

“We evaluated and tested quite a few different backup software solutions over a three year period and nothing fulfilled our needs until we tried SEP sesam.”

Michael Juarez
LAN Coordinator



Alpine School District

Situation

The Alpine School District is located in one of the fastest growing areas of Utah. One hour south of Salt Lake City, the district maintains data for over 75 schools, 8,200 staff members, 68,000 currently enrolled students and hundreds of thousands of accounts for Alpine alumni.

Alpine was relying solely on a RAID Array system to store all of their data. “We were extremely lucky that we did not lose any significant portion of our unprotected data,” says Michael Juarez, the district’s LAN Coordinator, “Alpine had replicated mission-critical data and used some scripts to back up important files, but really, we had gone without any form of formal backup solution for over 16 years.”

CONT’D.

In 2006, the Technology Director for Alpine School District, Matt Johnson, decided it was time to begin the search for a reliable backup solution. The IT department’s staff tested backup software from every major vendor in the marketplace and nothing met their rigorous requirements until they were introduced to SEP sesam through their long-time relationship with EOS Systems, Inc.

CHALLENGE

Alpine needed to find a solution that would support the various platforms utilized by the District, including Windows, Linux, NetWare, SUSE Linux and many other Novell products, as well as support their GroupWise mail system and databases. The District’s environment consists of 42 servers located at individual schools and a central repository of Linux servers at the main district office. Alpine was also in the process of migrating from a 5 TB storage volume to a 10 TB SAN volume.

With no formal backup solution and increasing budgetary constraints, Alpine could not replace their server hardware as often as desired, but instead made sure every server was on maintenance contracts as insurance against system failure. This system, however, meant the risk of critical data loss from a catastrophic hardware event was higher than ever.

SEP Software Corp. is the premier technology leader providing standardized and high performance backup and disaster recovery solutions for professional IT environments of all sizes. Its flagship product, SEP sesam, delivers seamless solutions to corporations' backup requirements.

SEP sesam ensures that data security for both virtual and physical environments can be easily and cost-effectively achieved. SEP sesam is the ultimate expression of German engineering and attention to detail. Design and programming originate from our German offices in Weyarn, near Munich, where overall performance and reliability are our utmost concern.

ABOUT ALPINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Alpine School District is the primary school district in northern Utah County, Utah. The District includes the cities of Lindon, Orem, Pleasant Grove, American Fork, Alpine, Highland, Lehi, Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain. Alpine currently consists of 51 elementary schools, 11 junior high schools, 8 high schools, and 3 alternative schools and continues to grow each year.

SOLUTION

After three years of testing various data backup solutions, SEP sesam was chosen. "What appealed to us about SEP sesam was that it backs up everything. You can add and backup any client in seconds, as well as have the main console on any server, whether it's Linux or Windows," related Juarez. "One of the most important aspects of the software for us was the ability to back up our GroupWise mail system. Between GroupWise, a few databases and our file servers, we're up to almost 10 TB of data, but now we feel confident about SEP sesam's capability to back up everything as that number grows."

RESULTS

Alpine has been using SEP sesam since 2009 and has been able to utilize the software to its fullest potential. Shortly after implementing SEP sesam, Alpine lost two servers, which would have completely erased all data if not for SEP. The simple SEP Restore Wizard made data recovery possible in just a few short hours. According to Michael, "It was easy to do. I didn't have to call tech support to restore the file server data on our two servers that went down. When we lost the servers, we thought we lost their original data, but we've been able to restore it with SEP sesam without any problems. It worked like a champ."

Juarez reported, "SEP had a number of techs specifically on Linux who knew it inside and out. That made the transition really easy. Once we got it up and running, the backups were surprisingly fast. SEP's support staff has been very responsive and very good at resolving issues regarding system setup and utilization. They helped me gain a clear understanding of what had gone wrong and provided the methodology to correct any issue. The few times a backup has not worked, all I've had to do was post a question and we received an answer in just minutes. They are competent and very well trained. My weakness is SUSE Linux, but they have very strong skills, so I've pretty much had to rely on them. But I have had no complaints relying on SEP. Tech support and everyone from the sales side has been excellent and very responsive. It's been a great fit."

In the near future, Alpine will be changing licensing from NetWare to either Active Directory, or OpenLDAP/ ClearOS, depending on a few variables. "One of the reasons we picked SEP sesam is the fact that the software will support us regardless of any direction we choose to grow. It just does what you expect of it," said Juarez.