

## Health First Relies on Vizioncore Solutions to Back Up Every Image, Every Night.

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### THE SITUATION

Health First's virtual server farm had outgrown the organization's backup and recovery ability, putting essential IT systems at risk. Network engineer, Jeff Allison, was concerned that, in the event of a major failure, it would take weeks to restore the applications and data, and get running again.

### THE SOLUTION

Allison found Vizioncore's vRanger Pro ability to completely back up the organization's farm of virtual servers, every night, was a huge advantage. They found Vizioncore's product to be superior to other alternatives.

### THE RESULTS

"Vizioncore seems committed to the continued development of vRanger Pro. It is a feature-rich product that improves with each update. Nothing else we found can provide a full snapshot of our environment on a daily basis."

Jeff Allison  
Network Engineer  
Health First

### THE SITUATION

With three hospitals, Medicare, HMO and prescription plans, outpatient facilities plus fitness centers, Health First is the largest health services provider on Florida's Space Coast. The system continues to grow, with a new hospital in Viera, Florida, set to open in 2010.

Health First's virtualization environment is also growing, leading to concerns it was expanding faster than the organization's ability to efficiently safeguard it. Specifically, Health First's farm of virtual servers had outgrown its backup and recovery ability, putting essential IT systems at risk in the case of a major failure.

Health First has virtualized Microsoft Windows, Novell, SUSE Linux, Red Hat Linux and other servers and its storage area network (SAN) using the VMware platform. The organization is upgrading to VMware Infrastructure 3 and is also planning to leverage virtualization to cover a Citrix cluster.

"To go back and restore 100 servers from bare metal is a lot of work. It would take us weeks," said Jeff Allison, network engineer at Health First. "We wanted to back up each entire image, every night, without impacting the server or any applications. That was just too much for the systems we had."

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## THE SOLUTION

Now everything Health First virtualizes is backed up nightly with Vizioncore's vRanger Pro backup and recovery tool. The solution backs up Health First's complete farm of 16 virtual servers, which hosts about 150 applications that are essential for day-to-day operations of the organization.

"Vizioncore's ability to completely back up our farm of virtual servers, every night, was a huge advantage. We found their product to be superior in performance to other alternatives," said Allison. "I think it would take about five weeks for other systems to back up everything. We have seen other backup systems take weeks to backup a similar complement of servers."

vRanger Pro automatically compresses .vmdk and .dsk files and sends them to the user's choice of a Windows, Linux or VMware ESX Server. Restores are done on any ESX Server and can be performed at either the full-image or file level. Recovery is extremely fast because the image is compressed, and all configurations are included in the full image.

The comprehensive backup and restore performance of vRanger Pro gave Health First's IT managers peace of mind they didn't have before.

"We're backing up all of our SAN storage. If anything would ever happen to the SAN, vRanger Pro is our lifeline. We wouldn't have to rebuild our servers from scratch. That would literally take weeks. With Vizioncore's software, I could rebuild it all in a couple days, maybe sooner," says Allison.

Health First uses vRanger Pro for more than disaster recovery. Allison takes advantage of vRanger Pro hot backup capability to save time while conducting routine upgrades and transfers between servers.

"Having vRanger Pro has given us the confidence to leverage advanced virtualization features," he says. "We can do a hot, live migration of a server while it's up and running. I'd never do that without having product such as vRanger Pro for backup and recovery. The ability to migrate a server without taking it down is a true value in a healthcare environment."

"When we're doing an upgrade, it's easy to move something to a virtual server. That way we don't have to impact applications on 20 to 30 actual servers. If anything goes wrong, we can have the virtual server restored in five minutes."

## THE RESULTS

vRanger Pro gave Health First the backup and protection it needs, and saves time in day-to-day operations. Allison estimates common recoveries are done three to four times faster with vRanger Pro than they were previously.

"The most significant feature is the ease of recovery. It takes maybe 20 minutes to rebuild the server. That's the biggest benefit," says Allison. "It's really helpful during upgrades. Physical servers occasionally need to be shut down for an upgrade, but we can clone them so quickly, it's easy to keep applications up and running while we're doing the upgrade. There's a big advantage to not having to shut the system down."

Ease of use is also a big benefit – vRanger Pro essentially eliminates scripting, a major difference from other solutions that Allison had considered. The software also runs independently of other enterprise IT management systems, which simplifies integration, training and daily operation.

"Vizioncore seems committed to the continued development of this product. It is a feature-rich product that improves with each revision. Nothing else we found can provide a full snapshot of our environment on a daily basis," says Allison. "We have utilities available from VMware, but we prefer this software because it is such a superior product."

Allison's final word?

"I would recommend Vizioncore's offerings to any organization which is supporting and leveraging a VMware environment of any kind."



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