

About VirtuWorks

VirtuWorks provides **Outsourced Managed IT Support** on a flat-rate, monthly basis. This billing method places the full responsibility of maintaining stable and well documented client networks firmly in their hands. Because VirtuWorks charges the same amount monthly, regardless of how long they spend maintaining customers networks, they cannot afford to only partially resolve issues, as they will resurface, costing them money. In order to support this business model, proactive management of a customer's backup environment is critical for business success.

Challenges of Data Protection Service Management

Data protection processes must execute predictably and reliably to enable the service levels required to offer a complete end-to-end managed service. A significant portion of a managed service agreement is dictated by the ability of the service provider to restore critical data and applications in the event of an outage and financial penalties can be applied if those levels of service are not met

Knowing with certainty whether backups are completing error-free was a daunting task for VirtuWorks. Faced with unprecedented data growth, ever-shrinking backup and recovery windows, and requirements to adhere to regulatory compliance mandates, MSPs must have the ability to analyze and centrally manage backups and policies to ensure recoverability of business-critical data. Operational complexity is always a challenge due to factors like geographical diversity and rapidly changing and varying requirements between managed service customers. VirtuWorks needed to meet its customer's Service Level Agreement (SLA) needs while minimizing costs, risks and intervention.

At VirtuWorks, associates were spending an excessive amount of time building backup reports needed to effectively manage customer environments when manually collecting data and exporting to spreadsheets. As a result, most of the time dedicated to managing backups was spent creating backup reports, not mitigating potential issues or repairing actual problems. Human error was also a constant concern.

Omar Armenteros, VirtuWorks President, explained, "I didn't have the visibility that I needed. The amount of money that it was costing to ensure backups didn't justify the portion of the managed service offered."

Without automated backup reporting, VirtuWorks and all MSPs may meet with the following challenges:

- Uncertainty of meeting data protection SLAs as agreed.
- Increased administrative costs when manually creating reports.
- Low confidence in data protection information impeding customer acquisition and retention.
- Potential customer satisfaction issues due to unknown and unaddressed backup problems.
- Difficulty collecting service fees without validating delivery reports.

VirtuWorks Teams with Bocada

VirtuWorks initially looked to Bocada because of their strategic partnership with Microsoft and seamless integration with Microsoft DPM (Data Protection Manager). MS DPM is VirtuWorks data protection solution of choice and a pillar offering in its service catalog. Data protection covers a large percentage of the SLAs (Service Level Agreements) that VirtuWorks delivers simply because business continuity is highest on the list of requirements from its SMB clients. SMBs, because of their smaller size, operate on extremely tight budgets. Their stability and viability are typically more precarious than that of their larger corporate counterparts. Data loss is almost always catastrophic to an SMB's ability to continue in business. VirtuWorks offers MS DPM because it enables them to provide the best ROI to its customers for rapid and reliable recovery and efficient, continuous data protection. Therefore, it was critical as VirtuWorks evaluated data protection management solutions, to have tight integration with MS DPM for centralized management and reporting of data protection activities. As an additional requirement, VirtuWorks needed a data protection management solution that had the capability to support a wide range of heterogeneous backup platforms. This allows VirtuWorks the flexibility to offer MS DPM as its premier data protection server while supporting its customer's legacy backup software as required.

About the company

- The leading Managed Service Provider (MSP) and SaaS provider to medium and small businesses (SMB) in Southern Florida, VirtuWorks serves the information technology (IT) needs of more than 200 customer organizations.
- Revolutionizing the way IT support services are provided to SMB customers, transitioning from hourly IT support to flat-fee managed services and SaaS offerings from the cloud.

Meeting Customer SLAs

After implementing Bocada Enterprise, VirtuWorks could ensure it was in a position to deliver its customers the data protection levels required to meet expected SLAs while at the same time meeting its own cost targets for delivering those SLAs. Bocada Enterprise delivers VirtuWorks critical information on how specific backup jobs are being handled, and audit reports documenting proof of data protection levels and backup/SLA effectiveness. Further, Bocada Enterprise provides validation that specific data sets can be restored and documentation of any backup issues so that repairs and risk mitigation can be implemented quickly and effectively. The resulting reports prove to clients the recoverability of business-critical data and the efficacy of the data protection service that VirtuWorks delivers, promoting greater customer satisfaction.

Armenteros, elaborated, “The feeling I had before Bocada was that I didn’t know what was going on. Now I feel comfortable that my information is consistent, correct and timely. I have more and better information to make decisions. Before implementing Bocada, the information that I had was not accurate. A backup may have said it was complete on my spreadsheet, when it was actually failing every other day. It was impossible to meet SLAs without Bocada. Before it was more like plugging little leaks everywhere with no definite way to ensure the boat wouldn’t sink. Now I know the boat will stay afloat.”

Increased Customer Satisfaction and Reduced Costs

Armenteros went on to say, “Since implementing Bocada Enterprise I can easily see trends and have much greater granularity into backup operations. Information fed back to me and my staff is the most important thing. Now I have an SLA that is 90-95% and we are saving \$5,000 per month previously spent to create reports manually. That amounts to a full-time employee spending nearly every moment of every working day to create reports, leaving no time to troubleshoot potential problems. After implementing Bocada Enterprise, we spend time fixing problems, not building reports.”

Bocada Enterprise allows VirtuWorks to provide peace of mind to its customers by letting them see specific data protection analytics for themselves. Says Armenteros, “If the backup is failing, I want my customer to know. It creates a layer of transparency that fosters trust. Trust is the biggest selling point in IT managed services. It gets us more referrals.”

Equally, Armenteros said, “Customers are lost through lack of trust. Communication fosters trust. This is more important even than knowing how to do the work. As long as you can establish and maintain trust, your customer will be your customer.”

Finally, customers whom have documented proof that their SLAs are being met – such as is demonstrated through reports provided by Bocada Enterprise -- are more than happy to pay for services in a timely manner.

In the Future: Strategies Perfectly Aligned

Bocada’s strategic direction dovetails perfectly with VirtuWorks business strategy. Bocada’s Data Protection Service Model (DPSM) is a strategic tool that enables the delivery of best practices coupled with a unified management platform for data protection. DPSM charts a multi-phased approach to assess overall data protection delivery infrastructure and effectiveness and improve the ability to deliver quality data protection and recovery services. The results are published to customers to prove the effectiveness of data protection operations and provide evidence of lowered costs. There are five phases in the process: Assessment, Policy Management, Services Delivery Management, Risk Management, and ultimately, Operational Excellence.

The DPSM model aligns well with what MSP industry experts, such as MSPMentor (mspmmentor.net), are advising MSPs must do to ensure continued customer satisfaction. Implementing each phase in the Bocada DPSM model increases an MSP’s ability to successively and significantly provide value to its customer, increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Bocada’s DPSM model is all about having information critical to meeting business goals flow through an organization, assisting them to assess themselves in the areas of compliance, governance and risk management. DPSM helps to identify ways to enhance business processes and deliver higher service levels. It’s easy to see why Bocada and VirtuWorks are perfectly aligned, because delivering higher service levels are what MSPs are all about and enabling superior data protection service delivery is what Bocada does best.

Results using Bocada Enterprise

- Meeting SLAs at 90-95%
- Savings of \$5000 per month (1 employee, 8 hours per day @ \$30 per hour)
- Attracting new customers through referrals
- Reducing customer attrition
- On-time receivables