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Case Study

Pyramid8 Finds Cloud-Based Backup Solution Comes Through after Building Collapse

- UK-based recruitment consultancy
- Microsoft SQL server databases
- Dramatically faster and reliable backup and recovery solution

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SUMMARY

Recruitment consultancy Pyramid8 had historically relied on tape-based backup to protect data across the entire organization, which included two databases containing vital client and applicant information. As a consultancy that provides talent to both the private and public sectors in the U.K., including the National Health Service (NHS), the firm began to experience escalating challenges in its backup architecture—particularly as the organization grew. The firm housed all of its backup data in-house, with no offsite solution to provide greater data security, and no system in place for data recovery in the event of data loss. These reasons combined with the consultative support by U.K.-based Clovertec, a provider of local and national IT support, disaster recovery, and backup services powered by Asigra, precipitated the firm's move toward a cloud-based data protection solution. The decision paid off handsomely when Pyramid8's office building collapsed, resulting in the company's inability to access its server containing valuable client and applicant data. Clovertec was able to conduct an immediate emergency restore to gain access to the data, saving the firm the four weeks of downtime it would have taken for the server to be manually recovered and helping to avoid significant revenue loss.

CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

Pyramid8 is a U.K.-based recruitment consultancy that specializes in providing local recruitment service for permanent and temporary staffing requirements in Yorkshire and surrounding areas. The firm also provides project managers, programme managers, business analysts, and project office staff on a permanent and contract basis to both the public and private sectors in the United Kingdom. Located in West Yorkshire in the city of Leeds, the firm has 7 employees. Though a small firm, Pyramid8 is extremely data-dependent, providing talent to organizations of all sizes, including the National Health Service (NHS). In fact, with two databases that contain client information dating back 7 years as well as more than 30,000 applicant resumes and CVs, data is considered the lifeblood of the entire company. As the firm continued to add clients and applicants, the amount of data backed up through its onsite, tape-based system expanded as well. As headaches involved in managing this data influx rose, it became clear that manual tape backup—with no offsite solution and no plan for data recovery—was becoming too risky, inefficient, and cost-prohibitive. These factors led Pyramid8 to seek a more reliable and economical backup and recovery system—one that the firm could call upon for speedy data restoration in the face of a major disaster.

BUSINESS SITUATION

Prior to May 2011, tape backup had been Pyramid8's only data protection technology across both of its databases. Yet as the company continued to experience rapid expansion in both its client and applicant lists for its recruitment and staffing services, the manual process of keeping up with the expanding storage requirements became difficult to manage. Pyramid8's Director of Finance and Operations, Andrew Willsher, who has responsibility for directing the firm's corporate technology and strategy, became increasingly concerned about the consultancy's complete lack of a disaster recovery solution. Willsher was also concerned that Pyramid8 stored all of its data in-house, with no backup copy available offsite.

> "Clovertec is a local IT services provider that we completely trust. Not only do we like the fact that they are in our local area, but we also appreciate that they are responsive. When we phone them they know us and offer very personalized service. What's more, the Clovertec-Asigra data protection solution offers a managed service capability, which means that we no longer have to worry about how to backup and restore our data since that's all handled by the Clovertec team."
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> **Andrew Willsher, Director of Finance and Operations**
> **Pyramid8**

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In response, Willsher first tried shifting from tape to an electronic-disk-based solution, but this did not fully address the firm's concerns. So Willsher next contacted local IT services provider Clovertec to take over the full management of Pyramid8's data storage and recovery needs. Clovertec, which offers specialized data services for small and medium-sized businesses, recommended their solution DataGuardian, powered by Asigra. DataGuardian provided the consultancy with the ability to rely on an offsite copy of its data, as well as a reliable data-recovery solution in the event of data loss. Willsher was so impressed with Clovertec and DataGuardian that he chose to partner with the service provider right away, needing no further investigation of competitive options. By offering dramatically faster and more reliable backups and recoveries, the new solution from Clovertec promised to offer significant advantages for data protection.

"Like many data-intensive companies in a continuous growth phase, Pyramid8 had understandable concerns about needing an offsite solution for backup, as well as a reliable solution for data recovery. Finding the right solution and company to partner with was key to resolving those issues. Clovertec is a trusted IT Provider who has become an extension of our team, easing our minds about our data security."

Andrew Willsher, Director of Finance and Operations, Pyramid8

SOLUTION

Clovertec's cloud backup service is deployed across Pyramid8's organization, covering one server that supports two SQL databases—one for client data and one for applicant data—stored as flat files in programs such as Microsoft Word. Laptops are also networked into the server and protected by the solution.

