



The Truland Group stays 'beyond current' with flexible backups from project sites and a company-wide disaster recovery plan

A global electrical contractor reduces administrative costs by 60 percent and required storage space by 30 to 40 percent by implementing a Dell AppAssure remote backup and disaster recovery solution.



"In our industry we need a solution that is flexible and adaptable...and AppAssure is clearly a winner in that area."

-Harvey Batra, Director, Information Technology

Customer profile

TRULAND
BEYOND CURRENT

Company	The Truland Group Inc.
Industry	Construction
Country	United States
Employees	1,700
Website	www.truland.com

Business need

The Truland Group needed a flexible backup solution that could adapt to the environmental requirements of mobile worksites around the world. They wanted to lower risk and labor costs by moving from siloed, departmental backups to a comprehensive, automated managed backup and recovery process.

Solution

Choosing Dell AppAssure, The Truland Group's IT staff has insight into the status of backups and data replication throughout the company. They can schedule automatic remote backups based on the needs of individual projects and locations.

Benefits

- Reduced backup labor costs by 60 percent
- Savings of 30 to 40 percent in required storage space
- Unified disaster recovery plan for all company data
- Customizable backup schedules to meet field environmental requirements

Founded in 1913, the Truland Group delivers cutting-edge electrical systems for business, government agencies, institutions, and developers worldwide. The ninth largest electrical contractor in the United States in terms of revenue, the company strives to innovate with new processes and methods to increase their productivity, ensure quality craftsmanship, and reduce project costs. This philosophy has led the company to numerous awards for technical excellence—and lately, it has fostered some big improvements in Truland Group’s disaster recovery process.

“We were so thrilled with the cost savings. We save about 60 percent every month - about \$120,000 to \$130,000 a year.”

Matthew Gentile, P.E., CFO

Time for a switch

The Truland Group’s IT infrastructure is a full Dell server environment. The company recently undertook a large upgrade to their infrastructure, and recently implemented a Dell® Compellent® SAN. In the same spirit, the company began to search for a replacement for their outdated backup and disaster recovery solution. “It was cumbersome, ancient, wasn’t foolproof,” says Harvey Batra, Director, Information Technology. “There was no reporting, no communication flow between the provider and the software. No IT-level insight.”

Dan Damiani, a Dataprise, Inc., consultant who works with Truland Group as a Senior Program Manager agrees. “If something went wrong, the old service provider would let you know, but it wasn’t a proactive measure on their part,” he says. “We were constantly rebooting the servers just to make sure the backup was running. We did an estimate of how much time we were wasting, and it was between 25 and 30 hours a week.” That’s time the IT department’s staff could have spent more productively, improving methods and processes in other departments.

Power failure

Backup and recovery under the old system was costing The Truland Group about \$1,800 per month in administrative labor costs and \$18,000 per month in vendor costs. But this amount was a fraction of what was at risk in the event of a major data loss. Batra notes that just eight hours’ worth of data in the

accounting organization could result in lost productivity of \$100,000 to \$150,000.

In order to do offsite recovery, The Truland Group’s IT staff had to detach hard drives from the server and mail them to the service provider--a slow road to data availability. But, says Damiani, “Just having the stress of having to think about it happening was enough of a problem.”

Technology at work

Hardware

Dell Compellent SC8000
Storage Center SAN

Dell PowerEdge R820 ESX Host

Dell PowerEdge R420 Utility Servers

Dell PowerEdge R620 servers

Dell PowerEdge R720 servers

Dell PowerEdge R710 servers

Dell Networking S4810 switches

Software

Dell AppAssure®

Microsoft Exchange Server

Microsoft SQL Server®

VMware®

Microsoft Windows Server® 2008



Catalytic converter

Batra's initial assignment at Truland Group turned out to be the catalyst for the change to a real, automated offsite replication solution. After joining the company originally to manage its financial application, he designed a departmental disaster-recovery plan that included onsite incremental backups more regularly. With his new plan in place for the financial application, he approached Damiani to see how he could ensure that the backup data was also replicated offsite.

"The part that was missing was, 'How are we integrating backups into an organization-wide disaster recovery plan?'" says Batra. "We were doing these backups of individual software entities, and it wasn't tying into the bigger picture."

Amping up

In searching for a comprehensive solution, Truland Group considered Asigra™, CommVault®, and StorageCraft® ShadowProtect®, but chose the Dataprise Managed Remote Backup with Disaster Recovery (MRB-DR) offering, which includes the award-winning Dell AppAssure software. MRB-DR provides Dell AppAssure software as the heart of a flexible, fully managed, and centrally monitored backup solution.

And, says Batra, "Dataprise not only came in with a good solution through Dell AppAssure, but they also brought it in at a cost that is much, much less than what we were paying."

Pivotal in the selection of Dell AppAssure was its capability to customize automatic remote backups based on the needs of individual projects and locations.

"We're a project-based company," Batra explains, "so we have moving sites. We have trailers located on job sites with construction going on, and we need to be able to pull that data and comprehensively back it up. We're an electrical company delivering the best in value and are always prudent about maintaining project cost, this also includes managing fuel/energy cost during the project build phase through scheduled power shut downs. Hence, we wanted the flexibility for our backup plans to adopt to the scheduled power shut down; and backup the data before the shut down and automatically turn off the server safely."

IT can schedule automatic remote backup of files, directories, or entire disks in very near real-time, whenever and wherever necessary. "AppAssure works wonderfully," says Batra. "It's adaptable and flexible, so we can program and schedule the backups for each site based on its environment."

Environmentally friendly

The Truland Group's IT department is well integrated with every department in the company, and is tasked with providing the technology, methods, and processes that will enable business success. AppAssure helps them meet their mission to automate processes where possible, provide real-time information visibility, and improve operational productivity.

"AppAssure will let you combine and integrate your disaster recovery in a single unified view for your backups throughout the organization."

*Harvey Batra,
Director, Information Technology*



“We want our workforce to have the right information at the right time, through the media available to them. In our industry we need a solution that is flexible and adaptable, and it’s going to work based on the environment that it’s put forth into. And AppAssure is clearly a winner in that area. But also, from a general IT industry point of view, AppAssure will let you combine and integrate your disaster recovery in a single unified view for your backups throughout the organization.”

*Harvey Batra,
Director, Information Technology*

Using AppAssure, Truland Group’s IT staff can verify backup status and data replication progress, and manually initiate restoration of individual files and folders, via a web-based interface. They no longer have to guess what’s going on with their backups. The company’s 10TB+ of data is automatically replicated to a secure remote site for disaster recovery. The business risk of data loss is minimized, and the labor costs of making backups and physically shipping drives for DR have been eliminated.

“We were so thrilled with the cost savings.” says Matthew Gentile, P.E., CFO of The Truland Group. “We save about 60 percent every month; about \$120,000 to \$130,000 a year. And that’s just the financial benefit. You start to put dollar values for the productivity benefits, and that number will go higher.” Other savings include a reduction of 30 to 40 percent in required storage space due to AppAssure deduplication capabilities. Truland Group is in the process of moving its data to a co-location facility, and anticipates an even larger reduction in backup data when the migration is complete.

Beyond current

The new managed remote backup and disaster recovery solution is a perfect match for a company that offers its customers electrical designs and services that are ‘beyond current.’ Looking ahead, Batra sees full implementation of the Dell Compellent SAN, and a closer integration of data policies with individual project needs.

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