Higher Education Gets Data Backup and DR

Actifio Helps Bryant University Create the Ideal Data Protection Strategy

KEY FACTS

Who: Bryant University, Smithfield RI

IT Environment: Two data centers, one on campus and one remote, Windows, Exchange, Oracle (Banner), Azure, VMware 90%, Cisco UCS, Cisco network, three tiers of IBM storage, Actifio Sky & CDS..

Challenges: Creating a single, reliable, and advanced capability for data backup and disaster recovery.

Solution: Replaced existing backup with multi-site Actifio CDS/Sky for backup, DR, replication, deduplication, and Oracle web development.

Bryant

Executive Summary

Bryant University wanted a single, reliable, and advanced capability for data backup and disaster recovery (DR). As they reviewed possible solutions, positive customer references led them to Actifio. They decided this was an ideal solution because it would handle both data backup and DR. It was also capable of protecting their expanding use of cloud resources and flexible enough to support the needs of their web developers. With Actifio's support, they installed the platform on-campus and at a new remote site as a single comprehensive backup/DR solution.

Bryant University Overview

Located in Smithfield Rhode Island, Bryant University is nationally recognized for its academic excellence. The University consistently ranks high in publication ratings, including from U.S. News & World Report and The Economist. With an emphasis on outcomes, the University creates a focused, energetic, learning environment. Accolades include ratings in the top ten percent of "overall best" of all U.S. colleges and universities and number nine in Top Regional Universities (North). Bryant also has a remote campus in China. With every class taught by a professor and small class sizes, students benefit from mentoring and collaboration with internationally recognized experts. With all of that, the required support of a high-quality IT department is essential to the university's mission.

The Challenge

Like many universities, Bryant's campus includes all the functions of a small city. From libraries and living spaces to telecommunications and IT operations, they serve the diverse needs of students, faculty, and administration. And, in keeping with their standards of excellence, it's essential for every support function to be of

the highest quality. That means always-on Information Technology, always functioning without worry. However, IT had a challenge. They needed a strategy for disaster recovery (DR). "The software we were using could handle backup but couldn't support DR," said Bill Jones, Bryant's Senior Technical Analyst. "Fortunately, we hadn't had any major outages, but we knew that too much was at stake to continue without a reliable Disaster Recovery plan in place." Bryant's goal was to find the right platform to do both backup and DR and to quickly restore operations at a hot site if needed. Their IT consultants at Lighthouse Computer Services recommended a look at Actifio.

> "Speaking with current Actifio customers, we heard very positive references. One, a Boston area university, related an instance where a major outage required the simultaneous recovery of all servers. Using Actifio, they were able to fully recover in an extremely short amount of time. It was a very positive experience for them. Hearing that story, from another university, convinced us this would be the right platform for us."
>
> –BILL JONES—**SENIOR TECHNICAL ANALYST**

As the plan emerged, Bryant chose Actifio as their DR platform. "We didn't know at the outset how we would get there," said Jones. "But Actifio helped us put the pieces together." The decision was to implement Actifio for DR and gradually migrate to Actifio as their backup platform. When complete, the old backup platform would be retired.

> "This was all new to us; learning how data virtualization works and seeing the amazing speed of data recovery. It was all very impressive. Actifio patiently helped us to understand how we could take advantage of it, and how to implement it smoothly."
>
> –BILL JONES—**SENIOR TECHNICAL ANALYST**

Solving the Puzzle

To move ahead, Bryant needed a DR site. Ideally, a remote site could serve both as a target for backup data as well as a hot-site in the event of a DR event. Bryant consulted with OSHEAN, a non-profit agency in Rhode Island providing network and technology services to government and non-profit institutions. On OSHEANS recommendation, Bryant began a relationship with Navisite to create their remote DR site. Actifio engineers were made available to help coordinate a smooth implementation. Once the DR site was fully operating, data backup was also phased-in to the remote site. Bryant then had both off-site data backup and a hot site where operations could be quickly transferred or reinstituted if needed. Two people on the IT staff efficiently manage the system with a third person as a stand-in if required. An added advantage in the new system helps their web developers and Oracle database administrators (DBAs). Instead of a time-consuming Oracle RMAN process, DBAs have self-service Actifio access in

support Oracle Workflows. They can now easily create fresh database copies every evening in 90% less time compared to the previous system. Also, because it protects both on-site and cloud data, Actifio can continue to safeguard university data if it expands to the cloud.

"The first thing I would say to a potential customer is that Actifio support has been fantastic from the start. The Actifio technology is excellent, and they provide service and support to match. For example, when we needed to implement reliable Oracle backup, we had regular discussions with the Actifio engineers responsible for Oracle integrations. They were there whenever we needed help or advice."

–BILL JONES—**SENIOR TECHNICAL ANALYST**

A New Strategy

Since the original installation, Bryant has migrated to Actifio Sky, a VM that replace the CDS appliance on campus. They plan to follow with the same transition at the remote site. They regularly use Actifio for simple data recovery. "If we need it back quickly, we can mount a VM at the remote site and have it back running in five minutes or less. Then we can take our time to recover the whole server. But even that can take as little as 20-30 minutes. It's all very seamless, said Jones "Nobody on campus would even know."

Actifio regularly checks in to see that all runs smoothly at Bryant. A monthly support call reviews logs, versions, etc., and to make sure all issues are identified and addressed. "I wish other vendors would do that," said Jones.

Bryant University benefits:

- Fast response and high-quality service and support
- Data backup times reduced by 90%
- Operational trust in IT systems and data protection capabilities
- Established backup and DR for all sites
- Self-service for DBAs to refresh development databases 90% faster
- Near instantaneous data retrieval from backup data

About Actifio

Actifio virtualizes the data that's the lifeblood of businesses in more than 35 countries around the world. Its Virtual Data Pipeline™ technology enables businesses to manage, access, and protect their data faster, more efficiently, and more simply by decoupling data from physical storage, much the same way a hypervisor decouples compute from physical servers. For enterprise-class backup modernization, self-serve instant data access, or service provider business transformation, Actifio is the first and only enterprise class copy data virtualization platform.

For additional information, visit Actifio at **www.actifio.com** or contact Actifio at **info@actifio.com** or **855.886.8997**.

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