

premiere NETWORKS

Premiere Networks speeds VM backup and restore by 50% with Druva Phoenix

80%

Reduction in hours per week spent managing backups

50%

Faster backups and restores compared to Dell EMC Avamar on-premises

About Premiere Networks

Reaching 245 million people each month, Premiere Networks (part of the Katz Media Group, a subsidiary of iHeartMedia) is the number one syndicator of radio programming in the US. Premiere Networks syndicates more than 100 radio programs and services to over 7,100 radio affiliates offering the best in talk, entertainment, and sports programming. Notable personalities include Ryan Seacrest, Steve Harvey, and Glenn Beck.

The challenge

In 2013 Premiere Networks initiated a data center consolidation project, and reduced 60 racks of physical servers into six racks of ~200 virtual machines (VMs) at its California headquarters. At that time, it transitioned from tape backups to two Dell EMC Avamar on-premises grids - one in Sherman Oaks, CA with a disaster recovery (DR) site in San Antonio, Texas. Data was replicated bi-directionally between the two sites.

But, as the volumes of data for its radio and audio files grew, so did the budget required to keep Avamar running. Premiere's Director of IT Ruben Oganessian said, "After using Avamar for three years, we were hit with yearly increases of \$100,000 USD from Dell EMC for hardware and software maintenance."

Additionally, Senior Network Engineer Matt Wade said, "It wasn't just Avamar costs. Every time there was an upgrade, a drive



Challenges

- Yearly increases of \$100,000 USD from Dell EMC Avamar for hardware and software maintenance
- Significant human resource time required to support the two Avamar grids for upgrades, drive replacements, disk failures, and maintenance
- Daily management of Dell EMC Avamar backups by a lean IT team

Solution

- Druva Phoenix protects 80 TB of data on ~200 VMs and 8 Linux and Windows servers
- Druva Phoenix CloudCache feature (a virtual appliance) keeps 10 days of data onsite for faster backups and local restores
- Weekly reports from Druva dashboard on backup status, which has eliminated manual backup management

Results with Druva

- 80% of time previously spent managing backups has been recouped and used to work on other strategic IT projects
- 50% faster backups and restores with Druva CloudCache than with Dell EMC Avamar on-premises
- 5-year TCO reduction with Druva compared to Dell EMC Avamar
- Facilitated corporate cloud migration and eliminated hardware and software maintenance costs and time

replacement or disk failure, I had to find someone to replace it or fly to San Antonio myself. And, I was spending an hour a day just managing Avamar backups.”

The solution

With the industry moving towards cloud and Premiere Networks’ parent company, iHeartMedia, launching a corporate AWS cloud strategy, there were several compelling reasons for Ruben and team to evaluate cloud-based data protection: the escalating costs to support two Avamar grids (the five year total cost of ownership (TCO) was about \$800,000 USD), the need to stop managing onsite hardware and software at the DR location, and a recommendation from the CTO, who had successfully implemented Druva inSync at Katz Media to backup laptops.

“Our CTO suggested we look at Druva Phoenix to backup our ~200 VMs and eight Windows and Linux servers – totalling 80 terabytes (TB) of data - to the cloud. We had gotten our AWS accounts and needed to determine how to move our VMware infrastructure to the cloud. So, we launched a proof of concept (POC) with Druva and were able to use Druva’s disaster recovery functionality to convert VM backups into Amazon machine images (AMIs), and then from the AMIs we launch an instance and we’re done,” said Ruben.

“During the POC we tested the speed of SQL database backups and restores to remote offices and immediately found that Druva in the cloud was 30% faster to backup and restore than our on-premises Avamar grids,” said Matt.

Ruben added, “I’ve been in the industry for 30 years, and I deal with support from many vendors. One of the first things that impressed me about Druva was its support. It’s more preferable in terms of accessibility and interaction than any of the vendors I’ve dealt with.”

Results

Cloud based backup is not only allowing Premiere Networks to meet its zero downtime policy, but it’s also facilitating its corporate cloud migration strategy. Per Ruben, “Now that we have cloud backup with Druva, it’s giving us opportunities to move more workloads to the cloud faster.”

Additionally, with Druva, Ruben is projecting a big reduction in costs. “Our five-year TCO projection with Druva is much less than it was with the products we previously used. One such contributor to a lower TCO, in addition to eliminating hardware and software costs, is Druva’s built in global deduplication, which allows us to use less storage than we did with Avamar,” added Ruben.

Another big benefit that Premiere Networks is achieving is increased speed of backups and restores. After the initial implementation, Ruben’s team deployed Druva CloudCache, and are now achieving 50% faster backups and restores as compared to Avamar on-premises, while still maintaining 10 days of data locally. “With Druva we can quickly restore local data and access historical data stores in the cloud, both of which happen faster than with our previous on-premises solution. Additionally, we can deploy disaster recovery at the time it’s needed,” said Ruben.

Premiere’s small IT team saves a lot of time and is more productive. “Using a cloud-based backup solution means I don’t have to worry about patches, upgrades, hardware failures or flying out to remote sites to resolve issues. With Avamar, I used to spend at least an hour a day going through logs, checking backups, and making sure everything was functioning properly. But, since switching to Druva, I haven’t had to do that,” said Matt. He now has 80% of the time back that he previously spent managing backups because he gets weekly reports from Druva that have dramatically simplified management.



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