SafeData

Southland National Ensures Business Continuity with SafeData/DR

Alabama-based Southland National Insurance Corporation has been an ever-growing presence in the preneed insurance market since it was founded. Its primary focus is life insurance designed to fund pre-arranged funerals, or an insured's final expenses.

Challenge

To protect its claims documentation, Southland National had always relied on tape backup. The firm also had a SunGard recovery system contract; however, it was signed to simply fulfill specific audit requirements for the firm.

When VP of Information Services, Bentley Pearson joined Southland, he requested a third-party security audit of all of the company's IT solutions. "It was a very eye opening experience," said Pearson. "We had an old infrastructure that needed to get straightened out first, but the business continuity piece was always on my mind."

"We reviewed the SunGard contract and found that it could not meet our recovery objectives at a reasonable price point," said Pearson. "I was losing sleep because we did not have a recovery solution in place."

"With SafeData/DR, we now have a one-stop, turnkey solution for our iSeries and Windows environments. We are very pleased with the solution as well as with the team at SafeData – and I can now sleep well at night."

~Bentley Pearson, VP of Information Services, Southland National Insurance

Solution

Southland National selected SafeData/DR for data backup and recovery. "We put SafeData through a nine-month boot camp to test the solution. "We are very diligent at testing our products before we purchase them. We gauge the reliability of a vendor on how well they respond to potential customers' demands."

As the sole IT person at Southland, Pearson outsources the company's very complex, three-tier Windows environment to a managed services firm. He manages Southland's two System i networks,

which include the life insurance administration system - the lifeblood of the business – in-house. "We live and die on the System i," added Pearson.

"SafeData was very accommodating with our testing process. It was important that I ensure SafeData/DR was the right solution before presenting it to management. We tested the product to the limit, negotiated a good price and are very happy with SafeData."

"Being able to handle the complexity of our iSeries and Windows environments speaks volumes to SafeData's capabilities," he added.

Return on Investment

"We have tested the backup and recovery of the iSeries environment twice in front of bank auditors to show we are properly backed up," said Pearson. "They were blown away by SafeData. We took them through a secure VPN connection and demonstrated that we would have our systems up and running in less than 10 hours, enabling us to operate our business even if a disaster occurs."

One example of SafeData/DR's reliability is when a Southland employee accidently deleted a folder containing several million images. Using SafeData/DR, Pearson was able to easily restore the folder with SafeData's seven-day concurrent backup. "I went online, easily found the folder, clicked it and it restored all the files. This locked me into SafeData. No one else could provide that quick support," he added.

"With SafeData/DR, we now have a one-stop, turnkey solution for our iSeries and Windows environments," said Pearson. "We are very pleased with the solution as well as with the team at SafeData – and I can now sleep well at night."