

Quraz, LTD. Premium Trunkroom owner/ operator

Transition from Tape to Cloud Backups

Lessons Learned With Aging Tape Technology



Transition from Tape to Cloud Backup

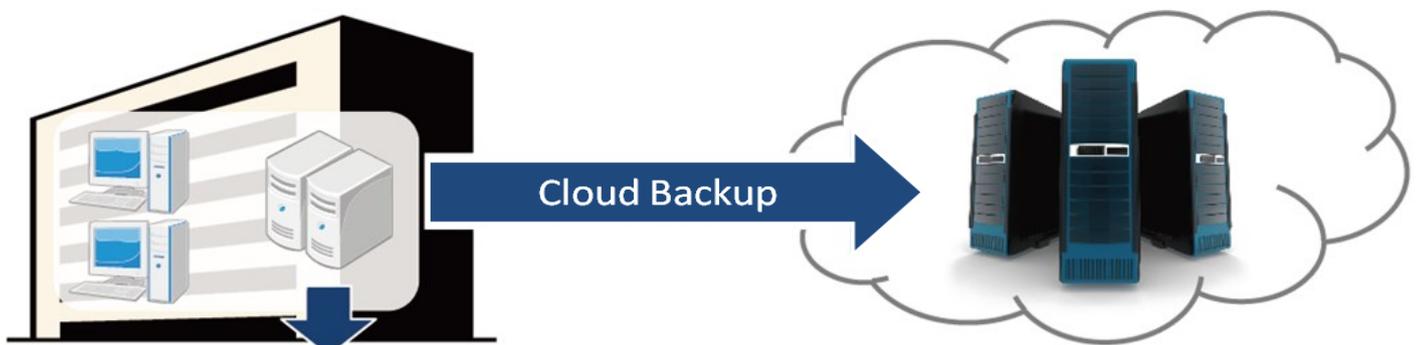
Quraz was founded in 2001 to acquire existing, well- located but underutilized buildings and reposition them as high quality rental-storage facilities. The company has opened 45 properties in dense, urban locations and has converted those buildings into 24,000 units.

Now Japan's largest owner operator in the JPY24 billion indoor rental-storage market, Quraz maintains an approximate 20% market share. According to Oricon's rental-storage customer satisfaction rankings, Quraz has been ranked #1 overall and #1 in eight categories for the past three years 2010-2012

The Previous Environment

Quraz runs their business out of Tokyo with the majority of their windows based servers on VMware. "Traditionally we used D2D2T GFS rotation utilizing a tape library and LTO tapes. The backup software was Symantec's backup exec where data was backed up to local disks and then to tape. The tapes were eventually sent off-site via a traditional tape courier storage company." explains Aaron Farney, Director of IT.

The system was about 4 years old, tapes were producing errors and backups were also taking longer than the allotted backup window. As the restore process was complicated and time consuming regular testing was put off. All this was starting to create tension as the IT department was agonizing over how to rectify the situation. Tetsuya Sahara, Quraz's infrastructure manager, explored purchasing new tapes and a new library with larger capacity. Thierry Leung, Quraz's enterprise systems manager, looked at additional disk space and a DIY version of disk-to-disk backup. Both seemed to complement each other or could stand independently. Quraz planned to investigate further then implement within a few months but they got busy.



The Catalyst for Change



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Quraz experienced a major email server failure. All data and functionality was lost. “No worries” said Mr. Farney “We’ll just restore from backup. We created an empty server and then started the restore process, boy were we in for a surprise.” Quraz didn’t have the tapes they needed on site so they ordered them from the offsite tape company. They had great service but took hours to get the tapes back. We started the restore process which was already taking a long time and then it failed. During the entire process our users were obviously distraught as they had no email.

This went on for about 2 days with the moral of the story being if Quraz had a week to restore the email server they could have done so from tape. However, they didn’t have that kind of time so they conducted an emergency migration to a cloud based email provider. Got the new email working and then literally spent the next week restoring data from various places and manually importing it. “This is when we got serious about evaluating a new backup system” says Mr. Farney.



The Challenge

Finding a backup solution that was cost effective, scalable and hassle free within 45 days! Quraz dusted off their previous evaluation to overhaul their traditional backup infrastructure. They evaluated the existing platform which included purchasing new tapes, restructuring backup jobs, buying more disk space for the D2D portion and even a new tape library. They soon discovered that this was not effective for 2 reasons (1) total cost of ownership was very high with little return on investment and (2) it was no longer a practical solution as Quraz was planning on moving their servers to a data center far away from their Tokyo headquarters.

When Quraz realized their traditional solution wouldn’t work they started looking at other options, specifically cloud based solutions. “There were a few providers that offered a cloud based backup system but none as robust and flexible as Blueshift’s service,” explains Aaron. Blueshift asked the right questions, designed a solution that fit our needs perfectly and we didn’t have to compromise our requirements one iota.



The New Environment

Aaron says “identifying and implementing the Blueshift cloud backup service was one of the best strategic and tactical IT decisions in some time. It provides us with peace of mind with our data being securely backed up to multiple locations. Offers scalability as we can just add data on the fly and we don’t have to worry about purchasing or replacing tapes.” Quraz does image level backups on the majority of their servers and any bare-metal restores are fast and easy enough to do regular restore tests.

Aaron also adds “The Blueshift solution is cost effective as we pay a low monthly fee that over 5 years is actually cheaper than creating and supporting our own backup infrastructure. And if something breaks it isn’t our problem it’s Blueshift’s. The Blueshift team is very responsive in addressing questions and would highly recommend their solution to anyone who has data protection needs.”

Aaron Farney is the IT Director of Quraz, Japan’s largest owner and operator of indoor self-storage facilities. Aaron has been living and working in Japan for nearly 18 years. He can be contacted at afarney@quraz.com; visit www.quraz.com.

Blueshift Data Protection is a leading provider of cloud backup services delivering secure, off-site, disk-based, data backup, recovery and archiving solutions for clients ranging from small, medium-sized to larger organizations. For more information please visit www.dataprotection.jp



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