



# The Master Group Returns 125 Days of Productivity with Cisco-Cohesity Solution

## Master

**INDUSTRY**  
HVAC/R Distributor

**USE CASE**  
Backup and Recovery, Disaster Recovery, Long-Term Retention and Archival

**COHESITY SOLUTIONS**  
DataPlatform, DataProtect, CloudArchive, Helios

**SOLUTION PARTNERS**  
Cisco, AWS

**CHANNEL PARTNER**  
Insight Canada

### Key Benefits

- 900 percent restore time reduction with regularly faster data restores
- Doubled data center capacity due to storage efficiency
- 125 production days returned to the company by eliminating tape backups
- 75 percent reduction in time for full backups

As Master Group IT began to set its five-year strategic direction, consolidating data center operations including improving backups was high priority. The organization elected to migrate to a Cisco hyperconverged environment and required a complementary backup solution that would span on-premises and cloud environments. Since deploying Cisco HyperFlex for primary (latency-sensitive) data and Cohesity DataPlatform for all other data in a single, unified architecture on Cisco Unified Computing System (UCS), Master Group has transformed its data management. The distributor has boosted reliability and end-user experience, reduced costs, and created efficiencies resulting in 900% improvement in data recovery time and 125 days of IT productivity returned.

### Challenges

Master Group IT believed it could gain efficiencies by consolidating its data center operations to two locations—one production, the other for disaster recovery (DR). In addition to cutting costs, the team hoped modernization and replacing Quest Rapid Recovery would accelerate its slow and cumbersome backups. SQL and Exchange workloads in its 99 percent virtualized environment often took more than two days to back up and consumed extensive troubleshooting hours. Consolidated, modern infrastructure would also help IT staff more easily move from tape backups to leveraging cloud for long-term retention, meeting speed and security requirements to access and manage valuable data across its enterprise.

The IT team consolidated its existing data center environment with Cisco HyperFlex and Cisco UCS and began monitoring operations through cloud-enabled Cisco Intersight, while identifying a new, easier backup and recovery solution. The primary goals of its modernization efforts were to reduce the number of vendors it engaged and technology overhead, simplify data management, and cut costs. That's why the introduction through Insight Canada to Cisco strategic partner Cohesity for data management was particularly interesting to Master Group.

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"A true backup solution for Cisco HyperFlex, Cohesity on Cisco UCS combined with Cisco Intersight has freed our team to focus on valuable projects while resting easy because our environment is secure and data is restored in minutes. We've significantly simplified data management and gained new insights and efficiencies across the board, returning tremendous benefits to our entire organization."

François LePage, Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Manager, The Master Group

## Solution

Master set up proof-of-concept environments to evaluate Cohesity, Commvault, and Rubrik. In head-to-head comparisons, Cohesity demonstrated superior speed, easier management, and more comprehensive data protection.

"Cohesity backed up data twice as fast as the other two solutions," according to François LePage, Master Group Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Manager. "That sealed the deal for us. Cohesity was clearly the best solution to solve our backup challenges, help us extend to cloud, and reduce our costs going forward."

Master deployed Cohesity DataProtect and Cohesity DataPlatform on Cisco UCS for backup, recovery, and data protection, along with CloudArchive to store data in AWS Glacier for long-term retention. That eliminated legacy tape backup headaches. The distributor has two Cohesity clusters and replicates data to its secondary co-location (COLO) environment to ensure reliable DR.

DataPlatform's native snapshot integration with Cisco HyperFlex ensures VM protection workflows are completed more efficiently, elevating end-user experience by alleviating the performance impact of VM stuning and IO penalties on mission-critical ERP and CRM VMs. It also allows the distributor to move away from physical servers for low-latency backup. Software-defined Cohesity works seamlessly across data centers, freeing valuable IT resources for more innovative projects. Through Cisco Intersight and Cohesity Helios, the IT team has complete visibility into its backup servers and data, overcoming previous day-to-day management obstacles.

A key Cohesity feature is instant mass restore, which allows the IT team to restore VMs in a matter of minutes, at scale. "The Google-like search capability has made it easy to restore data regardless of knowing if the data was located across files, VMs, or folders.

The entire process is more efficient," says LePage. "In our previous environment, it could take several days to restore our largest Exchange backup, but now, with Cohesity, we can accomplish a restore in a matter of hours."

Additionally, the distributor is able to back up an AlwaysOn Availability Group (AAG) of SQL servers with Cohesity. Its previous backup product was unable to protect databases in an availability group and prevented Master from taking steps to ensure high availability for its data.

## Results

Master is no longer challenged to back up or restore Exchange servers, and backup times have dropped from several hours to 45 minutes for its largest servers.

By replacing tape backup with CloudArchive and AWS Glacier, Master has improved operational resources by 50 percent, improved SLAs by 2x, and reduced incremental backup times by more than 80 percent. LePage estimates the reallocation of IT resources has returned 125 production days back to the company.

Integrated with Cisco UCS, Cohesity also helps The Master Group reduce storage consumption and meet RTOs.

Deduplication and compression that was previously 1:8, with Cohesity is 3:1. A mirrored Cohesity cluster at the COLO enables the IT team to meet a four-hour RTO with shorter data repatriation.

Overall, Master has realized many benefits with the joint Cisco-Cohesity solution simplifying data management including:

- 900 percent restore time reduction with regularly faster data restores
- Doubled data center capacity due to storage efficiency
- 125 production days returned to the company by eliminating tape backups
- 75 percent reduction in time for full backups
- 3-5 second latency savings for ERP and CRM apps achieved by native snapshots, improving end-user experience

The Master Group plans to extend Cohesity to back up Microsoft OneDrive and SharePoint. In addition, the IT team expects to use Cohesity Marketplace app CyberScan to reduce risk by assessing its global cyber exposure through automated scans of backup snapshots.

## About The Master Group

A leader in the heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration sector for over 67 years, The Master Group has been named one of Canada's best-managed companies since 2010 and is the largest independent HVAC/R distributor in Canada. The company employs over 900 dynamic and devoted individuals who serve the industry at more than 43 branches and five distribution centers from coast to coast.



Learn more at [Cohesity.com](https://www.cohesity.com)

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