UNITRENDS
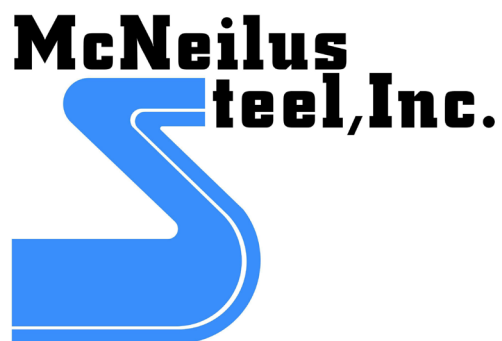
Unitrends a Clear Winner
over Leading Competitor for
Virtual Backup and Recovery
at Steel Service Center

Manufacturing Industry Success Story
McNeilus Steel
Darren Boeck, Manager of Information Technology

McNeilus Steel, Inc.

Customer Profile

Headquartered in Dodge Center, Minnesota, McNeilus Steel is a family operated full line metals service center specializing in cut-to-length stretcher leveled flat roll carbon products. Founded in 1948 by Harry McNeilus, the company's metals distribution business now has more than 550 employees and three warehouses located in Dodge Center, Minnesota, Fargo, North Dakota, and Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Each location sells and delivers hot roll and cold finish bar, tube, pipe, sheet, plate, flooring, grating, stainless, aluminum, rebar, and other miscellaneous ferrous and nonferrous metal products. The company also offers metal fabrication services that include shot blasting, laser and plasma cutting, bending, rolling, machining, rebar fabrication, sawing, and robotic beveling.

Executive Summary

This case study describes how a family operated steel company implemented Unitrends Virtual Backup to increase reliability of backups and restores, streamline quarterly updates to key applications and reduce overall backup storage costs through global deduplication.

The Challenge

Relying on a legacy backup system for its backup and restores in its virtual environment had become a major problem for McNeilus Steel, according to the company's IT Manager, Darren Boeck. Attempts at restoring data were not always successful and the product's reporting system was not sufficient to identify and alert administrators when problems occurred. There were also challenges with reclaiming storage space. In one instance, Darren discovered rogue backups more than 4 years old. Lastly, backup storage requirements were rapidly increasing and becoming more costly.

When Darren contacted the vendor for support he was told that the product was nearing end of life and that McNeilus would have to upgrade to a more expensive product. Knowing the cost and complexity of this new solution would be prohibitive for his organization, Darren sought a new backup and recovery solution. His research on the Internet and Spiceworks led him to two finalists: Unitrends Virtual Backup (UVB) and a leading competitor. He downloaded free trials of both products and conducted a side-by-side evaluation of each.

The Solution

Within a matter of minutes, Darren could see the difference between the two products. "The UVB interface is vastly superior," said Darren. He then noted that UVB performed more than twice as fast on VM restores: 8 minutes for UVB versus 19 minutes for the other solution. Darren also found the competitive product sluggish in performing inventory operations such as creating backup jobs, compared to UVB. "With UVB you simply hit the Protect button and the inventory loads in 1-2 seconds or less. The other one took 10 seconds, every time. It just doesn't communicate as seamlessly as UVB, probably because of the Windows overhead," Darren stated. Additionally, he was pleased to see that UVB was able to easily create ondemand and ad hoc backup jobs, which streamlines an ongoing internal payroll process. Each quarter new tax updates are released and must be entered into the system before payroll can be processed. Since this process can be error-prone, McNeilus is meticulous in how it's executed. First they'll take a backup of the system, then apply the new tax updates, then take another backup, and if something goes wrong, compare the

"The Unitrends Virtual Backup interface is vastly superior to anything else we evaluated."

"Unitrends just has the better product. It's easier to use, more intuitive and has better performance."

– Darren Boeck
Manager of Information Technology
McNeilus Steel

About Darren Boeck

Darren Boeck is the IT Manager at McNeilus Steel and has been employed there for the last 16 years. He holds a B.S. in Information Technology.

two backups to identify the errors. "The ability to take these backups ondemand versus having to schedule them is a huge aid," said Darren. Lastly, Darren viewed UVB's global deduplication as superior to the job based deduplication offered by the other solution, in conserving backup storage space and reducing costs. When he looked at the key features and benefits he needed, Darren chose UVB as the clear winner:

- UVB had a much more intuitive, easier to use interface.
- UVB performed twice as fast in VM recoveries.
- UVB eliminates the extra expense of Windows licensing.
- UVB Reporting offered some additional features such as the ability to filter alerts on 'Errors/Warnings Only' which minimizes email alert overload.

The Results

Darren was able to deploy Unitrends Virtual Backup across his entire virtual environment easily and quickly to protect approximately 70 Virtual Machines. He is able to remotely manage data protection for three locations and intends to extend UVB capabilities for disaster recovery, replicating to secondary sites once remote offices are fully deployed.

Darren is also in the process of evaluating Unitrends ReliableDR to automate disaster recovery testing, failover, failback and compliance reporting. All in all Darren is very pleased with his purchase. "Unitrends just has the better product. It's easier to use, more intuitive and has better performance," he concluded.

Are You Ready to Get Protected? Connect with us Today for a Customized Quote

About Unitrends
Unitrends delivers award-winning business recovery solutions for any IT environment. The company's portfolio of virtual, physical, and cloud solutions provides adaptive protection for organizations globally. To address the complexities facing today's modern data center, Unitrends delivers end-to-end protection and instant recovery of all virtual and physical assets as well as automated disaster recovery testing built for virtualization. With the industry's lowest total cost of ownership, Unitrends' offerings are backed by a customer support team that consistently achieves a 98 percent satisfaction rating. Unitrends' solutions are also sold through a community of thousands of leading technology partners, service providers, and resellers worldwide.