

Colt Technology Services

Colt Technology Services Delivers Self-Service Backup as much as 10x Faster with the Veritas NetBackup Platform and Appliances

To increase backup and recovery service levels and benefits for customers and resellers, Colt Technology Services switched from another vendor's backup technology to the Veritas NetBackup Platform with NetBackup appliances. Results include 2x faster support for new software versions, deployment in a day instead of weeks, up to 10x faster backup, automated replication adopted by 60 percent of customers, and a self-service capability delivering greater control and many new revenue streams for resellers.



colt

Organization profile

Website: www.colt.net

Industry: Technology

Headquarters: London, U.K.

Employees: More than 5,000

Key challenges

Colt Technology Services wanted to enhance backup and recovery capabilities for customers and resellers of its award-winning cloud services.

Solution

Colt replaced another vendor's backup technology with the Veritas NetBackup Platform with NetBackup appliances for advantages in vCloud backup, deduplication, replication, self-service, and more.

Benefits

- 2x faster support for new software versions, enhancing customer service levels
- Quicker time to deploy with backup appliance (less than a day instead of days/weeks)
- Up to 10x faster backup and 10:1 and greater deduplication
- New revenue from replication service consumed by 60% of customers
- Self-service portal adds revenue from dozens of resellers, partners and customers in four countries

Driving 20 percent annual growth

Cloud business models are evolving quickly, and the race is on to deliver new competitive advantages to IT customers. Colt Technology Services is in that race, and is achieving some key milestones. The company has been recognized as a Leader in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Cloud-Enabled European Managed Hosting, and it was named Network Virtualization Industry Operator of the Year 2014. Colt is building on the strength of one of the largest cloud footprints in Europe: a 23-country, 83,000-kilometer network with 21 Colt data centers connects 19,800 buildings. This enables the company to provide hugely scalable service delivery while guaranteeing data sovereignty and local support for more than 80,000 customers. Colt is also a leader in introducing new benefits from virtualization and cloud services. "A few years ago, a customer who asked us for a hosted Microsoft Exchange service might have had to wait weeks for provisioning, and now we can provide it almost instantaneously," says Will Wetton, cloud services product manager at the company. "And with our vCloud platform, we can deliver a dedicated infrastructure in days rather than weeks—and soon that will be almost instantaneous as well."

Colt has developed advantages in backup and recovery that have turned that service, often a secondary offering, into a primary one that is growing at 20 percent per year. Sales accelerated in the past year after Colt switched from another vendor's backup solution to the Veritas NetBackup Platform with NetBackup appliances. The switch enabled many new gains.

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Richard Morris

Solution Line Manager
Colt Technology Services

2x faster support for new software versions

“One of the key reasons we switched to NetBackup is that Veritas development cycles are about twice as fast as at our previous backup vendor,” says Richard Morris, solution line manager, at Colt. “When a new version of an application such as Windows Server or Microsoft SQL Server is released, we’ve seen NetBackup support it within about three months, where our previous backup vendor took about six months—a lag that was too slow for us as a service provider.”

Faster time to value with greater flexibility

Colt can also provide on-site backup protection for customers more easily because Veritas NetBackup appliances deploy quickly. An appliance is an all-in-one solution, combining media server, NetBackup software, and scalable storage, optimized and pre-configured to work together. It removes the complexity associated with building a backup system.

“We absolutely wanted the backup appliance model because we can deploy it less than a day,” Morris says. “A traditional solution of separate backup software, server, and storage would take far longer and would not be practical for us.”

Up to 10x faster backup

Veritas NetBackup enables Colt to take advantage of client-side deduplication. “Deduping at the client, at the customer site, reduces network traffic and backup windows quite dramatically,” says Morris. “We also dedupe at the backup target and the media server.”

The result is a significant reduction in the volume of backed up data. “NetBackup appliances are achieving 10:1 and higher deduplication ratios, and this is critical in enabling us to offer a hybrid service and replicate any significant amount of data from a client site to backup vaults in our data center,” says Morris.

NetBackup Accelerator for VMware technology integrates VMware Changed Block Tracking and NetBackup Accelerator technologies to send only changed blocks from client to media server. “We can now do a full backup in the same or less time that we could previously do an incremental backup,” Morris says. “Backup times are as much as 10 times faster.”

