Citizen Potawatomi Nation protects its data—and heritage—with Cohesity FortKnox and AWS

INDUSTRY
Public Sector

USE CASE
Backup and Recovery, Ransomware Protection, Data Isolation and Recovery as a Service

COHESITY SOLUTIONS
DataProtect, FortKnox

DATA SOURCES
Network-attached storage, Microsoft SQL Server, VMware

TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS
Amazon Web Services, HPE

Key Benefits

- Ransomware protection
- Compliance with government-recommended 3-2-1 backup rule
- Cost avoidance from not maintaining offsite storage
- Faster restores – minutes instead of hours or days
- Time savings for IT
- Qualification for cybersecurity insurance

Citizen Potawatomi Nation (CPN) counts on dependable access to data to deliver government services like healthcare, support tribal business enterprises, and preserve tribal history and language. With the rise in ransomware attacks, CPN wanted to add an additional layer of data protection beyond just a single onsite backup copy. CPN strengthened security and business continuity by maintaining two copies of data, one onsite with Cohesity DataProtect and another on AWS with Cohesity FortKnox. Finding and restoring files is much faster, and maintaining two ransomware-protected backup copies in different locations helps to protect CPN's data and heritage.

Challenges

CPN is a federally recognized tribe with approximately 38,000 members across the world. Funding comes from the federal government as well as tribal enterprises like casinos, gas stations, grocery stores, a bank, and other businesses. "Citizen Potawatomi Nation has the same security concerns as any state and local government, including member privacy and continuity of service during a cyberattack," says Christopher Abel, CIO/IT Director for CPN. "We also have a unique concern—preserving our history and language for the next generation." CPN developers have brought this legacy to life in the form of interactive digital exhibits at the 36,000-square-foot Citizen Potawatomi Nation Cultural Heritage Center in Shawnee, Oklahoma.

"

"As CIO, it's an important part of my job to protect the data recording our culture and history to make sure it's available for the next generations. We sleep better knowing that Cohesity FortKnox protects our data in transit and at rest, in a secure vault on AWS."

– **Christopher Abel,** CIO/IT Director, Citizen Potawatomi Nation

Abel's team provides IT services for tribal government, enterprises, health clinics, and the Cultural Heritage Center. Previously the IT team kept one local copy of data on Veeam. To strengthen protection, Abel wanted to adopt the 3-2-1 strategy recommended by the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). Guidelines call for three copies of data—two local (on different media) and one offsite. "We wanted a new onsite solution that backed up and restored faster, was easier to use, and saved us the hassle of managing a proxy server," Abel says. "For the offsite copy, we preferred a cloud solution because it avoids the costs and staff time to set up and manage physical storage."

Solution

CPN found the answer to its security and data protection concerns with Cohesity, recommended by Pinnacle Business Systems, a local reseller. "Cohesity stands out from other data protection solutions for its security, including ransomware protection, and its ease of use," Abel says. "Our 25-person IT team supports more than 2,200 employees and 38,000 tribal members, so we always look for solutions that will save us time and effort."

Cohesity DataProtect creates a local copy of CPN's data on HPE Apollo servers, without the need for a proxy server. At the same time, Cohesity FortKnox creates an offsite copy in a secure data vault in AWS cloud. Both copies are immutable, meaning that they can't be encrypted or deleted as part of a ransomware attack. "Cohesity FortKnox on AWS is the easiest way to maintain a secure offsite backup as part of a 3-2-1 strategy," says Abel. "It's much simpler and less expensive than assigning our own staff to set up and maintain storage at a remote site or in the cloud."

Results

Now tribe members' personal data and enterprise systems are protected against cyberattacks, including ransomware. If production systems are hit by a ransomware attack, Abel's team can restore clean copies of data either from the on-prem Cohesity backup or Cohesity FortKnox. That applies to data from virtual machines, databases, and the files and code behind the interactive exhibits at the Cultural Heritage Center. "As CIO, it's an important part of my job to protect the data recording our culture and history for the next generations," Abel says. "We sleep better knowing that Cohesity

FortKnox protects our business and cultural data in transit and at rest, in a secure vault managed by Cohesity on AWS." Ransomware protection also helped CPN qualify for cybersecurity insurance.

Backup and recovery speeds are faster with Cohesity, and so is locating and recovering lost or corrupted files. From a single pane of glass the IT team can find any file, restore it with a couple of clicks, and monitor the status of all backups and restores. "Doing wildcard searches to see the name and location of every file of any type is a huge time-saver," says Abel. "Recovering VMs and files takes hours or minutes instead of days like it did before. That's helped us shift time and effort from backups and restores to projects that improve quality of life for tribal members."

Cohesity's intuitive interface proved its worth one weekend when Abel's phone rang with an emergency call from a tribal enterprise that needed an important folder restored. The IT staffer who ordinarily handles restores was unavailable. "I'd not had to personally handle a restore in a year with Cohesity but the interface was so straightforward that I did it from home, in just minutes," Abel says. "The caller was relieved to get the folder back right away – and I could get back to what I was doing."

"Cohesity gives us the confidence that our data won't be lost or locked up in a cyberattack," Abel says. "We can move forward without the fear that when we wake up tomorrow, next month, or next year, the data we need for tribal services and to preserve our history will have somehow disappeared. I think of Cohesity as protecting not just our data, but also our culture."

Highlights of the Cohesity solution for Citizen Potawatomi Nation include:

- Ransomware protection
- Compliance with government-recommended 3-2-1 backup rule
- Cost avoidance from not maintaining offsite storage
- Faster restores – minutes instead of hours or days
- Time savings for IT
- Eligibility for cybersecurity insurance

Learn more at Cohesity.com

COHESITY

Cohesity.com | 1-855-926-4374 | 300 Park Ave., Suite 1700, San Jose, CA 95110

5000122-001-EN 1-2023