DXi & Scalar Series

SMACL Solves VM Backup and Restore Problems with Quantum Solutions

Outgrowing its legacy backup software and hardware, SMACL, France's leading mutual insurer for local governments, worked with integrator Scasicomp to find a solution to its virtual machine (VM) backup and recovery problems. With Quantum DXi deduplication appliances and vmPRO software, SMACL has faster backups, improved restores, and more efficient disaster recovery—as well as complete data protection for its VMs.

Founded in 1974 as the Société Mutuelle d'Assurance des Collectivités Locales, today SMACL Assurances is a leader in insurance services for local French governments, associations, and individuals—with one or more contracts in 75% of urban communities and 90% of the general and regional councils across France.

OUTGROWING LEGACY SYSTEMS

As SMACL grew and added more clients, its data needs and use of virtualization increased, outstripping the capability of its legacy backup software and hardware. In addition to needing backup for its primary insurance policy records, the company also needed protection for back-office applications, including data records, accounting information, messaging, email, and HR documents.

With its legacy software no longer able to meet its needs, the IT team decided it was time to start over and build a new system that could provide full protection today and grow with the organization over time. Working with integrator Scasicomp, a specialist in data protection solutions, the team researched solutions from three different vendors. The new solution needed to simplify and improve backup and restore—especially for VMs, which had become a major problem as more of the company's application servers were virtualized. Also critical was providing simpler disaster recovery (DR) protection by moving copies of data to off-site locations. Finally, the solution needed to provide low total cost of ownership—not only keeping acquisition costs low but also making it easy for the IT team to transition from its existing system to the new one.

CHOOSING A FLEXIBLE, FUTURE-PROOF SOLUTION

The selection team carefully reviewed backup software and hardware, deduplication, replication, and VM protection from a wide range of options. Ultimately, the team chose Quantum because it offered highly efficient deduplication appliances, automated replication, advanced tape libraries, and software designed to manage protection and recovery of VMware VMs. It also provided the best price performance and allowed the team to use its existing backup software initially and then gradually transition to the new system.

The partnership between Quantum and Scasicomp allowed the team to test the products before purchasing. This was critical because it enabled the team to confirm that the solutions worked in its own environment. After the success of the product trials, the team was able to move forward with confidence that Quantum's solutions would solve its backup and restore problems.

INCREASED DISK STORAGE AND FASTER ACCESS TO BACKUP FILES

The IT team decided to roll out the new system in two stages. First, it installed the hardware for the new system: two DXi6700 deduplication appliances—one for the primary data center and a second for an off-site location. In the first stage, the existing backup software wrote data to the first DXi®, which automatically replicated the data to the second unit for DR protection.

Because the DXi appliances use patented variable-length deduplication, the amount of data that could be stored on disk increased dramatically—at the same

"Expertise, flexibility, and fast response characterized the Quantum/Scasicomp team throughout the implementation of this project, from engineering study to final rollout. We couldn't have made a better choice—Quantum's solution met 100% of our expectations."

Eric Frischeteau, IT Systems & Networks Manager, SMACL

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- DXi6700 deduplication appliances: one in the main data center and one in a remote site
- vmPRO data protection software for VM backup
- Scalar® i80 tape library with Linear Tape-Open (LTO) technology
- NetBackup with OpenStorage Technology (OST)

KEY BENEFITS

- High-performance backup shortens backup windows and handles data growth
- Quantum's variable-length deduplication stores more backup data on disk for faster restores and reduces network bandwidth needs during replication
- Automated replication provides DR copies in an off-site location automatically, improving protection and reducing administrative overhead
- Quantum/Scasicomp try-and-buy option provides maximum value and confidence
- Symantec OST support provides automated control over replication and tape creation with automated updating of backup catalogs
- vmPRO provides fast protection for VMs—ensuring all VMs are protected
- vmPRO's support of native VM format provides instantaneous, easy, and safe VM recovery

time reducing the bandwidth required to replicate data to the second site. The systems are designed to scale easily in place, allowing them to support future needs cost effectively as data needs increase.

The Quantum solution gives SMACL faster access to backup files because they are all stored on disk. It also delivers daily automated off-site protection for all of its critical data using its existing backup application—without any administrative overhead. Servers that needed longer-term retention were written to a Quantum Scalar i80 tape library.

The second stage replaced the legacy backup software with Symantec NetBackup for physical servers and Quantum vmPRO™ software for the VMs.

> Scasicomp, an expert in backup projects, has total expertise when it comes to Quantum solutions. They provided SMACL Assurance with a full-spectrum solution that responded to all our concerns.
>
> **Eric Frischeteau**
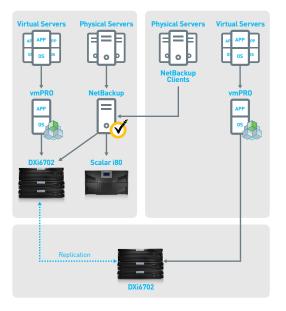> IT Systems & Networks Manager, SMACL

CLOSE INTEGRATION BETWEEN DXi AND NETBACKUP

With the new system, the IT team can leverage the synergy between the Quantum and Symantec solutions enabled by the OpenStorage Technology (OST) program. OST includes an API that allows intelligent storage devices, including DXi appliances and Quantum Scalar tape libraries, to integrate with NetBackup to perform advanced protection operations under control of the backup software. In the new system, some of the replication and tape creation functions are carried out directly between appliances and libraries under the control of NetBackup. Using OST minimizes network traffic and keeps all the NetBackup catalogs aware of data locations for any data that has been replicated or written to tape.

vmPRO SOLVES VM BACKUP & RESTORE PROBLEMS

The new solution uses Quantum vmPRO Software to provide protection for all of SMACL's virtual servers—almost 200 at deployment, but the numbers are increasing rapidly. Quantum vmPRO automatically creates copies of VMs on disk, in this case the system's DXi appliances. With vmPRO, backups are faster, ensuring that all the VMs are protected. But even more important for SMACL is the fact that vmPRO writes its copies in native VMware format and is fully compatible with the VMware management tools. When the IT team needs to recover VMs protected with vmPRO, there is no format translation required—the team can drag and drop the files to a production disk or even boot them up directly on the backup target.

"Quantum's vmPRO solution enables simple and efficient backup of virtual environments," explains Benoît Fix, Scasicomp sales engineer. "Because vmPRO backs up VMs in their native VMDK format, disaster recovery is also greatly simplified. Recovery of complete VMs on local or remote devices is instantaneous and easy enough that it can be delegated to the project teams."

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> **Benoît Fix, Sales Engineer, Scasicomp Nantes**

ABOUT SMACL

The Société Mutuelle d'Assurance des Collectivités Locales (SMACL) was founded in 1974 by local elected officials to meet the insurance needs of local governments. The company generated sales of over 320 million euros in 2012. As champion of cooperative values for nearly 40 years, it has a single ambition—to be of service to its members. Now called SMACL Assurances, the mutual insurance company provides services not only to communities, but also to associations and individuals.

Quantum.
BE CERTAIN

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