



Data Management Solution Helps Bank Meet Compliance Requirements, Cut Costs

Overview

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Financial services—Banking

Customer Profile

Founded in 1977 in The Dalles, Oregon, Columbia River Bank (CRB) is a community bank serving Oregon and Washington businesses and residents. CRB operates 21 branches and has more than 300 employees.

Business Situation

CRB was having trouble managing its growing volume of stored data. It needed an affordable data management solution with search and indexing features to speed up the legal discovery process.

Solution

CRB deployed Simpana Backup and Recovery and Simpana Search from Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner CommVault. Simpana Search supports the FAST ESP indexing engine, providing high-level search functions.

Benefits

- Reduced costs
- More reliable search and discovery
- Simplified management and maintenance
- Improved productivity

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Randy McBride, System Administrator, Columbia River Bank

With 21 branches and a growing customer base, Columbia River Bank found it challenging to store and manage its increasing volume of data. It wanted more effective data management and search tools to perform legal discovery tasks and comply with regulatory requirements. In 2004, CRB deployed Simpana Backup and Recovery, part of a modular solution from Microsoft® Gold Certified Partner CommVault. The solution takes advantage of the bank’s existing Microsoft software. In 2008, CRB added Simpana Search, which uses the indexing engine from Microsoft subsidiary FAST, to provide high-level search capabilities. Simpana requires no additional hardware or software and reduces storage costs, saving CRB potentially hundreds of thousands of dollars over competitive solutions. Just as important, CRB now has peace of mind knowing that it can easily comply with federal and state regulatory requirements.



Situation

Columbia River Bank (CRB) delivers traditional banking services to individuals and businesses throughout Oregon and Washington. The bank is one of the largest community banks in the Pacific Northwest, operating 21 branch offices. Known as “the local bank with big bank services,” CRB also has nontraditional offerings such as health savings accounts and investment and retirement services. The bank has more than 300 employees.

CRB has experienced considerable growth in recent years. As a result, the bank was concerned about the need to archive data. “Although there have been many court rulings, it’s still difficult to know definitively the legal requirements for archiving data,” says Randy McBride, System Administrator at CRB. “There has always been debate about exactly what and how much data we’re required to hold on to because regulators don’t mandate that. It’s a constant balancing act to ensure that we keep all the data we need without incurring the expense of holding on to data we don’t need.”

Equally important was the bank’s ability to search for and easily access historical data to respond to compliance audits and legal discovery actions. “If someone were to question the way in which CRB handled a loan, for example, we would need to gather all relevant data and messages pertaining to that loan,” says McBride. In the past, gathering that information was a costly, labor-intensive undertaking. CRB had some basic search tools, but nothing on the enterprise level, so much of the searching was done manually through various databases. “In one case, we set up a separate mail server just to port archived messages to,” says McBride. “We could have four or five people working for days on just one case.”

CRB wanted to solve these data management issues but it needed to do so in the most cost-efficient way. Ideally, CRB wanted a Windows®-based data management solution that was easy to deploy and use, and made the most of the bank’s existing hardware and Microsoft® software.

Solution

In 2004, Columbia River Bank began using the Simpna Backup and Recovery solution from CommVault, a leading provider of enterprise data management software and services and a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner. “One of our biggest reasons for choosing the CommVault Simpna solution is its modular design, which lets us control our costs by deploying modules only as we need them,” says McBride. “Another deciding factor was that Simpna integrated beautifully into our existing Microsoft environment.” The bank’s infrastructure has long been built on Microsoft products, which now include the Windows Server® 2008 operating system with the Active Directory® service, and Microsoft Exchange Server 2007, Microsoft SQL Server® 2005 data management software, Microsoft Office SharePoint® Server 2007, and the Microsoft Office Outlook® 2007 messaging and collaboration client.

CommVault offers a comprehensive, unified data management solution that operates across heterogeneous environments. “Other vendors’ solutions require disparate products, each with a different management interface and storage location, to handle various aspects of data management such as archiving, backup and recovery, replication, deduplication, and content search,” says Randy DeMeno, Chief Technologist – Windows Products and Microsoft Partnership at CommVault. “They generally are not integrated with one another, and almost all require a Linux or UNIX operating system.

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CommVault software supports virtually all platforms, including Windows.”

By late 2008, CRB had reached the point where it needed to add an enterprise search and indexing solution to make it easier for employees to perform legal discovery. “We have been extremely happy with CommVault and its support, so we naturally looked to it for an enterprise search solution,” says McBride. Price was an important factor. “Right now, we are being extremely careful in the banking industry with how we spend our money, so we looked very hard at our options to make sure that the Simpana Search solution met all of our requirements.”

Simpana Search is one of the industry’s first data management solutions to support the FAST ESP indexing engine from Fast Search & Transfer (FAST), a data management company that Microsoft acquired in 2008. FAST incorporates sophisticated high-end search capabilities for enterprisewide search and is optimized for Windows environments.

