

Cornerstone Community Bank Cuts Replication Time by Almost 70 Percent with vReplicator and vRanger

Cornerstone Community Bank is one of the largest locally owned and operated banks in Hamilton County, Tennessee. Since opening its first branch in 1996, Cornerstone has focused on delivering friendly, personal service to customers, of which 85 percent are businesses. The bank has about 130 employees, including two full-time IT staffers. For fast and reliable replication, backup, and restore capabilities for its virtual environment, Cornerstone turned to Quest Software

The Challenge

Cornerstone's IT infrastructure includes about 28 Windows and Linux servers; 23 of them are virtualized. In addition, the bank has three ESX hosts at its primary data location and two ESX hosts at a secondary location for backup and disaster recovery.

Cornerstone was unhappy with the performance and reliability of the tool it was using to replicate data to the secondary site. "The performance we were seeing was slower than it should have been," explained Randy Dover, Vice President and Information Technology Officer, Cornerstone Community Bank. "And there were too many errors. Sometimes the tool would just lose virtual machines at our remote site and would start replicating from scratch. Since we have a few machines that are more than 100 GB and one that is almost 400 GB, that would take an unacceptably long time to complete—90 hours for the 400 GB machine alone."

In addition, Cornerstone lacked a backup solution designed for virtual machines (VMs) so recovery was cumbersome and time-consuming. "Our backup process was to do a flat file backup on our virtual servers just as if they were physical servers, and back up those to tape every night," said Dover. "I knew that if we lost a VM for some reason, such as losing one of the hard disk files, the restore would be difficult. We would have to build a new virtual machine from scratch, install the Windows OS, install the backup agent, find the right tape that has the backup of the server we needed to restore, and then do a flat file restore from tape, just as if the VM was a physical box."

Cornerstone recognized that it needed an efficient, reliable replication solution and a backup and recovery tool designed for the virtual environment.

The Quest Solution

A search of the marketplace led Cornerstone to Quest Software's vRanger solution. vRanger speeds VMware backup and replication while dramatically reducing storage requirements. It also delivers simple, fast, and reliable VMware ESX and ESXi replication, optimized for image-based data handling. vRanger reads only active blocks from the image using patent-pending Active Block Mapping, minimizing backup windows and storage needs. And instead of sending VM data through a single, central server, it uses distributed processing, to minimize impact on host operations.

"vRanger saved us 20-25 hours of stressful, around-the-clock work, and it got those critical servers back up for our customers before lunch instead of the next day...I restored two domain controllers in less than four hours; then in another four hours, I also restored five servers, including an Exchange Server, a file/print server, and a couple other critical production servers."

— Randy Dover
Vice President and Information Technology Officer
Cornerstone Community Bank

OVERVIEW



Headquarters

Chattanooga, Tennessee

Services

Local community bank

Critical Needs

Replication and backup and recovery for a virtualized environment

Solution

vReplicator and vRanger

Results

- Delivered reliable replication that is 67 percent faster than previous tool
- Reduced restore time from hours or days to just minutes, saving IT staff time and enhancing customer satisfaction
- Improved the accuracy and reliability of backups
- Performed restores without the need for a separate server license
- Enabled backup to support offsite storage with tape
- Delivered fast file-level restore

CASE STUDY

With its patent-pending capabilities, vRanger is the fastest, most reliable, and most secure VMware backup solution on the market.

The Bottom Line

vRanger has delivered the performance that Cornerstone needed in a replication solution, including cutting replication time for its largest VM by 67 percent. "Since we began using it about two years ago, we have increased the number of VMs in our environment from 9 to 21," reported Dover. "Yet we can replicate those 21 VMs with much better performance than our previous solution did with just 9. For instance, replicating our largest VM, which is almost 400 GB, used to take 90 hours. With vRanger, replication takes only 30 hours."

In addition to delivering outstanding performance, vRanger has proven to be reliable and effective. "We used to have problems with our old tool losing VMs, but I have not seen it happen a single time with vRanger," said Dover. "We are very happy with it."

vRanger has earned similar kudos from Cornerstone for speeding the restore process from hours or days to just minutes. This not only saves valuable IT staff time but also enables the bank to deliver the service its customers need and expect.

"Restoring from a vRanger backup is quick and easy because you don't have to know anything about the original VM; the restore creates the VM with the same configuration, memory, hard drive, etc., as the original," explained Dover. "For instance, we have a couple of machines that host our customer web sites. A security provider pushed out an update to a security agent, causing those machines to malfunction and blue screen. I was able to restore the first server, which had one 25-GB hard drive and one 7-GB hard drive, in just 6 minutes 18 seconds, and then I restored the other one just as fast. vRanger saved us 20 to 25 hours of stressful, around-the-clock work, and it got those critical servers back up for our customers before lunch instead of the next day."

vRanger has also been exceptionally easy to use. "A few days after I installed vRanger, I tested to see how easy a restore would be," said Dover. "With vRanger, I was able to restore 2 domain controllers (DCs)

and 5 servers in less time than it used to take to restore just one DC—even though I had never done a vRanger restore before. Specifically, I restored 2 DCs in under 4 hours; then in another 4 hours, I also restored 5 servers, including an Exchange Server, a file/print server, and a couple other critical production servers. In contrast, at my previous job, restoring just one DC took at least 8 hours, and sometimes 12 to 14 hours."

Sometimes a full restore isn't needed, so Cornerstone also appreciates the speed and flexibility of vRanger's file-level restore (FLR) capability. "There have been occasions when we needed to restore a single file," Dover said. "With vRanger FLR we can browse to a savepoint, browse to a file to restore, choose the destination, and restore the file—all in well under five minutes from start to finish. In fact, I can restore a file using vRanger FLR quicker than I can load a tape to restore from a tape library."

In today's world of overblown marketing claims, Dover gives vRanger perhaps the highest praise an IT professional can give to any software solution: "vRanger does what it says it will do. If you've got a virtual environment, you need vRanger."

About Cornerstone Community Bank

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About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software (Nasdaq: QSFT) simplifies and reduces the cost of managing IT for more than 100,000 customers worldwide. Our innovative solutions make solving the toughest IT management problems easier, enabling customers to save time and money across physical, virtual and cloud environments. For more information about Quest solutions for application management, database management, Windows management, virtualization management and IT management, go to www.quest.com.



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