



Minimal Complexity. Maximum Protection.

Fast and complete restoration of manufacturer's ERP functionality.

Executive Summary

ElectroCraft manufacturing operates a business-critical IT environment. It had grown more complex with time. Maintaining systems availability had become uncertain, particularly for their ERP software so crucial to smooth business and manufacturing operations. Recognizing a serious vulnerability in their system backup and restore capabilities they began examining options. Actifio Sky quickly emerged as the best solution to protect the full combination of data, applications, and virtual machines. It wasn't just backup. It was full, immediate, operational application restore. After a fast and simple implementation, ElectroCraft quickly experienced a very real test of the system when a critical VDI server failed. With the help of Actifio Sky, access to the full system VM, OS and data was restored in less than ten minutes – early proof of the right decision, well timed.

ElectroCraft Overview

As an innovative manufacturer of specialty motors, ElectroCraft operates globally with a lean customer-focused business process. Their products are used in thousands of applications from air conditioners to aircraft. Their lean business process extends to IT operations that are critical to reliable operation of custom manufacturing services. All must live up to the same demanding levels of quality that are at the foundation of ElectroCraft's reputation.



Key Facts

WHO: ElectroCraft, Inc. is a manufacturer of specialty motors headquartered in Dover, New Hampshire.

CHALLENGES: Unreliable and incomplete backup system. Vulnerable older systems were backing up data only, without OS/Application recovery capability.

IT ENVIRONMENT: Core ERP system, 90% virtualized, SharePoint, SQL, engineering design applications, Linux, Windows. HP blade servers, EMC and 3Par storage.

SOLUTION: Actifio Sky enabling efficient backup of data, OS and applications.

IMMEDIATE BENEFITS: "Huge time savings." Less than a week setup vs. months for alternatives. Minimal operations attention. Best available price/functionality.

“Protecting our critical ERP databases before was too costly and complicated. When we looked at existing options like Veeam and Commvault, none could deliver what we really needed, which was a fast and complete restoration of the application functionality, not just the data. Then we found Actifio Sky. Actifio Sky was the obvious answer, especially when we saw how simple the licensing and setup are.”

– GUILLAUME MEILLAT,
ELECTROCRAFT SENIOR GLOBAL NETWORK
AND SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR.

The Challenge

As an innovative manufacturer of specialty motors, ElectroCraft is critically dependent on their IT systems and applications to maintain high customer service levels and reliable production schedules. Guillaume Meillat joined ElectroCraft as their senior global network and system administrator and immediately recognized a critical difficulty in the protection of some core applications and systems. Data was being backed up to tape for the ERP, AutoCAD and other critical applications. However, the operating systems and applications were not.

This created a crucial vulnerability to the business. If they were to lose an older server or face corruption of an older OS version, they had no mechanism or internal knowledge to reinstall the application or OS. Losing a critical application was a significant business risk.

Examining Options

The ElectroCraft IT team initiated a careful examination of application and data protection alternatives. Several leading brands were considered, including Symantec, Commvault, Veeam, and Actifio. They wanted an application that could easily backup the data as well as the virtual environment, including servers and applications. More importantly they needed capability to fully restore any failed system quickly to its previous operational state. In comparison to competitors, they decided Actifio was the right fit. “The selection was easy,” said Meillat.

“Actifio demonstrated the most flexible and powerful features and came at a very favorable price point.”

The Solution: The most serious challenge for ElectroCraft was the inability to meet recovery objectives. In particular, they wanted immediately to address their difficulty in backing up older applications. Consultants and staff familiar with older applications were no longer available to assist. Install files were missing. So, a big Actifio selling point was the capability for a combined restoration of applications, VMs and data from the backup.

The initial Actifio Sky install took only 30 minutes, and they accomplished completion of the first full backup for 100 virtual machines in just a few days. This meant a substantial savings of time and effort compared to the weeks of setup estimated for implementation of competitor’s solutions. Incremental backups began each evening after startup and now “it just runs.”

Benefits

Not long after installing Actifio Sky, ElectroCraft experienced a severe outage of a VDI server connected to the central ERP system. When the server stopped running, instead of spending a great deal of time troubleshooting the problem, they restored the previous night’s backup from Actifio Sky. “In about ten minutes the whole server, application, and all the related data was up and running again,” said Meillat. All other servers could see this exact duplicate and immediately began working with it. With the old system, their alternative would have been to take time to troubleshoot the issue with only a capability to restore data, not server or application. Instead, the entire restore was easily done without a delay for troubleshooting. They then ran on the restored server for nearly a week before reinstating the normal environment.

“We were very impressed with Actifio Sky. The efficient whole-system restoration is what initially sold us, and we soon had verified proof. The capability to completely reinstate a server in just a few minutes is outstanding. It just works.”

– GUILLAUME MEILLAT,
ELECTROCRAFT SENIOR GLOBAL NETWORK
AND SYSTEM ADMINISTRATOR.

Immediate ElectroCraft Benefits

- **Implementation speed**—Months of implementation work avoided. Fully up and running in less than a week where competitors could have taken months.
- **Expense reduction**—Substantial expense reductions through simple licensing based on capacity of protected data and not on number of servers.
- **Simplified operations**—Minimal oversight required. Login a couple of times a week and it's just running, needing little attention once initially established.
- **Rapid recovery**—Fully functional VMs can be restored from backups, avoiding whole-system recovery nightmares.
- **Multi-functioning**—Simultaneous backup and live data operations enable normal operations, application testing and upgrades without workflow disruption.
- **Times saving**—“Enormous time saved” in daily activities with rapid recovery of VDI servers. A significant advantage to continuous manufacturing operations.
- **Simplicity**—The simple policy engine is easy to set up and modify as needed.
- **Flexibility**—Actifio works across the heterogeneous infrastructure, across multiple operating environments, on virtual and physical systems
- **Application Archives**—VMs of old application versions are easily saved and quickly restored to full operation as needed.