



School System Implements Plan for Disaster Recovery with Recovery Manager for Active Directory

The Challenge

Just prior to the conclusion of the 2003-2004 school year, a loss of substantial amounts of Active Directory data forced CMS to conduct a three-week data recovery process. This time consuming recovery process was the impetus for CMS' search for a recovery tool.

"Our message to other school systems is that you really have to get all the bases covered and have all the pieces in place if you want to launch into an Active Directory deployment as comprehensive as what we did. We were doing okay when we had 10 schools or even 20 schools. Once we got to 60 and 100 schools on our Active Directory, we discovered that we needed to dedicate support staff to Active Directory, secure a strong AD management application and implement a comprehensive recovery plan."

– Wayne Shumate

The Quest Solution

To properly address the challenges of Active Directory availability, CMS needed to develop and implement a comprehensive recovery plan. Recovery Manager for Active Directory is a key component of that plan, helping to ensure that CMS is fully equipped to rapidly recover directory data in the event of inadvertent or malicious data corruption or loss.

"CMS had a fairly substantial disaster in which 650 Group Policy Objects (GPOs) were deleted. Recovery was a manual, time-consuming process. Using native tools, recovery resulted in duplicate GPOs. There were servers that had 200 GPOs, and some had 700, 800 and 1000 or more.... It took two of us almost three weeks solid to get it all sorted out. Now, with Recovery Manager in place, a similar scenario would require no more than two hours to remedy." – Jim Boyer.

Why Quest

"Quest Software came highly recommended by our primary Active Directory consulting firm, SRS Technology, and Recovery Manager was the tool of choice. Quest was able to accommodate the specific requirements of a very large school system...I couldn't be any happier with Quest's ability to meet our needs. In fact, they went way beyond the call of duty to help us." – Wayne Shumate

"At SRS Technology, we recommend Recovery Manager above and beyond any other tool because it is so essential to be able to restore organizational units (OUs) and GPOs in an easy and efficient manner." – Jim Boyer

Business Benefits

"In working to manually recover data from our loss at the end of the 2003-2004 school year, the cost to our resources was high. In addition to CMS staff, a variety of contractors were involved in the resolution. All 100 AD sites were being adversely affected. System security was compromised, and our school-based technology coordinators and help desk personnel were overwhelmed with troubleshooting and problem-solving. It was causing all kinds of ripple effects throughout the school system. With Recovery Manager in place, we could have restored data more rapidly, tightened things faster and gotten back to normal operation sooner. We learned a valuable lesson." - Wayne Shumate

Technology Benefits

"With Recovery Manager in place, we are confident in our ability to restore data faster and get our users operational faster. Obviously, our goal is to avoid any possibility of catastrophe; however, with Recovery Manager, we are better equipped to address it." – Ray Midgett

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—Jim Boyer
Sr. IT Architect with SRS Technology

Overview

Business Benefits

- Faster, more efficient data recovery
- Minimal impact on staff and resources
Increases end-user satisfaction
- Minimal impact on end users
- Happier end users - CMS' students, teachers and school-based technology coordinators
- Sustained availability of instructional and business resources

Technology Benefits

- Equips organization to recover data
- Eliminates the manual process of restoring GPOs
- Restores Active Directory objects without taking domain controllers offline
- Reduces support costs

“Being able to restore Active Directory objects without having to do a lot of other operations in Active Directory is a primary, time-saving benefit.” – Ray Midgett

“Part of the manual recovery process involves restoring the Group Policies. If you create a Group Policy, you give that policy a ‘friendly name,’ for example ‘Group Policy One’. But part of what Microsoft does is to turn that name into a very long alphanumeric value. An entire day was spent trying to figure out those long, 24-character values and associate them with a name we knew to ensure that we were restoring the correct Group Policies. With Recovery Manager, we can restore by a friendly name. That alone makes things much easier.” – Jim Boyer

Core Functionality

Comparison reports provide the user details on what objects have been changed and deleted in Active Directory, enabling quick problem isolation and recovery.

Online restore wizard provides multiple granular, online recovery options, enabling flexible and immediate recovery of Active Directory objects and attributes.

Comprehensive object recovery enables the complete and automatic restore of objects, along with all their related attributes and memberships.

Centrally-managed recovery enables administrators to manage the backup and restore functions of Active Directory from a single console, simplifying the entire recovery process.

About Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools of Charlotte, North Carolina

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) is the 23rd largest school system in the United States, with 121,640 PreK-12 students and 145 schools. One of the largest employers in Mecklenburg County, CMS employs more than 15,000 staff members and has a total operating budget of \$889.3 million for 2004-2005. For more information, go to <http://www.cms.k12.nc.us>.

About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software, Inc. delivers innovative products that help organizations get more performance and productivity from their applications, databases and Windows infrastructure. Through a deep expertise in IT operations and a continued focus on what works best, Quest helps more than 50,000 customers worldwide meet higher expectations for enterprise IT. Quest Software can be found in offices around the globe and at www.quest.com.