



# Healthcare provider meets growing data backup and recovery needs

Allergy Partners backs up 12TB of data frequently and reduces costs substantially with Quest’s deduplication and backup appliance



## CUSTOMER PROFILE



<b>Company</b>	Allergy Partners
<b>Industry</b>	Healthcare
<b>Country</b>	United States
<b>Employees</b>	800
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://allergypartners.com">allergypartners.com</a>

## BUSINESS NEED

Allergy Partners has substantial data recovery needs that were increasingly challenging to meet with tape backups: Its patient information must be accessible 24/7, and backups must be retained for at least 10 days. With over 12 terabytes of data to back up frequently, the organization sought a more effective and affordable solution.

## SOLUTION

Allergy Partners now uses the Quest DR4000 deduplication and compression backup appliance to perform complete, fast and reliable backups across two facilities and to execute frequent, comprehensive backups at a fraction of the cost of its previous tape system.

## BENEFITS

- Enabled full nightly and weekend backups and deduplication
- Provided six times the data storage at a far lower cost than its old 2TB tape backups
- Completed backups faster, saving up to 20 hours a week
- Delivered a 71-percent deduplication rate for 12TB of data
- Achieved integrated replication for consistent availability of patient medical records

## SOLUTIONS FEATURED

- [Data Protection](#)

“IT has now become the engine that runs this company. Every day our physicians depend on EHR (electronic health records) to improve the care and the experience for the patient. Allergy Partners’ business depends on the expertise of its internal IS&T Team and our industry partners such as Quest.”

*Deborah Scott, Chief Operating Officer,  
Allergy Partners*

Allergy Partners is the nation's largest single specialty medical practice in allergy, asthma and immunology. The leading healthcare organization is comprised of 40 primary and 45 satellite locations spanning 17 states. Allergy Partners' vast network includes 39 practices that deliver high-quality healthcare, education and research for patients suffering from allergic disease and asthma.

#### **RAPID GROWTH MAKES TAPE BACKUP SOLUTION OBSOLETE**

Due to rapid expansion and the surging use of electronic health records (EHR), the IT team at Allergy Partners found itself continually challenged by its costly and time-consuming tape backup system. The system gave the team very limited capabilities to back up just 2TB of data on tape, and the organization's data needs exceeded that limit.

Staffing and operating costs were also troubling to both IT administrators and executive management. For example, manually executing, rotating and moving backup tapes took senior IT staff up to 20 hours a week to complete. And the cost of just 2TB of tape data averaged \$90,000 annually. These factors made it exceedingly difficult and costly to ensure complete backups on a consistent and reliable basis.

"Once we started adding more virtual machines and servers, it got to a point where we couldn't even get a full backup on a weekend," says Jason Reed, senior network engineer at Allergy Partners. "Two days wasn't long enough to get a full backup on all our systems. Then we started staggering it weekend to weekend, with incremental backups during the week. Then, suddenly, we couldn't perform a full backup. The bottleneck was the tape drive. We had a 15-tape drive, but the data we were backing up was more data than could fit. We just ran out of room."

#### **CONSISTENT AVAILABILITY OF PATIENT MEDICAL RECORDS IS CRITICAL**

Because physicians need immediate and easy access to updated patient medical records, the data in the Allergy Partners EHR system must be readily available around the clock. The organization's physicians must also have a reliable backup system to accommodate the need for immediate availability of medical records for unscheduled immunotherapy patients, who make up a major piece of the business and arrive on a daily basis for treatment. As Allergy Partners strives to serve its patients quickly, a reliable backup system is essential to ensure both quality of services and convenience.

"As we transitioned to electronic medical records and away from paper, then the challenge became 'How do you make sure that patient charts are available when the patient arrives?'" explains Marcia Henry, director of information systems and technology at Allergy Partners. "We had to look at backup more along the lines of availability — consistent availability — rather than just backup."

