



Confidence in a connected world.



CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Verus Claims Services LLC

Processing Legal Claims with Proven Security

Verus Claims Services of Hopewell, New Jersey is a 63-employee company with a specific niche: it processes claims for asbestos-related personal injury trusts using software it developed in-house. Its Microsoft SQL database contains sensitive information about hundreds of thousands of claims and is accessed 24/7 by hundreds of law firms around the United States. Verus and its technology partner STF Consulting rely on Symantec Backup Exec™, Symantec™ Endpoint Protection Enterprise Edition, and MessageLabs™ Hosted Email Security to keep its systems protected, secure, and operating smoothly. Backups don't interrupt operations and achieve a compression ratio of 7:1, malware attacks are completely prevented, and 95 percent of spam is blocked from the company's email systems.

Complicated legal settlements generate vast quantities of sensitive data. Information technology is a natural tool for managing that data, but it requires a provider with integrity, responsiveness, accuracy, and a dedication to continuous improvement.

Those four factors are the core values of Verus Claims Services of Hopewell, New Jersey. Founded in 2003, Verus serves a specific legal niche: it provides claims processing for asbestos personal injury trusts. Verus processes claims for 13 different trusts totaling hundreds of thousands of claims, using custom software architected by Morten Iversen, and Mark Eveland, who are two of the six Verus partners.

"Our system is built to capture the necessary data to evaluate whether a claim is valid," Iversen explains. "People submit documentation such as their work history and medical reports to support a claim." Hundreds of attorneys nationwide access Verus' claim management system around the clock, submitting their clients' information and checking the status of claims in progress.

Verus and its customers can't afford interruptions or downtime, so the company relies on Symantec Backup Exec and Symantec Endpoint Protection to protect its huge database of sensitive information. In addition, Symantec's MessageLabs online messaging security service protects Verus' busy employees from spam. The entire IT infrastructure has been managed by STF Consulting, Verus' Partner since 2005.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Website: www.verusllc.com

Industry: Settlement Claims Processing

Headquarters: Hopewell, New Jersey

SYMANTEC SOLUTIONS

Endpoint Security
Messaging Security
Data Protection
Disaster Recovery

Why Symantec?

- Antivirus, antispyware, device control, and more are consolidated in one product
- Backup Exec Agents for Microsoft SQL Server and Microsoft Exchange protect vital data
- Almost no spam clogs network even as email volumes rise
- Centralized management leverages shared resources

No Backup Window, Proven Reliability

“All the data at Verus is irreplaceable at this point,” says Sean Furman, president of STF Consulting. His team uses Symantec Backup Exec for Windows Servers 11D along with the Agent for Microsoft SQL Server and Agent for Microsoft Exchange, to back up the data.

Verus’ servers, which have a total storage capacity of more than six terabytes, reside in the company’s on-site data center. STF Consulting performs a full backup of the company’s critical data every day, a task made possible by Symantec technology. “Because of the Backup Exec Agent for Microsoft SQL Server, the data compresses substantially,” Furman explains. “We’re able to fit everything onto two LTO-3 tapes, with data compression of about 7:1.”

And because Backup Exec can run continuously, productive work isn’t interrupted. “I don’t have to have a backup window where we shut everything down,” Iversen says. “That adds a lot of value for us.”

Backup tapes are stored off-site for added safety. Data restores are rare, but Furman is confident that the backups are reliable. “I’ve been using Backup Exec for 12 years,” he says. “If a job verifies, it’s pretty much a guarantee on LTO media that it’s good to go.”

Leveraging Centralized Management

Verus used antivirus protection from Symantec since it opened its doors, but in November 2009 the company removed all other protection software from its environment in favor of Symantec Endpoint Protection. “Our biggest concern, in addition to data leaking out, is disruption of services,” Iversen says. “We can’t afford to get any kind of virus or spyware that would make our systems unavailable for our clients or staff.”

Today, Endpoint Protection Enterprise Edition protects all of the company’s servers and workstations with integrated antivirus, antispyware, firewall, intrusion prevention, application control, and device control.

