



American Steel & Aluminum Corp. Reinforces its Business Continuity Efforts with SafeData/DR

Overview

American Steel & Aluminum Corp. is a \$250 million subsidiary of the Canadian steel producer Novamerican Steel. Headquartered in Norwood, Mass. and employing more than 400 people, the company primarily processes and distributes carbon steel, aluminum and stainless steel products to customers through nine operating plants in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern United States.

Challenge

Remote backup of its technology systems has been a standard operation for American Steel for years. Through its previous disaster recovery contract with IBM, American Steel backed up its files and applications to tape each night and physically transported them to an off-site archive site.

“Our key challenge was the time-consuming processes to actually test the system,” explained Buzz Haas, MIS director for American Steel. “Remote testing required our team to move to the New York hot site location for several days once a year. If we had needed to recover our data while using this system, it would require the same or more time as performing our remote testing.”

Solution

“I needed to simplify my life,” explained Haas. “We had upgraded our system and were very interested in finding a better way of protecting our data. Our IBM Business Partner for our iSeries network pointed us to SafeData’s disaster recovery solution.”

American Steel has an IBM iSeries server at its corporate headquarters running on a virtual private network that supports its nine branch locations. On the iSeries server, the company runs industry-specific software applications that are at the core of its business operations.

“These applications manage our order processing, inventory, accounts receivable and accounts payable,” explained Haas. “Any interruption to these processes would be inconvenient in the short term, but could be detrimental to our business in the long run.”

With SafeData/DR, backup is done electronically via the Internet. Leveraging the latest in electronic vaulting technologies, SafeData/DR provides disk-to-disk backup and restoration capabilities. Its vaulting solution eliminates the potential for lost, damaged or obsolete tapes. It also provides American Steel with anytime, anywhere secure access to its files via a standard web browser. Furthermore, SafeData/DR’s restoration capabilities enable American Steel to use its data whenever it needs it.

Return on Investment

“The SafeData/DR solution is very easy to use and in the event of a disaster it provides quick recovery of our data and applications,” said Haas. “With one phone call to SafeData, our data recovery process starts and is available in less than six hours. We no longer have to have our IT people travel to another state and spend days testing our system or recovering files.”

“The implementation of SafeData/DR was a smooth process,” added Haas. “In less than two months we performed a recovery test that went very well. The SafeData team has provided a high level of support, is extremely competent and has always made themselves readily available when we had questions or concerns.”

American Steel still performs its tape backups as well, but the SafeData/DR solution provides the company with an extra level of redundancy and more confidence in its business continuity measures.