies on NetApp SnapMirror to its private cloud to protect the data behind those operations. Instead of meeting a 15 minute recovery point objectives (RPOs) for its Microsoft Dynamics NAV enterprise resources planning (ERP) software and two-hours for other critical systems, Produce World found data replication to be taking 24 hours and more.

The IT team considered adding more bandwidth between the two locations, but preferred to make better use of Produce World's existing infrastructure. Kelway, a leading IT services and solutions provider, recommended running a WAN optimization Proof of Concept (POC). Ultimately, Produce World settled on Silver Peak VX software for its performance, lower cost and simple deployment; Silver Peak easily integrated with Produce World's SnapMirror.

Cloud Flexibility

With Silver Peak, Produce World not only increased data throughput and reduced bandwidth consumption, but also dramatically improved its ability to adapt to changes in the cloud. When its private cloud provider closed its co-location site, for example, Produce World had to move its DR operations to a temporary location. Data replication went from operating across 40 Mbps to just 6 Mbps – normally a disaster in its own right.

The Silver Peak VX , though, reduces the bandwidth required by replication by as much as 20x. Produce World was able to continue replicating data to the temporary location without missing its RPOs, giving the company the time needed to establish a permanent DR site. "Without Silver Peak, it would have been increasingly difficult to replicate all of our data between the data centre and DR site," says Billington. "However, we managed to keep the data centre up and running for a period of six months without any performance issues.

Silver Peak again proved its value with the permanent DR location. Produce World required just half of its initial bandwidth for the new location. "Today, our 20 Mbps WAN link looks like it's doing nothing at all – it's just one of those things we don't have to think about anymore," says Billington.

Customer: Produce World

Business Challenges

- Expanding business meant more data needed to be replicated offsite.
- Escalating costs as data replication took longer than expected
- Slow data replication between the data centre and the disaster recovery (DR) location in the private cloud

Network Background

- The DR location is located 90 miles away from the company headquarters
- Replication applications include NetApp SnapMirror
- RPOs: 15 minutes for Microsoft Dynamics NAV and two hours for other critical systems

Silver Peak Results

- Reduced traffic by 80 percent
- Cut bandwidth allowance by 50 percent
- Avoided a costly bandwidth upgrade
- Lowered disaster recovery costs
- Transitioned between cloud providers without downtime