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Business Drivers

- Protect confidential client data from all threats
- Prevent downtime, leaving employees free to focus on core tasks
- Keep email inboxes spam-free
- Outsource security, backup, and antispam management

Symantec Products

- Symantec Endpoint Protection
- Symantec Backup Exec
- MessageLabs Email Security System

Symantec Partner

- STF Consulting (stfconsulting.net)

Technology Environment

- Server platform: Dell T710; Microsoft Windows Server 2008 R2; VMware Vsphere virtualization
- Tape Library: Dell Powervault 124T
- Applications: Microsoft Exchange, Microsoft Office, Verus Claims Management System
- Databases: Microsoft SQL Server
- Desktop OS: Microsoft Windows 7

BUSINESS VALUE AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

- 7:1 data compression for backups of Microsoft SQL Server data
- Central protection management consolidates information from many sites
- 95 percent of junk mail eliminated

“I don’t think there’s another antivirus solution that has the kind of power that Symantec Endpoint Protection has,” Furman says. “We can control things on such a granular level. For example, we don’t allow software to run from any type of removable media. If somebody plugs a USB stick that’s infected with malware into a workstation or server, we’ve totally blocked that auto-run from occurring.”

Verus also appreciates Symantec Endpoint Protection’s ability to block fake antivirus programs, a crafty exploit also called “rogue security software” that can turn up several times a day on Verus’ workstations. “They really tie up the end user,” Iversen says of the bogus antivirus software. “Those sorts of attacks appear with quite a bit of frequency, but they’re completely suppressed.”

Furman calls Verus’ upgrade to Symantec Endpoint Protection Enterprise Edition version 11 MR5 in early 2010 a “game-changer” for his company because of the centralized management it enabled. “We used to have to install a management console at every customer’s site, but now we centrally operate it from our office,” he explains. “We don’t have

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President
STF Consulting

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Morten Iversen

Partner
Verus Claims Services

to install and manage it at 40 different places, and the policies we establish are consistent across all of our customers.” That capability, he says, is unique to Symantec. “Not many companies can do what Symantec can do—if they can do it at all,” Furman says.

Verus also benefits from STF Consulting providing managed security at multiple customers. “I have better protection, and it’s easier for Sean to manage all the endpoints—to track and update everything as needed,” Iversen says. “If his team finds patterns of viruses at any of their other customers’ sites using Symantec Endpoint Protection, they use that information to help all of us much quicker. I get to leverage what other people experience to protect Verus.”

Ninety-Five Percent of Spam Blocked

MessageLabs online messaging security is the third Symantec tool Verus uses to protect its environment. Keeping spam off the network is vitally important for the company’s smooth functioning; because it deals with attorneys, trustees, banks, and insurance companies around the country, a great deal of Verus’ critical data resides in email. Indeed, more than 40 of Verus’ 63 employees are claims analysts who use email heavily.

Verus’ email volume has grown from 1,000 messages a week in 2005 to 2,500 messages a week today. Although Verus grew substantially as a company during those years, the explosion in email volume can’t be attributed entirely to business expansion. “Our email addresses are public,” Iversen explains. “They’re out there on our website. As we’ve grown and acquired more clients, we’ve become a bigger target of junk mail.”

So in 2007, Verus brought in MessageLabs, and once again called on STF Consulting to deploy and manage it. The results were immediate and dramatic. “MessageLabs eliminated 95 percent of junk mail—if not more,” Iversen says.

“MessageLabs has offered us a game-changing approach to how we handle spam and email-borne security threats at STF Consulting,” says Furman. “Being able to filter 95% of spam and unwanted mail before that traffic reaches our customers’ firewalls is a very comforting feeling.”

Full Speed Ahead

Verus Claims Systems has grown from a handful of people in 2003 to more than 60 today, and the systems that support the business have evolved and grown as well. Its technology environment includes Microsoft Windows 7, server virtualization, thin clients, and a paperless workflow. “Our IT systems evolved very rapidly,” Iversen says.

Symantec protection has grown and evolved along with Verus. “We consolidated everything onto Symantec long ago, and have stuck with it ever since,” Iversen says. He says he’s learned from his decades in IT that growing a company requires his undivided attention, and Symantec protection helps him provide that.

“I want to focus on developing our software and working with our internal staff to build the best systems for processing claims,” Iversen explains. “I want to avoid dealing with server and network issues.”

Instead, he delegates those jobs to STF Consulting and Symantec software. Iversen knows Symantec is doing its job when he doesn’t see STF Consulting employees in the Verus data center. “The less that these people are here, the better,” he says with a smile. “Because that means our business is going full speed.”

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