AvePoint

AvePoint's Cloud Backup Protects 10 TB of Data and Prevents Days of Downtime After Data Incident for Government Agency

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

Customer Location
Washington, DC

Industry
Public Sector

Platform
Microsoft 365

Critical Needs
• Extended M365 data backup and retention
• Quick and easy restores
• Protection of mission-critical data

Solution
• AvePoint Cloud Backup

⭐ Success Highlights

• Full-service, worry-free M365 backup
• Protection of 10 TB of mission-critical data
• Minimized downtime after data incident
• Reduced IT burden

🔍 Customer Profile

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is an independent federal agency dedicated to making the humanities available to all Americans. Created in 1965, it is one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States. NEH promotes excellence in the humanities and civic education by awarding grants for top-rated proposals examined by panels of independent, external reviewers.

⚙ The Challenge

While a smaller federal agency, with only about 250 employees, the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) maintains a large volume of data. Some of the agency's 18 internal departments have over a terabyte of data in their department alone.

This is partially due to the sensitive nature of their work. The agency is mandated to follow strict retention policies by regulations like the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Though FOIA only requires agencies to hold on to information for three years, NEH's internal policy is to retain information for much longer, resulting in a large amount of data to protect.

About two years ago, NEH began to migrate their legacy data from an internal network file system to Microsoft Teams. They wanted to enable their employees to work anywhere, from any device. During the process, they decided they also needed to find a better backup and restore solution for recovering old files.

Zachary Robertson, NEH's IT Consultant who spearheaded the migration, explains, "Because of our funding cycle, our team revisits files once every year to 18 months. If we needed to access a document after six months, it was a time-consuming process. We had to contact our backup vendor, who stored the files offsite; it could take an entire day to restore a single file or folder."

Referencing previous versions of their application documents is a big part of NEH's grant process. An inability to find or access these files and losing critical time during their grant cycle is the agency's worst-case scenario.

They needed a quicker solution. Zack began to look for a provider that could cover the entirety of their Microsoft 365 workloads, from SharePoint and Teams to OneDrive, Exchange, and Groups, and provide multiple backups a day to ensure their data was always readily available.

💡 The AvePoint Solution

In previous roles, Zack had worked with other backup providers but had a "less than stellar time working with them," he explains. For example, "The user interface of Veeam's SharePoint Backup tool is not easy to navigate, and I was not happy with the support we received from them when we needed it."

Zack heard AvePoint had good products and support, so when he found out Cloud Backup, AvePoint's FedRAMP authorized backup solution, offered what they need, it was a no-brainer. Recently named a Leader in The Forrester New Wave: SaaS Application Data Protection, Cloud Backup features four backups per day, unlimited storage and retention, and quick, seamless restores.

Set-up was fast and easy for the agency, and maintaining the solution has been a hands-off process for Zack. He says, "I don't have to do much daily management; I just go in here and there to make sure everything is succeeding."

Cloud Backup saves NEH time and manpower. "In the past, when we were managing SharePoint on-premises environments, sometimes we'd spend days trying to recover after an incident," Zack explains. "It's never easy to figure out what broke and why, let alone then fix it. We'd be working around the clock to get things sorted."

Now, however, they don't need to figure out what happened. Thanks to Cloud Backup's four daily backups, they can easily restore in minutes from the last site backup, minimizing IT efforts and employee downtime.

NEH experienced the impact of this shift last year. "One of our SharePoint landing pages completely disappeared," Zack explained. "I spent a few hours trying to figure out what happened before I remembered I didn't have to do that. I knew when the incident occurred, so I was able to restore the entire site from two hours prior to then in about 15 minutes. It saved me a couple of days of trying to solve the issue, and I was able to get back to the other things I needed to work on."

In the two years since NEH adopted Cloud Backup, Zack has only needed AvePoint's 24/7 support two or three times for minor issues, such as clarification of an error message. When he has interacted with the support team, he was impressed: "They are very responsive. If there is an issue, they are detailed in their solution, which helps us get back on track in no time."

👉 The Bottom Line

Currently, Cloud Backup is protecting more than 10 terabytes of data for the National Endowment of the Humanities. The protection of this information enables their mission-critical activities.

"Recently, the team was getting ready to open applications for our next grant cycle when they realized an entire Exchange Online folder for the program was missing. We didn't know how long it was gone," Zack says. "We were able to leverage Cloud Backup to find the last recovery point and determined it was deleted by a user in the department last October. Once located, we were able to restore it to the original location.

"If we had depended on Microsoft's 93 day backup, this entire folder - with over 300 applications - would have been lost. Microsoft's native backup just doesn't cut it in our business. Sometimes, it takes a year or two for someone to even realize a file was missing, and by then, we don't have the ability to restore. With Cloud Backup, we don't have to worry; we know our data is easily retrievable, even years out."

❝ *Microsoft's native backup just doesn't cut it in our business. Sometimes, it takes a year or two for someone to even realize a file is missing, and by then, we don't have the ability to restore. With Cloud Backup, we don't have to worry; we know our data is easily retrievable, even years out.* ❞

- ZACHARY ROBERTSON, IT CONSULTANT, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES