

TNPA chooses HP Autonomy Connected Backup for data protection

Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) is a division of Transnet, tasked with controlling and managing all commercial ports on South Africa's coastline. It is the largest port authority in southern Africa in terms of cargo volumes and is responsible for providing port infrastructure and marine services as well as ensuring the safe, effective and efficient economic functioning of the national ports system.



In a digitally driven world, TNPA's data is critical to performing its mandated functions and effective back-up and restore capabilities are an integral part of protecting this data. In an effort to automate and streamline this process, TNPA turned to Altonet and the HP Autonomy Connected Backup solution to reduce risk, improve efficiency and ensure that mission-critical data is secure and protected at all times.

Previously, TNPA relied on users manually saving their valuable data, an inefficient practice that left the organisation vulnerable to data loss. With an excess of 1800 desktop and notebook computers across eight ports and the TNPA head office, this manual process not only relied heavily on human compliance, but also exposed the organisation to unnecessary risk in the event of an incident, including lost laptops, hard drive failures, accidental deletion of files or even fire, flood and other disasters. TNPA needed to ensure that all critical user data was protected at all times across all nine locations and went out to tender with its requirements, ultimately selecting the HP Autonomy Connected Backup solution from local HP Autonomy Data Protection Partner Altonet.

"After evaluating many solutions as part of an open tender process, we found that the HP Autonomy Connected Backup solution was best suited for our needs. Altonet provided us with a workable solution and had the quality reference sites we needed to give us peace of mind on the quality of their implementations. They met all of our requirements and, as such, were the natural choice to work with," said Ian du Preez, senior manager: enterprise architecture of TNPA.

A tough selection process

"TNPA needed an intelligent, automated and secure back-up solution, and provided a detailed tender with a tough selection process. Our product offering is extremely robust and we were confident that it met all of their requirements, including Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) criteria. We were awarded the tender at the end of 2011 and after conducting due diligence in March 2012, and ensuring that all hardware and software met requirements, the roll-out began. This was completed towards the end of 2012. We also provided an educational workshop for helpdesk staff to ensure that they are able to deliver support to users should this be required," added Gareth Tudor, CEO of Altonet.

TNPA provided a comprehensive list of requirements as part of the tender process, all of which the robust HP Autonomy Connected Backup solution and Altonet met and exceeded. One of the most important requirements was for a fully automated solution that provided auto-scheduling of back-ups as well as fixed opportunistic back-up, and which would run in the background without interrupting users.

Centralised management, strong encryption, version control and the ability to work in a virtual machine environment were also critical, as well as the ability to back up open files as well as saved files. Data de-duplication technology was required to optimise storage capacity, along with support for multiple user profiles on machines, roll-out via Active Directory, and support for both 32 bit and 64 bit Windows operating systems.

The ability to lock user profiles

"TNPA also required the ability to lock user profiles and specify attributes and file types that each user or group of users are required to back up. This helps to optimise storage further, ensuring that only critical business-related data is stored. Back-end reporting was also required for visibility on all users, showing when back-ups occurred and how much data was backed up each time," Tudor added.

HP Autonomy Connected Backup automatically and securely saves critical data in the background while users work, backing up incremental changes in data and new documents to reduce the time, size and complexity of back-ups. Compliance and reporting functions are supported with Connected Classify and Collect, which offers extended capabilities for eDiscovery and data analytics. Connected Backup also makes it possible for users to access their protected files securely, while on the move. Files can be searched and downloaded to a variety of mobile devices, including smartphones and tablets, for offline use. Autonomy utilises advanced encryption and other security technologies to safeguard enterprise data during transmission, storage and recovery, ensuring that TNPA's critical data is always protected and always available for recovery.

Altonet and the HP Autonomy Connected Backup solution stood out from other tender applicants because of its proven scalability and single-platform approach, as well as its de-duplication and email optimisation capabilities. The HP Autonomy solution set is used by banks and auditors as well as other industries across the globe. This proven track record for protecting customer data along with the agility and intelligence of the Connected Backup solution were deciding factors in the selection of the winning tender bid.

"The biggest threat to business, with all employees working either on laptops or desktops, is a loss of data resulting from people not backing up their work. HP Autonomy Connected Backup minimised this risk by automating back-up and ensuring that if data is lost for whatever reason, it can be swiftly retrieved. We are confident that our data is stored safely and that we are compliant with legislation around data retention. We have already seen the benefits of this by being able to recover lost data quickly and get our staff back to full productivity in short order," Du Preez concluded.