

## Case Study

### Special Olympics Upgrades to Cloud-Based Solution for Advantages in Data Retention and Recovery over Tape Backup



- Non-profit organization based in Ireland
- Physical and virtual servers across multiple locations
- Cloud-based solution provides faster and more reliable backup and recovery services.



**Special Olympics**  
*Ireland*

**Another9**

## SUMMARY

Charity-based organization Special Olympics was a long-time user of a legacy tape-based backup solution to protect the data at its Irish branch, headquartered in Dublin. In 2012, the group began to question the ability of tape to effectively meet its backup and recovery needs.

The organization had started to experience many common challenges associated with tape-based solutions, including data retention problems and the inability to recover data in a timely manner. Also, a growing number of data security requirements continued to surpass the capabilities of tape, leaving the organization lacking proper assurance of compliance with the Irish Data Protection Requirements.

After an internal review, Special Olympics found that tape was insufficient as a long-term data retention solution. After considering multiple options for cloud-based data recovery technology, the organization decided to upgrade from its legacy solution to public cloud deployment using Another 9's cloud backup service powered by Asigra.

## CUSTOMER OVERVIEW

Established in 1968, Special Olympics is dedicated to empowering children and adults with intellectual disabilities to develop physical fitness and demonstrate courage. The international nonprofit organization provides opportunities for Special Olympians to participate in year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports with other Special Olympics athletes and the community. The Irish branch of Special Olympics is based in Dublin, Ireland. The organization was challenged to continuously safeguard a large volume of donation and participant data in relation to its events and programs. This combined with the growth of the organization and increasing mandates to meet Irish Data Protection Requirements led the Irish branch of Special Olympics to seek a public cloud backup solution. The goal was to aid regulatory compliance while improving operational performance.

## OPERATIONAL SITUATION

Tape backup via the legacy solution BackupExec had been the long-time primary data protection technology for the Irish branch of Special Olympics. The branch protected terabytes of data across four separate locations. The organization used mostly physical servers but also relied on some standalone VMware ESX virtual servers throughout multiple locations. The protected data were mostly files but also included SQL, MySQL, and Exchange data.

## ENVIRONMENT

- Protection of terabytes of data
- Data recovery enabled at four separate locations
- Combination of physical and virtual (VMware ESX) servers across multiple sites
- Data consisting of mostly files but also including SQL, MySQL, and Exchange
- Hybrid cloud backup deployment with both local and remote 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
- Optimization of IT resources for enhanced utilization
- Data encryption that secures data in-flight and at-rest with full support of Irish compliance requirements
- High performance data recovery compared to tape.

“We were unhappy with slow, tape-based recovery, which was falling short on several fronts,” said Niall Callahan, IT Director, Special Olympics (Irish branch). As a public charity-based organization, we need our data to remain both securely stored and accessible over extended periods of time to meet compliance mandates. The only option that made sense was upgrading our backup infrastructure to public cloud backup. The new solution from Another 9 provides both local and remote recovery and the ability to meet our security and recovery time objectives.”

However, several ongoing issues caused the branch's five-person IT department to question the reliability of tape as a backup medium. IT realized that the branch was starting to surpass tape's capabilities when the group began experiencing data retention issues—as well as having trouble with timely data recovery. The organization was also spending too much time on the management of its tape backup platform. With its large volume of sensitive donation and participant data related to its events and programs, Special Olympics had a large volume of data restoration requests that needed to be turned around quickly. Yet the tape-based solution was slowing down the recovery process, reducing efficiency. These continuous challenges—combined with a growing number of regulatory issues based on the Irish Data Protection Requirements for data security—resulted in the need for the organization to upgrade its approach to backup and recovery. Having tapes stored in four different locations exposed the data to potential loss and access by unknown persons. Additionally, data recovery involved the retrieval of tapes and required outdated search technology to track down data for restoration. This process often required days or weeks, increasing the need to modernize its backup capabilities.

In response, Special Olympics worked with IT services provider, Another 9, to deploy a public cloud-based data recovery solution powered by Asigra. The organization had previously partnered with Asigra for other data solutions and had been very pleased with the results. Founded in 2000 as a specialist disaster recovery provider, Another 9 expanded its offerings to include global cloud services as well. The Dublin-based business continuity service provider offers its customers end-to-end secure computing infrastructure and data management services to reduce costs and achieve higher levels of operational up-time. With physical locations for data recovery in Dublin, including Business Recovery Operations (Hot-Site) Center and Data Center facilities, the new backup technology from Another 9 and Asigra promised to deliver much faster and more reliable backup and recovery services—without the dated management or excessive time requirements of tape solutions.

## SOLUTION

Another 9's cloud backup service for data protection was deployed for the Irish branch of Special Olympics in 2012 across a combination of physical and virtual servers. The new solution automated the group's backup and recovery system, completely replacing its outdated tape management method. With new multi-site integrated backup, including offsite backup capabilities, the organization instantly had greater flexibility for offsite incorporation.

The solution delivered by Another 9 is powered by Asigra Cloud Backup™ software, the industry's leading cloud-based data recovery software with over one million installations worldwide. The software is built for efficient operation and easily integrates with public, private, and hybrid cloud architectures. Asigra's agentless software architecture provides for simple deployment and hands-free management while providing advanced features that include global deduplication, automated mass deployment, autonomic healing, and validation restore capabilities. Special Olympics highlighted following capabilities as key factors for selecting the solution:

- Support for both physical and virtualized IT environments
- High-performance remote backup and recovery
- Long-term data recoverability to meet compliance mandates
- NIST FIPS 140-2 certified security with AES-256 encryption in-flight and at-rest.

---

“As a trusted advisor to the Irish branch of Special Olympics, we understand the organization's needs to have data restored quickly and often, said Peter Fogarty, Senior Account Manager, Another 9. By partnering with Asigra, Another 9 is able to address those concerns for Special Olympics and also ensure that the organization meets the Irish Data Protection Requirements for database safety and security. Another 9's end-to-end, fully managed data backup and recovery services ensure both efficiency and security.”

---

---

“Data security is a top IT priority at Special Olympics to protect donation and participant data. The cloud backup service from Another 9 and Asigra delivers a secure solution for both backup and data recovery. The solution has helped the group as a whole see significant improvements in resource savings, manageability, and performance—as well as reliability and security.”

**Niall Callahan, IT Director  
Special Olympics (Irish Branch)**

---

## RESULTS

As a long-time customer of Asigra, the Special Olympics was already pleased with the IT provider's track record of excellent service and support, which allowed for the flexibility to scale up and down as the group's needs required. Approaching the second-year anniversary of the organization's cloud backup deployment delivered through Another 9, Callahan listed the top four business benefits achieved with the Asigra-based service.

First is automated backup and recovery, which increased the efficiency of the organization dramatically by completely eliminating time-consuming and expensive processes related to tape management. Second is multi-site integrated backup; the group benefited from offsite data backups that allowed greater flexibility for offsite incorporation. Third is the increased security of its large volume of confidential donation and participant data. Fourth is greatly improved data recovery performance, which dropped from days to hours since the upgrade from tape. The organization has already conducted several file recoveries since implementing the new system.

From a cash flow perspective, the organization quantifies savings of at least \$3K per month because of the reduction in hardware, software and management costs. Additionally, IT personnel who had previously been mired in tape-based management projects were now freed up for reassignment to more mission-centric IT initiatives.

---

## 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](http://www.recoveryiseverything.com)

