

Customer Success

Winthrop and Weinstine, P.A.

Key Highlights

Business Profile

Winthrop and Weinstine, P.A., is a full-service commercial law firm.

Industry

Legal

Challenges

Tape backups were costly, unreliable, difficult to restore and exposed the firm to liabilities when they were physically moved between the office and offsite vault.

Solution

Two Data Domain DD430 appliances

Benefits

- > **Return on investment:** By reducing its tape use, the firm lowered its media costs by about \$10,000 a year.
- > **Improved Performance:** The firm now logs 18-21x compression rates and reports notably faster restore times.
- > **Reliability:** To date, the firm has not experienced a single failure with Data Domain.
- > **Reduced Liability:** Winthrop and Weinstine no longer needs to move tapes offsite, freeing it from the security risks inherent in transporting tapes.
- > **Replication:** The solution's proven reliability, as well as quick restore capabilities, gives the firm a high level of confidence as it expands its disaster recovery efforts.

Backup Software

Veritas Backup Exec 10 from Symantec

Pre-Data Domain Architecture

HP StorageWorks SDLT tape drives

Reseller Partner

Nexus Information Systems

Data Domain Eases Burden of Tape Backups with Disk-based Solution

Winthrop and Weinstine, P.A., is a full-service, entrepreneurial, commercial law firm dedicated to advancing the best interests of its clients and community through the timely delivery of legal services. Founded by six attorneys in 1979, the firm has grown to 85 attorneys in a wide variety of practice areas. With offices in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, Winthrop and Weinstine serves clients ranging from individuals to Fortune 500 corporations.



WINTHROP WEINSTINE

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

Customer Challenges

As a law firm, Winthrop and Weinstine acquires a sizable amount of information and research in support of each case and client. Typically, the data it needs to backup, primarily its document management and email systems, adds up to about one terabyte. However, the firm's backup requirements can change quickly with the addition of new cases.

"In a matter of a week, we can double our amount of data," said Craig Wilson, IS Manager at Winthrop and Weinstine. "With just one new litigation case, our data grew by 1.5 terabytes."

When it comes to backup, reliability ranks as the firm's top priority. Yet it encountered a number of problems on a tape-based system: Backups and restores were slow and unreliable. Though the firm had a relatively new tape system, it often failed – as validated by monthly restore tests.

Tapes carried logistical and financial burdens. To handle its volume of data, Winthrop and Weinstine needed a significant number of tapes, which was cumbersome to handle and amounted to about \$1,200 in new tape costs each month.

Sending tapes to an offsite vault, via courier, increased security risks and the firm's liability. Administrators spent a substantial amount of time retrieving and restoring tapes. Looking ahead, Winthrop and Weinstine wanted a more reliable, cost-effective solution, as well as a more manageable approach to disaster recovery.

Data Domain Solution

Winthrop and Weinstine engaged Nexus, a Data Domain channel partner, to assist with a new backup and disaster recovery strategy. It considered using its existing SAN, but the inability to create snapshots ruled out that option. Instead, the firm decided to pilot disk-based backup with Data Domain's deduplication storage systems.

Winthrop and Weinstine initially tested one DD430 appliance at its Minneapolis site. The solution immediately proved itself on the firm's number one objective – reliability. "We wanted stability out of the box and Data Domain passed with flying colors," Wilson said. "The data is there, easily validated, and we can quickly get it back, which matches the firm's philosophy of high availability."

Though the firm continued backing up to tape and disk concurrently, the ease and reliability of the Data Domain disk-based solution has triggered a gradual move away from tape.

Business Benefits

With Data Domain, Winthrop and Weinstine has a more stable, cost-effective solution for backup, restores and disaster recovery.

The firm now logs 18-21x compression rates, making it more flexible as its data needs grow quickly. Administrators also report notably faster restore times.

By reducing its tape use, the firm lowered its media costs by about \$10,000 a year. Furthermore, Winthrop and Weinstine minimizes its liability. It doesn't need to move tapes offsite, freeing it from the security

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Craig Wilson
IS Manager

risks inherent in transporting tapes. But high availability remains the most compelling benefit.

"Data Domain is more of a guarantee," Wilson said. "I don't have a tape or external component that could fail. In fact, we've never had a failure with Data Domain, whereas we often had failures on tape."

Finally, Winthrop and Weinstine has moved the second Data Domain appliance to the Time Warner Telecom office for offsite replication. The system's proven reliability, as well as quick restore capabilities, gives the firm a high level of confidence as it expands its disaster recovery efforts.

Data Domain

2300 Central Expressway

Santa Clara, CA 95050

866-WE-DDUPE; 408-980-4800

sales@datadomain.com

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