



Bicycle seller Jenson USA rolls with electronic vaulting backup/DR solution from United Computer Group

Cyclists carry several spare parts in their caravans on race day, and Jenson USA, starts every business day with a complete spare dataset maintained by VAULT400.

Whether you're pacing traffic, pounding down a trail or setting a new track speed record, cycling is without question, a healthy endeavor. And on the subject of health, US bike sellers rang up \$6 billion in sales in 2008 according to the National Sporting Goods Association. And equally as impressive, 18.5 million bicycles were sold through bike dealers and mass merchant channels, says the Bicycle Manufacturers Association.

One prominent bike merchant, Jenson USA has been serving a large share of the cycling market since 1994. Jenson USA, founded by a competitive racer, is a leading online, and brick and mortar marketer of bicycles, parts, accessories and apparel, headquartered in Ontario, California.

With record year-over-year growth, Jenson manages its business on an IBM iSeries model 810 running CommercialWare's (now Micros Retail) retail management and BI software. Nearly 90 percent of Jenson's business is transacted through its web store that runs on Microsoft .NET. Orders are processed by the iSeries-based order management and ERP systems and if the iSeries is down, orders streaming in 24 hours-a-day from around the world are queued but not processed.

Until January, Jenson saved their daily, weekly and monthly backups to tape, and

later used an in-house disk-to-disk system for backup and recovery purposes.

According to Jeff Bolkovatz, Director of IT at Jenson USA, these were labor intensive and somewhat fallible methods. "The backup media had to be stored in a safe place so we were always shuffling from one place to another. We spent a lot of time and effort storing and retrieving tapes and drives. Media and drive failures were also a problem and we didn't like the fact that if we needed to recover a small snippet of data, we'd sometimes have to go through seven or nine tapes to find it."



The Breakaway

Tired of tapes and drives, Bolkovatz sought an alternative. He briefly considered High Availability but reasoned that, if a catastrophic event occurred, he would have other things to worry about besides the presence of a cursor. "We have inventory and logistics to consider," he says. "If an earthquake hits and we don't have a product to send out, why would we be taking orders for it?"

For Jenson USA, HA would have been a very costly option. "We looked at our return on investment and realized that we

could be down for a couple of days and still get by.” Bolkovatz admits there are instances where HA is a good fit -- banks, casinos and hospitals for example, but in his case, taking everything into consideration, it didn’t make sense. He started looking around for other options in January with the knowledge that Windows based systems had lots of online backup options. When he began to uncover similar solutions for his iSeries, the first solution he came across was VAULT400 (www.vault400.com) from United Computer Group (www.ucgrp.com).

Electronically vaulting data over the Internet is less expensive than HA because it doesn’t require the acquisition of additional hardware, software licenses and in some cases a remote data center. Still, Bolkovatz had some reservations. “I was concerned with the amount of data that gets transferred. When I looked at my backup tapes I could see they were pretty large. I soon learned that VAULT400 only sends net changes. It also uses a data compression method that reduces data volume by up to 8 to 1. In our case, only 300 to 500 megabytes would be sent to the vault per day which isn’t much.”

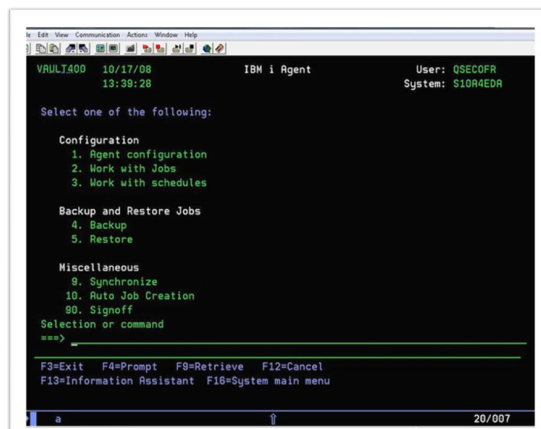
Another consideration was security. In part, his uneasiness revolved around the fact that Jenson USA processes its own credit card transactions. “I found out that VAULT400 uses AES 128-bit block size encryption. No one has a key for our account except us and the data is useless without the key. The data is first encrypted in our database and gets encrypted again before it’s sent to the vault so I’m not really concerned that it can be compromised.”



Bolkovatz says VAULT400’s tiered disaster recovery capabilities were a big selling point. “UCG and VAULT400 give us several options for recovery. We can restore our data on their server in case of a catastrophic event and send it back to us electronically once our system is restored. They can get us a new system sent out in a day or two. And, one option allows us to be up and running in a couple of hours if we need to recover quickly,” he says.

A Tough Decision?

After spending about three weeks weighing his options, Bolkovatz decided to subscribe to UCG’s VAULT400 electronic vaulting service, adding that it wasn’t a difficult decision to make. “When we used an internal disk-to-disk system, we didn’t have an ongoing subscription fee but it was also very limited and wouldn’t scale well. As our data grew we’d have to acquire more disk. With VAULT400, there’s no limit to how much of our data they can store.”



VAULT400 console

One of Jenson’s system administrators spent only about an hour installing VAULT400 and then configuring the tool to accommodate their existing backup schedule. It then took one day to electronically transfer Jenson USA’s entire existing database to the vault. “We did this over the weekend so there wasn’t much of a burden placed on our Internet connection,” says Bolkovatz.

Every morning an email message regarding the status of the vault is sent to Jenson USA and so far, there has not been one instance where files have been out of synch between Jenson's production machine and the vault.

Drafting In Vaulting's Slipstream

Now, when a technician at Jenson USA needs to restore specific files, they select an option on VAULT400's console, define the files they need and the library to which

they should be restored and VAULT400 handles the rest.

How healthy is Jenson USA's current ability to recover from a system failure or larger scale catastrophe? "I have peace of mind knowing that our data will be there when we need it. Current copies of our data are now stored in three locations. We don't have to move disks around and we won't have a bad disk or bad tape take us by surprise," he says.



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