



Tony's Fine Foods Preserves its Data with SafeData/DR

With more than 400 employees and a fleet of 50+ tractor-trailers, Tony's Fine Foods distributes over 12,000 world-class products from deli and bakery items to coffee and paper goods, to thousands of customers including grocery stores, delis, bakeries, restaurants and pizza parlors. Headquartered in Sacramento, Calif., Tony's Fine Foods is a family-owned and operated business that has been serving customers for more than 50 years.

Challenge

Tony's Fine Foods has experienced significant growth in recent years with the acquisition of two distributors, resulting in additional warehouses, a larger customer base and a greater responsibility for the company's technology infrastructure.

"We have been using tape for our nightly back up," explained Mark Geery, IT director at Tony's. "But, we had no disaster recovery strategy if a major disaster occurred. With a major levy just a few hundred yards away, flooding is always a concern."

Each morning a courier would take the backup tapes to an off-site storage facility. If a system failure occurred, a tape could be retrieved from the facility the next day, but this was a costly process and not very efficient for the growing business.

With the acquisitions also came its initiation to the iSeries platform, which hosts its Retail Warehouse Management System (WMS) and Enterprise Resource Management (ERP) system, handling all of its customer and supplier relationships, finance, accounting, orders and inventory. The growing company is so reliant on the applications hosted on its iSeries platform, a reliable backup and recovery system is imperative for its operational efficiency.

"It was not the weakness of the tape backup system that pushed us to re-evaluate our solutions, but the realization that tape has its limitations," said Geery. "We needed an off-site system readily available to us in a reasonable amount of time if our system failed. As the business was maturing, we knew we needed to find a better insurance policy to protect our mission-critical data."

Solution

One of the first steps for the IT team was to take a step back and understand what data it needed backed up, when and how quickly. It turned to SafeData to better understand its recovery time objectives and devise a strategy.

Trying to quickly merge the employees, processes and systems of the newly acquired companies, Tony's Fine Foods did not have the time to build a new IT infrastructure. It needed a simple, yet robust solution that could be implemented quickly.

"We liked SafeData's month-to-month subscription model and didn't want to outlay money for the hardware and software," explained Geery. "With SafeData providing the data center, we didn't have to find and evaluate co-location centers ourselves. This was a significant times savings for us."

SafeData transferred the food distributor's data and configured the system in just about two days. Tony's has an iSeries model 520 running two partitions – one for its production environment and one for the high availability partition running MIMIX for data replication. Data is sent to SafeData from the second partition each night. SafeData/DR offers disk-to-disk backup and restoration capabilities. Its electronic vaulting solution eliminates the potential for lost, damaged or obsolete tapes and Tony's Fine Foods can access its files via a standard web browser anytime, anywhere.

Return on Investment

"SafeData/DR gives us another layer of redundancy and with the data stored in a secure data center on the opposite coast, we have additional comfort in the event a regional disaster occurs," said Geery.

"SafeData has an in-depth understanding of the iSeries platform as well as the Retail ERP and WMS applications," added Geery. "With this knowledge, they were able to easily understand our system and our needs. We were amazed that the implementation was done remotely and we never met face-to-face. The process was essentially seamless."