Clovertec's service is powered by Asigra software, the industry's leading agentless cloud-based data recovery software with over one million installations worldwide.

The agentless software is built for efficient operation and easily integrates with public, private, and hybrid cloud architectures. Pyramid8 highlighted the following capabilities as key factors for selecting the solution:

- Cloud-based offsite backup for disaster recovery
- Device agnostic support for a wide range of computing devices including laptops
- Simple, centralized backup that eliminates the need for multiple-point solutions
- Highly scalable design that expands as the company's needs require
- Ability to reduce the cost of backup using Asigra's policy-based Backup Lifecycle Management (BLM) function which stores less critical data on archival storage platforms
- NIST FIPS 140-2 certified security with AES-256 encryption in-flight and at-rest

ENVIRONMENT

- Single-location IT environment that supports 7 employees in West Yorkshire
- One server on site that supports two SQL databases—one for client data and one for applicant data
- Data protected includes flat files in programs including Microsoft Word
- Staff laptops are networked into the server
- Hybrid cloud backup deployment with both high-performance local recovery and remote disaster recovery capabilities.

ASIGRA CLOUD-BASED DATA RECOVERY DELIVERS

- Single integrated solution for all data protection needs
- Policy-based protection based on the user's IT environment and recovery requirements
- Ability to transition internal IT resources to more strategic operations
- Data encryption that secures data in-flight and at-rest
- High-performance data recovery compared to tape.

RESULTS

Three years after implementing the Clovertec data protection solution powered by Asigra, Pyramid8 experienced an unthinkable disaster that endangered all of their data. In March 2014, Pyramid8's office building collapsed during renovations. The firm's servers became inaccessible, buried under piles of rubble. Willsher immediately called Clovertec to begin data recovery on the Saturday that the disaster occurred. By the time Willsher reached the office, Clovertec's Managing Directors were already on site. Within a short period, they had accessed Pyramid8's data in their Nottingham Data Center and started a restore to a standby server in the Clovertec office, as well as to an offsite hard drive. Clovertec took this two-pronged approach to ensure prompt access to the data. The IT services provider also set up an Office365 server to allow for continued receipt of Pyramid8's emails.

By the following Monday morning at 9:00 AM—just 48 hours after the collapse—Clovertec had not only made all of the firm's data available again, but the IT provider had also set up Pyramid8's staff to use workspace in the Clovertec office. Due to the quick response of the Clovertec team and their DataGuardian solution powered by Asigra, zero downtime was experienced and Pyramid8's team was able to get fully up and running very quickly. Without the Clovertec solution, the firm would have had to wait four weeks until the server was recovered from the collapsed building, which would have significantly impacted the firm's business. Willsher

estimates that the cost of not being able to access the client information and CVs of applicants for that length of time would have likely cost Pyramid8 more than £50,000 in lost revenue.

In addition to the vote of confidence Pyramid8 has in Clovertec based on this successful disaster-recovery effort, Willsher notes several other unexpected strategic benefits that the firm has also achieved in the three-and-a-half years since implementing DataGuardian. Having ongoing disaster-recovery services provides everyone in the firm with peace of mind, knowing that there is an "insurance policy" in place for their data. Plus, having all data now backed up offsite adds an additional layer of security and business comfort, knowing that the data is well protected.

> "Pyramid8's business is based on data—without their data, they have no business, which would result in loss of revenue and income for their staff. By partnering with Clovertec for data-protection services powered by Asigra, Pyramid8 can rely on a solution that they know works, boosting their level of confidence in their data security tremendously."
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> **Charlie Buckley, Managing Director, Clovertec**

About Asigra

Trusted since 1986, Asigra provides organizations around the world the ability to recover their data now from anywhere through a global network of partners who deliver cloud backup and recovery services as public, private and/or hybrid deployments. As the industry's first enterprise agentless cloud-based recovery software to provide data backup and recovery of servers, virtual machines, endpoint devices, databases and applications, SaaS and IaaS based applications, Asigra lowers the total cost of ownership, reduces recovery time objectives, eliminates silos of backup data by providing a single consolidated repository, and provides 100% recovery assurance. Asigra's revolutionary patented Recovery License Model provides organizations with a cost effective data recovery business model unlike any other offered in the storage market. Asigra has been recognized as a Gartner Cool Vendor and has been included in the Gartner Magic Quadrant for Enterprise Backup and Recovery Software since 2010.

More information on Asigra can be found at www.recoveryiseverything.com