

Seattle University Moves to the Cloud with Cohesity for Modern Backup and Recovery



INDUSTRY

Education

USE CASE

Backup and Recovery,
Dev/Test, Long-Term Retention

COHESITY PRODUCTS

DataPlatform, DataProtect,
CloudSpin

SOLUTION PARTNERS

AWS, Microsoft Azure, Pure
Storage, VMware

CHANNEL PARTNER

Datec

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1891, Seattle University (SU) is a Jesuit Catholic university located in the heart of Seattle and is consistently ranked among the top 10 universities in the West by U.S. News & World Report. The university offers more than 120 undergraduate, graduate and certificate programs to more than 7,200 students. Seattle University employs over 2,000 faculty and staff and manages an operating budget of \$210M.

CHALLENGES

Over the last several years, the IT team at SU has transitioned more of its server environment to the public cloud. While the physical data center is located close to the main campus, SU aims to move the majority of its servers to the cloud, and increase its overall cloud footprint in the next few years. The university recently deployed Cisco UCS for virtual desktop, and other hybrid services like Office 365 email will shift to cloud providers like Microsoft Azure and AWS. SU has more than 250 VMs spread across 14 hosts, and a Pure Storage array backs up SQL databases and file storage.

Each department at the university has its own shared Windows folder with a unique set of permissions, which was becoming a complex challenge when it came to data recovery. SU experienced a lot of recovery failures with its existing solution, as well as frequent problems related to maintenance and backups, resulting in decreased efficiency for the IT team. The university manages multiple small SANs, and aims to consolidate more of its environment to Pure.

"Cohesity is more than just a modern backup solution for Seattle University. Cohesity provides the flexibility for seamless integration in a hybrid environment. With it, we have the ability to push data to the cloud and back, allowing for quick and easy restoration of files, folders, or server level objects. Additionally, Cohesity gives us the capability to quickly and easily restore objects within file servers that have a unique set of permissions."

AARON BORUFF,
Application Administrator

Data growth was affecting requirements, especially with rapid growth in video editing files for marketing and communications. Data is retained on a shared network indefinitely, but the IT team wants to shift data to the cloud, as well as retire its remaining legacy servers.

SU aimed for the following capabilities in a secondary storage solution:

- Reliable and simplified next-gen backup and recovery platform
- Ability to expand beyond modern backup and recovery for dev/test
- Native integration with leading public clouds, including AWS and Azure
- Reduce cost and simplify management with unified web-scale solution

SOLUTION

Seattle University chose Cohesity over Rubrik to implement a modern backup and recovery solution. Cohesity empowers SU to protect, store and manage secondary data, and also extend the web-scale platform for a dev/test environment.

Cohesity is backing up all virtual and physical servers, including physical data. Once fully transitioned off its legacy architecture, SU will use Cohesity for its entire production environment. SU leverages Cohesity's native integration with AWS to speed its migration to the cloud from a single pane of glass. The IT team will soon implement Cohesity's integration with Microsoft Exchange Online for greater flexibility and simplicity to protect Office 365.

RESULTS

Since deploying Cohesity, Seattle University has seen impressive results across its entire IT environment. The IT team can leverage Cohesity's hybrid solution for on-premises and cloud storage options to save cost and increase agility. Backups have reduced from hours to minutes, and with Cohesity's global deduplication capabilities, SU gains more than 60 times its provisioned storage space capacity. Size reduction for all backups provides tremendous cost savings per terabyte both for on-premises and cloud data.

In the past when resolving backup issues, SU could incur three to four months of extra premier support costs, which quickly added up in its unreliable environment. The university saved cost in maintenance and licensing, and will continue to see CapEx savings as it migrates off all legacy systems. In addition, IT staff are freed up to focus on business critical operations instead of frequent issues with data restores.

Cohesity enables flexibility for simplified data retention. Data that is more than six months old is now moved to the cloud, and the intuitive UI is a huge win for IT staff that may not specialize in backup and recovery.

Now, Seattle University can test and develop with secondary data on-premises or in the cloud. With Cohesity CloudSpin, SU can now spin up a new VM in the cloud, and easily provision new apps and VMs in Azure for dev/test using Cohesity backups. This helps SU avoid downtime, as well as easily test updates and patches outside of production. With many servers at 100 percent CPU usage, Cohesity allows SU to pull all dev/test functions outside of production without running a script against an active directory. This capability has extended to many departments at the university, such as Athletics and Marketing, to update applications in the cloud in an enclosed test network.

Seattle University realized many benefits with Cohesity including:

- CapEx and OpEx savings in migrating from legacy solutions
- Cohesity's CloudSpin allows dev/test for on-premises VMs to test in Azure
- RPO and RTO policies now established, with backups reduced from hours to minutes
- Native integration with leading cloud providers and Microsoft Exchange Online