

Hitachi Consulting Corp.



“It quickly became apparent that Iron Mountain is the gold standard for PC data protection.”

– Michael Shisko, Director of IT

CUSTOMER: Hitachi Consulting

BUSINESS: Business and IT Consulting

CHALLENGE: Protecting Corporate and Client Data while Reducing the Storage Burden

A global consulting company, Hitachi Consulting is a recognized leader in delivering proven business and IT solutions to Global 2000 companies across many industries. Leveraging decades of business process, vertical industry and leading-edge technology experience, Hitachi strives to understand each company's unique business needs. From business strategy development through application deployment, Hitachi's consultants are committed to helping clients, who include 30 percent of the Fortune 100 and many leading mid-market companies, quickly realize measurable business value.

After 20 years as the consulting arm of Grant Thornton, Hitachi Consulting was incorporated in November 2000 when Grant Thornton sold its consulting organization to Hitachi, Ltd.

THE CHALLENGE: PROACTIVELY PREVENTING USER DATA LOSS

As a long-time, satisfied Iron Mountain customer, Michael Shisko, Hitachi Consulting's Director of IT, was adamant that Hitachi use the service following the company's buy-out of Grant Thornton's consulting organization. Already impressed with the way PC data protection quickly solved the problem of insufficient storage for Grant Thornton, Shisko realized that the benefits of Iron Mountain's service went beyond just data protection. By enabling employees to move data to their laptops for safe storage, Shisko was confident that this data would be protected, while easing the burden on exchange servers and other data servers.

Yet in 2004, Hitachi opted to cancel Iron Mountain's services after receiving backup and recovery utilities at no extra cost with the purchase of new laptops. The new software claimed to make local backups and PC-to-server backups on scheduled intervals, protecting all data from loss, but Shisko immediately recognized the product's inferiority.

Inefficient and time-consuming, the free replacement software backed up files to the server as a simple, rather than intelligent, file transfer, without any of the data reduction benefits that Iron Mountain's software provides. With such an unreliable means of data protection, Hitachi was not only putting itself at risk for data loss, but its clients, as well. Often, clauses in contracts with clients mandate that Hitachi comply with security regulations for protecting privacy and intellectual property, and Shisko didn't feel confident in the replacement software's ability to ensure this level of protection. Sensitive data was at risk, and Hitachi quickly recognized the need to eliminate this threat.

THE SOLUTION: RETURN TO IRON MOUNTAIN AS A CORPORATE STANDARD FOR PC DATA PROTECTION

“We quickly learned what the definition of ‘free’ is when it comes to software. Just two months after implementing the free product, we knew we wanted to come back to Iron Mountain because it works. It's definitely the gold standard, and the product we previously used just didn't compare. It wasn't nearly as robust or sophisticated, and we weren't

CASE STUDY

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comfortable relying on it as our company's only means of backup. We went away looking to save some money, but we returned because we realized the value we got from Iron Mountain's solution outweighed any cost."

Upon its return to Iron Mountain, Hitachi made the decision to select the Licensed Software option, which allows the company to back up data to its own servers. Iron Mountain worked with Hitachi to coordinate a three-month transitional contract in which Hitachi could immediately benefit from Iron Mountain's Subscription Service while the company got its internal data center up and running at its Dallas headquarters. Within months, the product was fully integrated, and Hitachi once again enjoyed the comfort and security of PC data protection across its 17 U.S. offices in 12 states.

Iron Mountain's PC Backup solution offers Hitachi automatic data protection that works even over dial-up connections. The solution intelligently determines which files need to be saved, eliminating duplicate copies that only burden the servers. As each of Hitachi's 1,000 employees, nearly 70 percent of whom are mobile, uses a laptop, the importance of having a solution that backs up data efficiently was high. "The free software we were using was horribly inefficient," said Shisko. "Since most of our users are remote, people just weren't using it."

With Iron Mountain's solution, employees no longer needed to find a high-speed Internet connection to facilitate a quick backup – by backing up only new files and file changes, rather than identical files from multiple machines, Iron Mountain's solution enables smaller, faster back-ups. As Shisko explains, "Say I've got two gigs of new data. Because of Iron Mountain's Delta Block™ and SendOnce™ capabilities, that's only going to be about 800K, and that's going to compress down to something like 32K, so my actual backup time is almost instantaneous, and yet I backed up a significant amount of data."

Iron Mountain's PC Backup solution has the added benefit of streamlining hardware migration. By restoring data to new hardware without requiring prior installation of user applications and files, the time spent setting up a user on a new piece of hardware is significantly reduced. "With this capability, we're able to run on a lean inventory of extra hardware," said Shisko. "When someone leaves the company, we do a final back-up and immediately ship the hardware out to a new person. That way, we have the comfort level of still having access to the original person's data without having to hold on to the laptop."

THE RESULTS: A COST-EFFECTIVE SOLUTION THAT WORKS

According to Shisko, even the company's experienced consultants suffer from their share of data disasters. "On a pretty regular basis, we have machines coming back that need to be restored. So, from a disaster recovery perspective, Iron Mountain is being used on a regular basis, improving overall productivity since our consultants can easily restore lost data themselves."

From a cost-benefit standpoint, Iron Mountain was the logical solution for Hitachi. "Essentially, I'm looking at one billable hour per employee per year to pay for Iron Mountain's Licensed Software solution, which is nothing compared to the time it takes if that employee loses his hard drive, if his laptop is stolen, or if he installs something and it just destroys the system. The time and effort it saves more than pays for itself. From a cost perspective, it's easy to justify."

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