Benefits

Simpana Backup and Recovery and Simpana Search from CommVault have helped Columbia River Bank control its costs. At the same time, CRB now has control of its data so that compliance with regulatory requirements is no longer a concern. In addition, employees are able to work more productively now that they have sophisticated tools to perform search functions.

Reduced Costs

Simpana has helped CRB control costs and improve its technology in spite of a tough economy and a shrinking IT budget. Simpana integrates easily into the bank’s Microsoft environment; none of the existing hardware or Microsoft software needed to be upgraded to run Simpana. In fact, Simpana is helping CRB save on hardware costs. “By not holding on to so much data, we’ve been able to clean

up our production servers. So, for example, performance has increased on our systems that run Exchange Server. With better performance, we don’t need to purchase additional hardware as quickly as we would have before.”

The only cost was for the Simpana licensing, which is very affordable because each module is licensed separately. “We are thrilled that we can just add more modules as we need them instead of having to buy a whole new solution every time our environment grows or changes,” says McBride. “Had we gone with a different solution, it would have cost far more. We would have needed a different product for each data management function, and we would have had to purchase more hardware and operating system licenses for dedicated servers.” Add to that the cost of training staff—and managing and maintaining those systems—and suddenly the other solutions were not nearly as affordable as Simpana.

More Reliable Search and Discovery

For McBride, the peace of mind from knowing that CRB can respond quickly and accurately to compliance requests and legal discovery actions is worth as much as the cost savings. “Before Simpana, we didn’t have clear-cut guidelines for what to keep and how long to keep it, so we tended to hold on to a lot of data, just to be safe,” says McBride. “Conservatively, I would guess we are holding three to five times as much data as we were five years ago.”

The more data CRB held, the more complex and time-consuming every manual search could be. But the high-level query capabilities of Simpana Search have virtually eliminated manual searches. “Simpana Search gathers and indexes data enterprisewide no matter where it’s stored—in a SQL Server database file, on Exchange Server or Office SharePoint Server, or on a Linux system—it doesn’t

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matter,” says DeMeno. “Through a single management console, Simpana software delivers a comprehensive report to the user or administrator that includes all the data that match the search criteria.” And because the search is done electronically, the level of confidence in the accuracy and completeness of the report is much higher.

“With the FAST engine embedded, Simpana Search gives us the most powerful search capabilities available in an integrated data management solution. We have access to every communication both internally and externally,” says McBride. “We can pull every bit of it back and say ‘Here is everything regarding that case.’ Simpana could potentially be worth millions of dollars to our company because, now that discovery is simple, we can easily refute a false claim and avert possible legal action.”

Simplified Management and Maintenance

Because it integrates so well into the Microsoft environment, the Simpana solution is easier to manage and maintain than other vendors’ point solutions. “Deployment was so simple,” says McBride. “Our engineer did it remotely, and the whole thing was ready to go within three days.” McBride manages about 75 server computers located in two separate data centers, so any tool that simplifies management is a plus. “The CommVault solution is much easier for us to manage than any other solution would have been because there’s really nothing new to learn,” he says. “It all just fits in beautifully with what we already have.”

Simpana also makes it easier for CRB to update its server software. Because Simpana can restore data across software platforms and across versions—for example, from Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 to Microsoft Exchange Server 2007—CRB can upgrade its server software to the latest versions without

worrying about losing access to older data. “When a regulatory agency wants data from a year or 18 months ago, you need to be able to produce it. You can’t say you won’t be able to provide it because you just upgraded your system,” says DeMeno. “CRB was able to upgrade some of its systems earlier than expected because it was so confident it would be able to retrieve data that had been archived under previous versions.”

Increased Productivity

Simpana has helped both the IT staff and other users work more productively. Because Simpana is so well integrated with the bank’s existing Microsoft tools, employees don’t need training to use it. Also, the new high-level search capabilities provided by the FAST ESP indexing engine in Simpana Search make all discovery tasks quicker. “A discovery case that previously would have taken three or four people several days to research can now be done by one person in seconds or minutes with Simpana Search,” says McBride. “Overall, that could significantly cut our discovery time.”

McBride says that productivity has also increased because users can restore some data themselves, for example, archived e-mail messages and SharePoint items and files. “In Microsoft Office Outlook, a little CommVault logo appears next to messages that have been archived. The user can click on it and automatically pull that message back. It doesn’t require any help from the IT staff so they have more time to devote to project-related tasks.”

McBride sums up the solution’s value to CRB, “Simpana is a great tool for putting us in legal compliance, and it is extremely cost-efficient because it uses our existing Microsoft software. We love working with CommVault because it understands our environment and helps us make the most of our resources.”

For More Information

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For more information about CommVault products and services, call (888) 746-3849 or visit the Web site at: www.commvault.com

For more information about Columbia River Bank products and services, call (541) 298-6649 or visit the Web site at: www.columbiariverbank.com

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