

StorageCraft ShadowProtect Keeps Business Running Smoothly

STF Consulting, based in the Central New Jersey township of Atlantic Highlands, is an IT management firm that provides a managed services portfolio to small and mid-sized businesses on the New Jersey shore. The firm consists of four employees who are intent on providing maintenance, monitoring, disaster recovery and ongoing network services to customers through a managed services offering.

"We sell the full relationship," says Sean Furman, president of STF Consulting. "Anyone can come in and sell a customer a bunch of boxes. The real beauty of managed services is being able to show a customer the total cost of ownership of their network over a five-year period instead of a five-week period. The long-term relationship is where the real value is."

STF Consulting targets businesses that often do not have IT resources to manage and support their network infrastructures. Those businesses, 25-75 employees in size, represent the bulk of customers of STF's services and support.

"None of the customers we support have IT staff," says Furman. "The whole relation-

ship is sold as an outsourced IT relationship that is designed for companies that are too small to have dedicated IT staff."

His approach is to "sell" potential customers on making their networks work properly rather than constantly fixing them. "Using StorageCraft's MSP offering is a business continuity vs. a Band-Aid approach," says Furman, who can charge a monthly fee to customers with service level agreements.

"The break fix/help desk model sees a customer as a cash cow when things don't work. The business only receives revenue to fix things when they're broken," he says. Because Furman takes the business continuity approach, his motivation is to

keep things working as smoothly as possible, as often as possible.

The Challenge

Founded in 2000, STF Consulting was setting itself up to be able to provide network infrastructure services to small and mid-size businesses that lacked the IT resources to manage and support their infrastructures. The company chose to support businesses with primarily Windows-based networks using Microsoft Exchange, SQL Server and Microsoft Office. STF's Furman knew that in supporting networks of this type, that he also needed to be able to provide disaster recovery, data protection and migration services to his customers to protect their infrastructures

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*Sean Furman,
president of STF
Consulting*



STF Consulting LLC

58 First Avenue
Suite 201
Atlantic Highlands,
NJ 07716

(732) 872-1911

www.stfconsulting.net



and business-critical applications and further to ensure their availability. He chose StorageCraft because of "their reputation."

"People talk about StorageCraft a lot on forums or blogs," says Furman. "Their reputation is solid and tarnish-free. StorageCraft definitely has its arm around what SMBs need."

Furman turned to StorageCraft's ShadowProtect products exclusively and the company's Managed Service Provider (MSP) Partner Program as the sole way of providing vital data protection services to his customers.

He had evaluated other popular backup and recovery solutions, but chose StorageCraft because its

MSP program fit with his needs to provide software and services as part of his business model. He chose ShadowProtect over other offerings after evaluating ShadowProtect IT Edition. When he looked it over, his reaction was, "I can't live without this!"

StorageCraft ShadowProtect MSP Partner Solution

In particular, Furman likes that he can manage customer's StorageCraft ShadowProtect installations remotely from his office. "We try to fix things remotely first because every time we have to visit a customer we are dedicating a resource to that company. That's expensive and a waste of time," says Furman. "If you have to roll a truck, that engineer can only work on one thing

at a time. If I am able to keep an engineer in the office, he can work on five things in that same amount of time."

He also counts on ShadowProtect's dependability. "StorageCraft puts out a good product that is reliable," says Furman. "Once you add StorageCraft into the equation it really takes the human factor out of it - no more tapes, no more dealing with open file problems -- it has worked out very well for us. We haven't had any failures since we've had StorageCraft in the equation."

Furman likes the pricing incentives in the StorageCraft Reseller Partner Program. "Their volume purchase agreements are absolutely a good deal."

In addition, he likes the flexibility of the StorageCraft MSP Partner Program. With that program, MSPs own the software licenses and receive discounts based on their entire installed base. They are billed monthly and the licenses are portable. So when customers change, licenses can change locations or be discontinued entirely. The net effect is that Furman pays for no more than the licenses he is using.

Benefits

Since implementing the StorageCraft ShadowProtect suite of products for his customers, Furman has noticed that there are a lot of advantages to the com-

pany's MSP offering.

"The ShadowProtect Server product is a no-brainer," says Furman. "It changes the whole ballgame with all the features and functionality you get from it."

He has also seen a benefit from using ShadowProtect Desktop Edition for customers with complex environments. "The desktop product has helped us change high-value targets that are very difficult to rebuild when they break, such as machines that are used for shipping, time and attendance or difficult automation," says Furman. "We definitely are going to get a StorageCraft license on it because it saves hours and hours of downtime."

StorageCraft Technology Corporation

121 W. Election Road
Suite 110
Draper, UT 84020

(801) 545-4700

www.storagecraft.com
partners@storagecraft.com