One Colt customer, a consulting company based in Spain, is now able to complete a backup that typically took 3-to-4 days in just four hours.

Enabling vCloud backup and recovery

NetBackup also protects VMware vClouds, copying not just their virtual machines (VMs), but also the metadata that defines a virtual data center, including the relationships between VMs and virtual applications, or vApps. “This is a capability we were waiting for,” says Wetton. “NetBackup captures all the elements that make a vCloud unique.”

About 20 percent of Colt’s vCloud customers take the self-service backup feature set whilst the other 80 percent opt for a managed service under Enterprise Backup and Recovery service which protect the data and applications that Colt hosts for them.

Replication adds new revenue

Both vCloud and Enterprise backup services are standardized on NetBackup and use its Auto Image Replication (AIR) feature to make a new replication service available. This enables customers to send a copy of backed up data automatically from one NetBackup appliance to another in a different Colt data center, further enhancing disaster recovery.

NetBackup AIR sends only deduplicated, changed blocks over the network, along with needed backup catalog information, making backup images available for immediate recovery from any domain or global location. “We see that 60 percent of our backup customers require replication, and we didn’t have this replication capability before. NetBackup AIR is very important to us, enabling a substantial new revenue opportunity.”

Technology environment

- Server platform: Many, including Windows Server, Red Hat Enterprise Linux, VMware vSphere on Cisco UCS
- Applications: Hundreds, including Microsoft Exchange Server and SharePoint Server
- Databases: Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server
- Storage: EMC, SolidFire, NetApp, others
- Tape library: Oracle StorageTek, Quantum

Solutions

- NetBackup™
- NetBackup 5230 Appliances, including
 - NetBackup Accelerator
 - NetBackup Auto Image Replication (AIR)
- NetBackup Self-Service Portal

Services

- Veritas™ Business Critical Services



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Solution Line Manager
Colt Technology Services

NetBackup appliances also have a tape-out capability that is useful to Colt customers. “We give our customers retention policy options, and they typically retain about three months of backup data on disk, and then move any needed audit copies to tape,” explains Morris.

Self-service capability builds new income streams

Customers want more flexibility, control, and agility with their backup services, and Colt provides these capabilities. “We use a self-service portal with NetBackup to put customers in charge and significantly reduce provisioning costs,” says Wetton. “With a single tool, they can manage their own backup infrastructure, choose what gets protected and what policies will protect it, and also run their own recoveries.”

Value-added resellers (VARs) use the self-service portal for NetBackup at Colt as an engine for delivering backup and restore services to multiple customers. VAR customers can sign on and create a new account, with the portal ensuring strict separation and security between customer environments. “Everyone in the chain, from Colt to the reseller to the end customer, achieves value and benefits with the self-service portal,” says Wetton. “We’re serving dozens of resellers, partners, and customers in four countries, and growing rapidly.”

Meeting critical SLAs

NetBackup is achieving a 98 percent backup success rate. “Compared with most enterprise backup configurations, that’s pretty high,” Morris says. “Recovery is 100 percent—if it’s backed up, it will be recovered. We’re also working with Veritas to develop backup performance SLAs around gigabit-per-hour throughput. That could possibly be an industry first.”

Colt contracts with Veritas Business Critical Services to get the highest level of technical support. “Veritas Business Critical Services has been an important backstop for us,” Morris notes. “We’ve had challenges in the past in which Veritas has gone beyond the call of duty and brought us back online. It’s very useful.”

Veritas is a strategic partner, Morris notes. “The Veritas team really understands the service provider business,” he says. “The way we buy, consume, and price backup is different than the typical reseller or enterprise customer, and Veritas knows how to meet all of our different requirements.”

“Colt has partnered with Veritas to integrate NetBackup technologies in their services platform to provide highly available and flexible backup, recovery and replication services to organizations with complex virtualized infrastructures. Colt is able to deliver higher SLAs, predictable OPEX costs and lower data loss risks to customers, providing clients with reassurance that their critical data is being protected by Veritas NetBackup.”

Ana Pinczuk

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For more information

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