

Case Study

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

KENCO CONSTRUCTION



Overview

Industry: Construction

Customer Profile

Kenco Construction is a specialty subcontractor based in Seattle.

Business Situation

Kenco's customer base was growing, and the demands on its existing IT infrastructure became more taxing.

Solution

They needed a more reliable backup system to keep their business up and running.

Benefits

Kenco is prepared not only for today, but for future growth.

Background

The construction industry is growing increasingly more complex as building projects get larger, designs become more intricate and safety regulations become more prohibitive. As the industry progresses, contractors are delegating a lot more responsibility and ownership to subcontractors. Subcontractors are now held solely accountable for quality control on more elements of an overall project than ever before. To remain competitive and keep pace with the biggest contractors in the industry, subcontractors must have IT and administrative environments that match the reliability, performance, and security of their bigger industry partners.

Recognizing this trend, Kenco Construction, a specialty subcontractor based in Seattle, has made large investments in its IT infrastructure over the last several years. Founded in 1981, Kenco has established itself as a respected specialty subcontractor for architectural sheet metal. Kenco's 50 employees help develop commercial and public works projects across Washington, Oregon and Alaska, and serve the biggest contractors in the industry, including Turner Construction and PCL.

Kenco's employees are spread across the company's offices in Portland and Seattle, its fabrication facilities in Everett, Washington and Tualitin, Oregon, and remote job sites. Kenco often handles 20 construction projects at a time in multiple Pacific Northwest locations.

Challenge

As the industry advanced and Kenco's customer base grew, the demands on its existing IT infrastructure became more taxing. Each Kenco project requires the management and storage of a massive amount of project-related data. Large CAD files that contain designs and updates for up to six months of work must have reliable and secure backup. Data that is constantly being changed at remote job sites must be protected and fully backed up every night. Files related to all day-to-day operations, including accounting files and project management files, and the SQL and Exchange servers, also need to be reliably saved and accessible.

Solution

Seeking an easy-to-use and reliable storage system to protect all company data, Kenco turned to its IT services and support provider of four years, ISOOutsource, for a recommendation on the right solution. In March of 2006, Kenco switched out existing DLT drives and deployed Sony AIT-4 tape drives in their place.

"Kenco needed superior tape drives that were easy to manage and met their growing capacity and performance needs," said Ryan Marberg, managing consultant of ISOOutsource. "Sony AIT-4 tape drives store over 120 GB of data for Kenco and are so simple to operate that the office manager can swap out the tapes and run a full backup on a daily basis."

The volume of data generated by the projects is stored and archived by Sony AIT in a secure way that protects Kenco and its clients. The affordable Sony AIT solution is ideal for projects with budget constraints, as well as long-term projects that require scalable, multi-generational storage to fit various performance and functionality needs.

"Our suppliers and customers are some of the biggest in the industry, so we


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Ken McDonald, CEO, Kenco Construction

need the most rock-solid reliable storage solution to protect our investments and relationships,” said Ken Macdonald, CEO of Kenco Construction. “As we become more dependent on our IT systems and work with huge volumes of data, it’s critical for us to feel secure with our choice for storage. Our Sony tape drives give us peace of mind at the end of the day, knowing that our data is safe and secure at all of our remote job locations.”

With the recent release of the Sony AIT-5 product line, Kenco upgraded its backup with an AIT-5 external drive, giving the company 400 GB native/1.04 TB compressed (using 2.6:1 ADLC) capacity per tape media. Because of this additional backup from the latest line of Sony AIT products, Kenco can rest assured that its critical data is secure.

Sony’s AIT drives are also part of Kenco’s 24-hour disaster recovery plan. With the new solution, all offsite storage and even complete servers can be restored in a matter of hours.

Conclusion

In the highly competitive building materials and subcontracting market, precise project management and quality control can mean the difference between success and failure. With Sony AIT drives at the heart of the company’s technology infrastructure, Kenco is prepared not just for today’s high volumes and activity, but for the expected growth that tomorrow will bring. With Sony AIT’s unique performance and capacity capabilities, the company has greatly simplified its environment, and met the data avalanche challenge head-on.

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