

MSP avoids appliance capital expenses, offers clients software-based disaster recovery

EDSI offers Quest® QoreStor™ to its managed service clients to lower storage costs, increase data protection and bring cloud tiering to backup and disaster recovery.



CUSTOMER PROFILE

EDSI 

TENACIOUS TECHNOLOGY™

Company Enterprise Data Solutions, Inc. (EDSI)
Industry Managed service provider (MSP)
Country USA (Ohio)
Website www.edsi.us.com

BUSINESS NEED

EDSI's small and medium business (SMB) clients needed backup and disaster recovery but could not afford dedicated appliances and software licenses for six to 20 TB of storage.

SOLUTION

Through Quest's MSP program, EDSI uses QoreStor to offer software-based data protection services through Veeam Backup & Replication, with and without the CapEx of appliances. They can add licenses and increase storage space as their backup and recovery business grows.

BENEFITS

- Assured SMB clients of smooth, scalable path to disaster recovery and backup using software
- Lowered storage requirement through source-side deduplication when creating backups and replicating
- Enabled support for Veeam repository without expensive, enterprise-grade license

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

- Data protection



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Jeff Manuszak, CTO, EDSI Inc.

When you see the hurricane coming, you can assume that it's too late to verify your backups and test your disaster recovery procedures.

EDSI is a managed service provider that offers professional services and data center hosting, extending to cloud-based backup, disaster recovery and replication.

They feel their clients' pain when it comes to figuring out how to protect ever-increasing amounts of data. They have helped clients plan for compliance, business continuity and high availability and seen companies scramble to back up and replicate while in the path of a natural disaster. Their pursuit of a right-sized approach to data protection has been a long one.

LOOKING FOR DISASTER RECOVERY WITH AND WITHOUT AN APPLIANCE

EDSI has sold and supported Dell (now Quest) Disaster Recovery hardware for years. It has enterprise customers who like to unbox and go with a pre-engineered solution. But disaster recovery with that kind of appliance represented a major capital expense for small to medium-sized businesses (SMBs).

"We had trouble selling appliances," says Jeff Manuszak, CTO of EDSI. "The smallest DR appliance held 6 TB but cost around \$30,000 out the door for the first piece. And that was no guarantee that our customers wouldn't run out of space, considering how fast they were generating and storing data. So they would do the math and say, 'If it's that high already, then getting up to 10 or 20 TB will cost way too much.' They faced the prospect of needing a 20 TB tray that cost \$50,000, and having to buy hardware plus software. Six figures for a single appliance made it a tough sell for us."

And then, as a managed service provider, EDSI wanted to purchase appliances for in-house use and resell services based on them to customers. "Again, the cost barrier was too high," continues Manuszak. "Given our size and the size of our customers, we saw too much risk in making that investment and trying to charge it back through services."

Looking at their customers' priorities, EDSI opted for QoreStor as a software-based platform for backup and disaster recovery.

Besides using and offering dedicated appliances, they can now offer a virtual appliance, both in the cloud and on premises with VMware.

WHEN IS A 20TB TENANT NOT A 20TB TENANT?

EDSI had been accustomed to offering its customers backup to ordinary disks and redundant arrays of inexpensive disks (RAIDs) using Microsoft Storage Spaces, without deduplication or compression. Shortly after switching to QoreStor they noticed the huge advantage of source-side, variable-block deduplication that, combined with built-in compression and encryption, can reduce storage requirements by up to 95 percent.

"Deduplication helps us out of our storage space squeeze," says Manuszak. "The problem is that our old backup software needed to write a full, new backup before deleting the old one. So a customer may have paid for, say, a 20TB tenant, but we may actually have used up to 60 TB, just because of limitations in the backup software."

EDSI faced the unpleasant prospect of charging its customers more. Until they started using QoreStor.

"With the deduplication in QoreStor, we were achieving 5:1 space savings after only 30 days of use," says Manuszak. "The system doesn't run out of space during storage operations like writing additional full backup copies or moving data from one place to another. Plus, we can keep more of our customers' data easily available to them on disk for a longer period of time before moving it to slower, cheaper storage. That means a higher level of data protection in case we have a problem with a primary storage device and need to restore immediately."

PRODUCTS & SERVICES

SOFTWARE

QoreStor

"With QoreStor, we can back up initially without encryption and turn it on later, and the system will encrypt the backup retroactively. Not many solutions on the market can do that, and it's very useful for compliance purposes."

Jeff Manuszak, CTO, EDSI Inc.

THE QORESTOR-VEEAM COMBINATION

EDSI uses QoreStor to save money in other ways. Some of their customers need tenant replication to yet another location to comply with regulations. To satisfy them, EDSI hosts complete, offsite backup and disaster recovery services with Veeam Backup & Replication.

“Veeam is our backup vendor of choice,” says Manuszak. “We believed that implementing QoreStor with Veeam would go well because their respective products work well together. But the problem is that Veeam’s method of copying a backup sends the same data twice and eats up bandwidth. So we replicate from one QoreStor appliance to another and take advantage of Rapid CIFS, the filter driver in QoreStor that ensures that only unique data is written. It’s an easy way to place the copy in the other location and meet our customers’ needs.”

EDSI also sees licensing and financial advantages to the QoreStor-Veeam integration. One customer purchased a Quantum DXi disk backup system only to find that the Veeam license they had been using did not extend to their new appliance. They needed to upgrade to a more expensive license. However, no extra license is needed for Veeam to run with QoreStor, which is a boon to smaller companies that don’t have or need the more expensive Veeam license.

CLOUD TIERING AND ENCRYPTION

QoreStor is designed for cloud tiering, or storing data in slower, less expensive tiers as it ages. EDSI sees a big advantage to cloud tiering because most of their customers need to keep only the two most recent weeks of backup sets immediately accessible. Their customers in finance and health care, on the other hand, need to keep data for up to seven years for compliance purposes. Cloud tiering helps keep the data accessible and the storage affordable.

Manuszak cites his customers’ need for security and encryption of backups: “Encryption at rest is a must-have, and in-flight encryption is even more important. But the differentiating security feature in QoreStor is that we can back up initially without encryption and turn it on later, and the system will encrypt the backup retroactively. Not many solutions on the market can do that, and it’s very useful for compliance purposes.”

GOOD FIT FOR A MANAGED SERVICE PROVIDER

Both EDSI and their customers can “pay as they grow” with the software-defined storage in QoreStor. Instead of charging flat rates whether the service is being used or not, Quest charges strictly by usage, keeping costs low and reflecting changes in the business. Through the QoreStor Managed Services Provider program, EDSI is purchasing additional licenses in 5-, 10- and 20TB increments as they grow their customer base.

“Adding storage in smaller chunks gives us a solid cloud offering,” says Manuszak. “And on-premises customers can point their replication at us as a disaster recovery hot backup site. As IT moves from on-premises through hybrid to being completely in the cloud, we think QoreStor is a good fit in our environment and our customers’ environment. And, we like having the flexibility to implement QoreStor as a virtual appliance on any hardware we already have. It helps us sell even more.”

ABOUT QUEST SOFTWARE

Quest Software creates technology and solutions that build the foundation for enterprise AI. Focused on data management and governance, cybersecurity and platform modernization, Quest helps organizations address their most pressing challenges and make the promise of AI a reality. Around the globe, more than 45,000 companies including over 90% of the Fortune 500 count on Quest Software. For more information, visit www.quest.com or follow Quest Software on X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn.

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