

CASE STUDY

Diversified Administrative Corporation

Proactive Data Protection

Diversified Administrative Corporation (DAC) needed a HIPAA compliant business continuity solution to secure, protect, backup and restore its data and business systems in the event of a disaster.

About DAC

DAC is a subsidiary of Diversified Group Brokerage, a family of companies built on the premise that self-funded insurance plans are the most cost effective and sensible health insurance options for many companies across the country. Diversified's family of companies have been administering self-insured health plans for groups and unions for over 40 years. Their tenure as a third party administrator has allowed Diversified to bring its clients the most comprehensive and cost effective approaches to healthcare.



Company President, Brooks Goodison knows that just one catastrophic event could bring a screeching halt to his business. “If our building burned down to the ground, we need the ability to continue doing business. We need to continue to process claims and service our customers. We need access to our data. Without secure, protected, accessible backup and an effective recovery plan, a disaster would be fatal...we’d be done.”

“Protecting and securing our data is something we take seriously. Our business depends on our systems. Our phones, our claims, our new business proposals, our customer service, and our email are all dependent on our systems being up and running.”

At Diversified, HIPAA compliance is a requirement. Security and protection of data is critical. “Our business is so privacy based. Protected health information can never and will never be leaked. Everything must be protected. For some reason, I think most companies just think they’re not vulnerable to security breaches or data losses. We chose to take a more proactive approach.”

Goodison goes on to say, “As a third party administrator of health claims, security of our data is brutally important. Some of our clients are publically traded companies. They test our security systems and audit the results. If we fail our security tests, we’re out of business. To protect our business and our clients, we made the decision to go with Technology Partners.”

Develop the Solution

Dan Weinstein, President of Technology Partners, recognized just how important a complete data protection and disaster recovery plan was to DAC. “When we perform our initial systems assessment, we focus on the individual needs of the organization. We take special care to learn about their business requirements,

and design a data protection and disaster recovery plan to meet their specific needs.”

With Diversified, our initial assessment exposed the vulnerabilities of their old system—an unreliable and untrusted tape backup system, doubts about the protection and security of their data and questions surrounding their ability to access data in the event of a disaster. There was a real sense of fear that if there was a data loss or system failure, DBG could be out of business before they had the time to recover.”

Darin Aloia, DAC’s Information Technology Manager, needed a system that at minimum complied with industry regulations, encrypted his data, backed up the data offsite, housed the encrypted data in a secure data center and that in the event of a disaster, could be recovered so DAC could focus on serving their clients and building their business.

Given Darin’s requirements, Technology Partners went to work designing a data protection and recovery solution. The solution focused on:

- Automating nightly backups.
- Utilizing an online backup system and trashing the old tapes.
- Morning emails and monitoring confirming the status of each backup.
- Securing the data by encrypting it during backup.
- Protecting the encrypted data by storing it at one of Technology Partners’ secure data centers, and mirroring it to another secure data center 1,000 miles away.
- Simulating a disaster, testing the recovery plan and creating documentation to be used in the event of a real disaster.



Weinstein continues, “We replaced Darin’s old tape backup system with an online backup system. Backups occur automatically, and Darin receives daily email notification confirming that the backups were performed successfully. When information is backed up, it is automatically encrypted protecting the sensitive nature of the content and then it heads to the vault, which is housed in one of our data centers. Once in the vault, the encrypted data is mirrored to our second data center, which is about 1,000 miles away.”

Reflecting back on the initial design of the disaster recovery plan, Aloia says, “I sleep comfortably knowing that Technology Partners designed and implemented a backup procedure and data recovery plan that’s secure, protected, compliant and focused on our specific needs.”

“We could have a catastrophic event and be up and running without missing a beat.”

Further, Darin says, “I like being able to pick-up the phone and talk directly to one of the engineers at Technology Partners. One night, our systems crashed at 7:00 p.m. I called Technology Partners. They stayed on the phone with me until 3:00 a.m. the next morning. Everything was beautifully restored. That was huge!”