STAGE2DATA

ENNIS FABRICS

Case Study: Ennis Fabrics Upgrades to a Holistic Backup and Disaster Recovery Solution with Stage2Data

James Ennis founded Ennis Fabrics in 1972, knowing that there was a better way to service customers in the textiles and supplies industry. Today, Ennis Fabrics have over 9,000 products that are distributed throughout North America and globally from the company's extensive, full-service distribution centers in Toronto, Vancouver, and Indianapolis.

Ennis Fabrics' fourth distribution center is a wholly-owned 40,000 ft2 quality control and consolidation warehouse in Ningbo, China. Given the extent of operations and a workforce of close to 200 employees, the challenge was finding the perfect backup/ disaster recovery (DR) fit.

THE CHALLENGE

Before reaching out to Stage2Data, Ennis Fabrics was handling all their data storage and backups in-house. They were on the hunt for a straightforward disaster recovery (DR) solution and even started setting up their own small server room for data replication and disaster recovery. However, they soon faced a challenge - with their small team, maintaining an in-house backup and DR solution meant they needed to be ready 24/7.

This made them realise that they needed a backup partner that could provide geographic diversity, be available at all times, accommodate their mixed IT environment, and keep their data secure and available in the face of a disaster.

That's when Stage2Data stepped in. Ryan pitched the idea that partnering with a backup/DR solutions provider, such as Stage2Data, means you don't have to worry about performing backups yourself or managing disaster recovery. The team at Stage2Data can do everything for you within budget and with a backup/DR consultant on call to assist 24/7.

MOVING TO STAGE2DATA

The company has a local data center at their headquarters in Edmonton which comprises 75 virtual servers (including email, distribution, shipping, accounting and more), 26 of which required failover and recovery in less than 4 hours. Moreover, they required daily off-site backups, which would run every night.

As Mubashar Ahmed, Information Systems Manager at Ennis Fabrics, explains:

> "I regularly have to restore data from the backups. The last set I had to restore comprised 1.8 terabytes of data from the Stage2Data data center to my VMware environment – which completed in under 2 hours! Likewise, the failover testing showed real character, and persistence, which was the result of outstanding teamwork and flexibility."

The team at Stage2Data worked with Ennis Fabrics to design a cost-effective custom solution that would fit their business requirements and budget. Where any challenges arose, they investigated and either came back with answers or made more suggestions and ultimately recommended using a combination of Zerto and Veeam.

Since January 2020, Stage2Data has started implementing and rolling out the new solution around the company's schedule so as not to disrupt the day-to-day operations.

FAILOVER TESTS

According to Mubashar, "one of the most important aspects of a managed services provider is its ability to be flexible. And where many service providers would, at a certain point, say this is not their problem, the team at Stage2Data never gave up. Whenever they faced a challenge, they worked alongside us to find a workable solution."

With the first failover test, a network failure was encountered, which wasn't entirely unexpected. With the second and third tests, all systems were unplugged – physically unplugging the cables from the routers – before conducting the test. This created a near real-life scenario for the tests. After each test, the entire system was rebooted, and the Stage2Data team could make improvements where necessary. The last failover event ran extremely smoothly, and everything worked as expected. The Ennis Fabrics server environment failed over to the Stage2Data mirror environment, and all the steps until final recovery took only 2.5 hours.

The next test, which will be conducted next month, is expected to be completed in less than 1.5 hours, thereby significantly exceeding their recovery time objective (RTO).

Now, Ennis Fabrics has the comfort of knowing exactly where all their data is stored and who has access to it. Additionally, they also have unparalleled availability with high-level DR maintenance and management that they were not capable of in-house. Ahmed notes that:

"The team at Stage2Data was always available, and always came in with a can-do attitude. When unexpected results happened, they didn't flinch – each test was a chance to make changes and to learn from the kind of issues that we would encounter in a real-time scenario and so ensure future success. I enjoy working with guys like Kirill Izvekov, who is an absolutely brilliant network guy. I could simply trust that between him and my internal network technician, they could overcome and resolve any network issue better than anyone. I do not doubt that we found the best fit in Stage2Data as a backup/DR partner."

ABOUT STAGE2DATA

Stage2Data Stage2Data is an award-winning Cloud Service Provider (CSP) founded in 2009. We specialize in backup, disaster recovery, cloud infrastructure solutions, and networking crucial to these services. We offer innovative solutions by partnering with best-of-breed technologies that fit our customers' needs and secure their valuable data. The result: comprehensive data protection and disaster recovery services that keep our customers operational when they need it most. Moreover, our advanced technology stack enables robust protection from cyber threats, while our experienced team offers tailored approaches based on individual needs. As a certified carrier-grade internet solutions provider (ISP), we provide secure and reliable solutions for digital threats to give our customers peace of mind in an ever-changing world.