U.S. GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION | PROBLEM SOLVED

A U.S. government department needed cloud-based networks that would allow it to share resources with other teams and quickly recover data, while still protecting confidential information related to national security.

Advancing National Security with a Classified Cloud

Protecting details concerning U.S. security is no small task. The systems for housing any agency data must not only meet critical security protocols but also keep the data easily accessible. One organization sought a private cloud-based network that would support resource-sharing among related teams that must be segregated from each other, while allowing it to quickly recover essential information. Building upon NetApp® Secure MultiTenancy capabilities that are government approved, the department created a "classified cloud" that lets it share resources while meeting critical security protocols, accelerate backup recovery, reduce the storage footprint, and improve the flexibility for future expansion.

Cut deployment time by

60%

across 3 networks

Accelerates
data recovery

from days to minutes

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"As we're building this out, more and more classified organizations are looking at what we're doing and trying to see how to duplicate it in their environments. This solution provides everything we need and we are looking forward to sharing it with others."

Pat Connolly,
independent IT contractor

The department belongs to an organization that relied on several networks, each with its own hardware and unique backup solution. And the networks were quickly running out of server room space, cooling, and power. "We were just maxing it out," says Pat Connolly, an independent IT contractor who was called in to lead the department's solution to its IT challenge.

The problem was compounded by the fact that network backups were not keeping critical information at hand. "We were doing backup to tape. When we needed to restore something, it took a couple days," Connolly explains. "Once, they asked us to restore the wrong date, so we had to do it twice—it took four days to get what they needed.

"This is program management and acquisition data—it's data that makes the organization run. Being able to readily access and share it between sites, is critical."

MANAGING ACCESS WITH NETAPP SECURE MULTITENANCY

Connolly partnered with World Wide Technology to find the right solution, landing on NetApp.

"The way that NetApp Secure MultiTenancy can carve up storage into individual pieces that each user, or each network, can access—and only they can access—made NetApp a solution that the security team would approve," Connolly says. "When we started looking at this, the other vendors claimed they could do it [multitenancy]. But, when push came to shove, they backed down. The only one that truly could do what we needed was NetApp."

SEAMLESS AND SECURE IMPLEMENTATION

The new solution creates a "classified cloud" that is totally isolated from other networks, with one separate piece that functions as a file share.

Connolly's team developed a solution that incorporates NetApp FAS Hybrid Flash Storage with full disk encryption and NetApp ONTAP Data Management Software. Backups are now streamlined with a pairing of NetApp Cloud Backup (formerly NetApp AltaVault) and Commvault IntelliSnap for NetApp. NetApp StorageGRID provides the secure shared archive.

NetApp Professional Services helped the team ensure that the initial installation was seamless and secure. Connolly recalls, "We designed exactly what we wanted, and then they helped us perform the initial configuration of the FAS, Cloud Backup, StorageGRID, and IntelliSnap."

Additionally, a NetApp Services Resident worked side-by-side with the customer's IT team to provide hands-on knowledge transfer. This coordinated effort cut deployment time across three networks by 60%. "The knowledge that NetApp Professional Services had has been exemplary," says Connolly. And their professionalism on site was excellent. All the things they did went very smoothly, without any hiccups. It was a stress-free job."

MEETING EVERY ORGANIZATIONAL NEED

Now, the department has a streamlined solution that can rapidly recover critical data. "We'll be able to pull individual files back within minutes, instead of days," Connolly says.

The new solution offers a smaller footprint and more flexibility.

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NetApp's inline deduplication capabilities save space and helps the team build for the future quickly by using the integrated end-to-end solution. "It's been easy to add and expand onto what's there. It's a very easy product to use—some of the others I've used have been a lot more cumbersome," he says.

The solution's multitenancy provides the security that the organization requires. Some of the security controls include disaster recovery capabilities and continual-operations capabilities. The solution also meets the risk management framework requirement for data-at-rest encryption on all servers and storage.

Now, the team can more fully align with the organization's security goals. "It's not cost-effective for individual departments to be able to achieve some of those goals on their own. But, by consolidating multiple departments on the same hardware, it becomes possible," Connolly says.

SETTING THE FOUNDATION FOR OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

As other governmental organizations see the success of the department's NetApp solution, they are looking at duplicating it.

The new solution's role is also expanding as it gains attention for its capabilities. Connolly explains, "It's now growing, and we're actually diverging from our current organization—standing up a whole new organization to manage this. And, as we bring more organizations onto this fabric, it will start expanding out into all types of data."

Part of that expansion will focus on better protecting national security data. Connolly's next task will be standing up a COOP site so the department will have two active sites. If one site goes down, the data would automatically be brought up at the other site.

"As we're building this out, more and more classified organizations are looking at what we're doing and trying to see how to duplicate it in their environments." Connolly says. "This solution provides everything we need and we are looking forward to sharing it with others."

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NETAPP PRODUCTS

NetApp FAS Hybrid Flash Storage

NetApp ONTAP Data Management Software

NetApp Cloud Backup (formerly NetApp AltaVault)

NetApp StorageGRID Webscale Object Storage

NetApp Professional Services

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