# Storage Virtualization at
## Town of South Windsor, Connecticut

## Customer Snapshot

**Town of South Windsor:**

With 25,000 residents, the Town of South Windsor encompasses roughly 26 square miles. Five people comprise the IT Department at the Town of South Windsor and all told, approximately 250 people work for the town. Anyone on the government side of things, other than the Board of Education, relies on the systems supported by a small IT team – including public safety, public works, finance, strategic planning, etc. Entities utilizing these systems are the Police Department, the Public Works Department, the Tax Collector, the Town Assessor, the Finance Office, Human Resources, the IT Department itself, the Recreation Department, the Human Services Department, and the Sewer Treatment Plant. For all of these IT "constituents," IT is charged with, among other things, ensuring that the 40-50 applications the systems support do so without interruption.

For more information, please visit: **www.southwindsor.org**

The Town of South Windsor in Connecticut has realized tremendous benefits after deploying DataCore's SANmelody storage virtualization software as its storage area network (SAN). In fact, the town has virtualized its IT systems "top to bottom" courtesy of DataCore Software and VMware. Moreover, DataCore has enabled the South Windsor's IT Department to repurpose systems and avoid a scenario involving a costly rip-and-replace.

Now powered by virtualization, this Connecticut town has achieved its objective of embracing business continuity and disaster recovery – within budget, without compromising on capabilities.

## Challenge

Prior to DataCore, the Town of South Windsor was grappling with an older, converted Novell network that the IT Department had migrated to Microsoft. In the words of the current network administrator for the town, this was literally riddled with "single points of failure" everywhere.

Before DataCore virtualized the town's approach to data storage, the town actually was managing two separate networks – one for the Town of South Windsor Police Department and one for the town government side itself. The town was completely reliant on tape back-up for recovery. "We had no business continuity or disaster recovery," explained Scott Roberts, IT director, Town of South Windsor. "It was a case of cross your fingers, hope and pray that the digital media will be restored from tape and we can get the equipment needed to get operational within a reasonable timeframe. A best-case scenario for this was that we would be back in business in 2-4 weeks."

Before VMware and DataCore, the IT landscape consisted of a bunch of old HP servers, with single uses – an Exchange "box," a virus scan "box," a database "box" for individual applications, etc. All and all, the IT team was managing seven individual tape backups that they had to manage. "There was no storage area network at all prior to DataCore," commented Lance Page, network administrator and project leader, Town of South Windsor. "If you lost the file and print server – you lost all the files."

> "It was clear that if we wanted to go in the direction we were dead-set on going – and that is the way of virtualization – that DataCore was absolutely the right choice for us. We have faith in this network because of DataCore. That was not the case before we deployed the DataCore SAN."
>
> *- Scott Roberts, IT director, Town of South Windsor*

## Solution

It was clear that this would be an unsustainable situation for the town, going forward. Whereas a traditional hardware SAN with Fibre Channel connectivity would have delivered on most of the business objectives that the IT Department was striving for, this was far too expensive of a proposition for a town government on a tight budget. Fortunately, Roberts and Page were introduced to DataCore through an IT solutions provider that was a VMware and DataCore partner. SANmelody, DataCore's software-based storage virtualization solution, was just what the town needed to economically deliver the business continuity (BC) and disaster recovery (DR) the IT Department was desperately trying to put in place.

The IT team has now collapsed the two separate networks into one new network built from scratch. Moreover, the Town of South Windsor has gone "all in" in terms of virtualization – deploying virtual servers, supported by virtual storage.

After being sold on VMware to address the IT Department's server-sprawl, the IT director at Town of South Windsor knew a SAN was needed to support the virtual machines. "However, the hardware SAN approach was just not going to happen," said Roberts. "Traditional SAN vendors were asking upwards of $250,000 just for the storage piece of the infrastructure puzzle. Our entire budget was $125,000 – for virtual servers, storage, new equipment, everything. The fact that DataCore allowed us to repurpose servers we already had on hand was a tremendous advantage as well."

## Results: Virtualization, Repurposing and Real Disaster Recovery

Having learned the benefits of server virtualization from the VMware partner, the IT staff at the Town of South Windsor was "all ears" to hearing what DataCore could do for them on the storage-side. "It was clear that if we wanted to go in the direction we were dead-set on going – and that is the way of virtualization – that DataCore was absolutely the right choice for us," added Roberts.

For half the price of a traditional hardware SAN alone, the IT folks at Town of South Windsor were able to buy the VMware licenses they required, three SANmelody SANs, as well as the necessary new equipment for the deployment – including two identical machines, as well as additional, new HP servers. Exisiting equipment was repurposed for the new deployment – delivering substantial savings. Two DataCore SANmelody nodes located in separate buildings are now running in an "active-active" capacity (connected synchronously through Fibre Channel), while a third runs in a completely different site and runs "active-passive" (connected via asynchronous mirroring using iSCSI). "We have faith in this network because of DataCore," commented Roberts. "That was not the case before we deployed the DataCore SAN."

The Town of South Windsor can now lose an entire building and be up and running at a moment's notice, since the SANs are synchronized. The virtual servers that are connected to the SANs can also be restored quickly on the same premise – they are replicated too. "If one building explodes, all our data is already connected back to the second system at the other building," noted Page. "Our disaster recovery plan is set. So much so that if one building blows up, it will take me longer to drive to the other building than it will be to get the town's network back up and running. No joke."

**For more information on storage virtualization, please visit:**
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