#### **MAKING A MOVE TO DEDUPLICATION**

With their data storage needs growing exponentially, the IT team at Allergy Partners began to look at deduplication

"We can easily perform a full backup on everything with the DR4000 in place."

*Jason Reed, Senior Network Engineer, Allergy Partners*

#### **TECHNOLOGY AT WORK**

##### **SOFTWARE**

[Quest DR4000 Disk Backup and Deduplication Appliance](#)

and the Quest DR4000 Disk Backup and Deduplication Appliance as a solution to their ongoing challenges: “Quest really came into the picture at that point and provided the insight that we needed,” says Henry. “Plus, the extended support gave us the capabilities to do what we needed to do.”

Allergy Partners chose the DR4000 as its data protection and recovery solution because of its innovative deduplication and compression technology. The organization uses the disk-based appliance to remove redundant data from the backup work stream in order to accommodate data growth and reduce its storage footprint.

“Deduplication was one of the main things we started looking at with advanced backup solutions,” says Reed. “We’ve been able to achieve a 71-percent deduplication rate for data retained for 10 days with the Quest DR4000. This is so important because of the increasing amount of data we need to store.”

#### **“ASTRONOMICAL” SAVINGS**

Using its former tape system, Allergy Partners spent an average of \$90,000 a year to back up two terabytes of data. Now, with DR4000 appliances in its primary and secondary data facilities, the organization is able to back up data, retain it for 10 days, replicate it nightly, and deduplicate 12 terabytes of data frequently and at a significantly lower cost per year. Allergy Partners also saves costs up front with the DR4000’s affordable price point and inclusive licensing that features replication and rapid data access (RDA).

“We looked at a comparable product, but what really caught our eye was just how affordable the Quest product was — a fraction of the price without add-on costs as compared to the other backup solution,” says Reed.

“Quest helps us to meet the challenge from management to keep our backup and recovery costs low,” says Henry. “We’ve had the DR4000 since June 2012, so when you multiply the annual savings by that and several more years into the future, the savings are truly astronomical. Plus there are so many benefits that are hard to measure, such as having data readily available and knowing that it’s there when you need it.”

#### **MORE FAMILY TIME FOR IT STAFF**

With the DR4000, the IT team at Allergy Partners contends that the time savings to senior engineers and other IT staff is significant, and actually helps them regain some valuable family time. The IT team estimates that it saves as much as 20 hours per week because the team no longer has to perform such time-consuming tasks as manually searching for specific data and labeling and storing tapes.

#### **COMPLETE NIGHTLY BACKUPS**

“We can easily perform a full backup on everything with the DR4000 in place,” says Reed. “So we have a full backup of all the data, and we also replicate it every night offsite to the second DR4000 appliance. So instead of just going once every week or every few weeks with tape, we can now back up everything, every night, successfully.”

#### **RELIABLE ACCESS AND AVAILABILITY OF EHR DATA**

“IT has now become the engine that runs this company. Every day, our physicians depend on EHR patient records, and our business relies on a lot of valuable financial data too,” says Deborah Scott, chief operating officer at Allergy Partners. “So any time the system is down and we have to go and restore data, it’s not just affecting the immediate vicinity, it’s affecting the practices across all Allergy Partners states, and our business as a whole.”

#### **ABOUT QUEST**

Quest helps our customers reduce tedious administration tasks so they can focus on the innovation necessary for their businesses to grow. Quest® solutions are scalable, affordable and simple-to-use, and they deliver unmatched efficiency and productivity. Combined with Quest’s invitation to the global community to be a part of its innovation, as well as our firm commitment to ensuring customer satisfaction, Quest will continue to accelerate the delivery of the most comprehensive solutions for Azure cloud management, SaaS, security, workforce mobility and data-driven insight.

“We have met the challenge from management to keep our backup and recovery costs low... The savings are truly astronomical with Quest.”

*Marcia Henry, Director of Information Systems and Technology, Allergy Partners*

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