

vmPRO, DXi and Scalar

MSP Relies on Quantum to Power Cloud Data Protection Service

When a leading Midwest value-added reseller decided to offer cloud-based data protection to its customers, it realized that a key piece of technology was missing. Quantum's deduplication technology turned out to be the right fit.

Hipskind Technology Solutions Group started out as one of the leading value-added resellers in the greater-Chicago area, with special expertise in primary storage, virtualization, and data protection practices. As part of the company's focus on understanding and meeting its customers' needs, Hipskind then decided it could offer even greater value as a managed service provider. Most recently, recognizing the power of the cloud, the company expanded its MSP capabilities to include its own cloud infrastructure.

Hipskind saw that the cloud offered a unique way to provide critical backup, disaster recovery, and business continuity to customers that did not have the IT infrastructure to support it. The company also thought it would appeal to customers that were tired of the high capital costs and ongoing management burden associated with doing it all for themselves, a situation made more complex as they increased their use of virtualization.

LOOKING FOR A DEDUPLICATION PARTNER

When it came to making cloud-based data protection practical and affordable, however, Hipskind realized it needed to incorporate data deduplication. Without this key technology, remote backup and disaster recovery processes use too much disk space and too much bandwidth for anything but very small data sets. Those limitations keep most of the large, general-purpose cloud providers from serving the data protection market effectively. When deduplication becomes part of the mix, there are several distinct advantages. The volume of data stored on the customer disk is reduced, making disk backup and retention practical; and because only new data in each backup needs to be moved over the network, replication is possible over WANs.

Deduplication also provides benefits in the cloud because the long-term retained data takes up less space, and data from several users can share a single storage device. The end result is much better protection and dramatically lower costs.

"We went out and actually looked at every deduplication appliance on the market," explains Wally Lang, Hipskind's General Manager. "We ended up choosing Quantum as our partner for several reasons, but the primary one is the elegance of their deduplication algorithm. It's variable-length, which makes the deduplication capabilities much greater than standard block-level. That allows us to store more data in a smaller space at the customer site, and we're replicating less data over the wire. All of this means we get much higher utilization from our storage resources in the cloud."

HIPSKIND'S QSAFE: LEVERAGING QUANTUM TECHNOLOGY TO PROVIDE MULTI-SITE PROTECTION

The service that Hipskind launched, called QSafe, is innovative and takes full advantage of the cloud. At each customer's site, the company installs an appliance, either physical or virtual, that uses Quantum's DXi® deduplication technology. Local backups are stored on the appliance and retained for most file recoveries, using the customer's existing backup application. The second line of defense—the one focused on disaster recovery protection—replicates a copy of the backup sets to the Hipskind cloud, where matching DXi technology retains the data safely for recovery. The service can scale to protect data from a terabyte up to multiple petabytes.



"Quantum has been a great partner on both the technology and business side...and helped us build this business. It's been a great fit."

Wally Lang
General Manager, Hipskind

SOLUTION OVERVIEW

- DXi deduplication and replication appliances, physical and virtual
- vmPRO backup software for virtual servers
- Scalar tape libraries

KEY BENEFITS

- Deduplication and replication enable cost-effective cloud backup, DR, and business continuity for small businesses and enterprises with up to several petabytes of data
- Variable-length deduplication enables remote replication over LANs/WANs and reduces storage needed to hold data, keeping costs low
- Quantum's vmPRO software backs up VMs in native format—makes standing up servers fast and easy for business continuity
- DXi appliances scale to provide centralized data protection and DR in the cloud with option for encryption
- Wide range of Quantum DXi products, both physical and virtual, make it economical to provide local protection

"We have an automated process that gives our customers exactly what they need for data security," Lang explains. "That's three copies of their files—the primary copy, the local backup, and the replicated copy—spread over two different physical locations."

Data is secure because the DXi technology offers encryption options at the local site, in the cloud, and during replication.

A major advantage to customers is that QSafe provides this protection using a subscription approach that keeps the costs low and makes it easy to scale the service up or down.

"QSafe uses an OPEX model, so there's no capital investment on the customer's part," Lang says. "But they get the benefit of absolutely the latest technology plus all the maintenance and service at a cost lower than they could procure and deploy for themselves."

With QSafe, the amount of time that customer IT departments spend managing backup and DR shrinks dramatically, freeing up resources for other critical tasks.

FAST, FLEXIBLE RECOVERY FOR BOTH PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SERVERS

For recovery, the customer has several options with QSafe. In most cases, users simply restore files locally from the DXi backup system at their site. If anything prevents that from happening, Hipskind can restore lost files by sending copies from the cloud over the network used for replication. Or, for large-scale restores when time is critical, QSafe can also transport files to the primary site on removable storage.

In addition, QSafe leverages Quantum vmPRO™ technology to extend protection services to virtual servers, increasingly a challenge for IT departments that have migrated key applications to VMs.

"Another of the reasons that we selected Quantum as a partner is because of their vmPRO software," Lang says. "It's a backup software solution that protects virtual machines locally, and it makes its backup copies in native format. That is extremely important because it gives us the option of using the backup copy to stand up a copy of a VM in our cloud without having to reconstruct the files—it's a very powerful and fast option for business continuity in a virtualized environment."

Beyond Quantum's DXi deduplication and vmPRO technology, Hipskind also leverages Quantum's Scalar tape solutions—users who want long-term retention on tape can elect that option, with disk-to-tape creation taking place either at the customer site or in the Hipskind cloud.

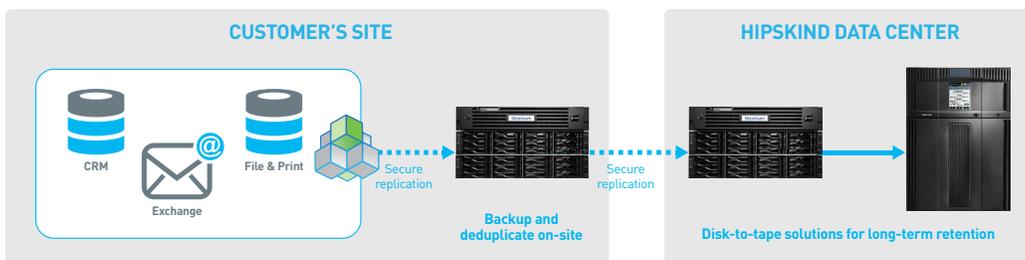
"Quantum has been a great partner on both the technology and business side," says Lang. "They brought in engineering support, helped us learn the products, trained our engineers, were flexible on the pricing models, and helped us build this business. It's been a great fit."

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ABOUT HIPSKIND

Westchester, Illinois-based Hipskind Technology Solutions Group is a leading regional IT solutions provider that helps companies maximize return on their IT investment by offering a unique combination of consulting, technology, and professional services. Hipskind's cloud service, QSafe, allows its customers to back up and replicate their data to a secure, centralized data center environment, ensuring the availability of their data in the event of a disaster or catastrophic event. Hipskind's QSafe service provides an economical, subscription-based data protection and business continuity program that eliminates the need for large, up-front capital investment.



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