

Rubrik Earns High Marks for Delivering Ransomware Protection and Automation to Novato Unified School District



INDUSTRY

Education

CHALLENGES

- No disaster recovery solution in place
- Cumbersome backup process that led to data loss
- Manual processes resulting in data inconsistency

RESULTS

- 85% TCO over 5 years
- Immutability from ransomware threats (saving thousands of \$ of downtime)
- Instant restores (days vs. minutes)
- VMs reduced from 80 to 18 (allowing for a more maintainable VMware environment)

BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

- Peace of mind knowing the district is protected from ransomware attacks
- An easy-to-use, automated data backup solution that is fully supported by Rubrik experts
- Time and money savings with faster restores and a less costly data backup solution

Located 30 miles north of San Francisco, the city of Novato is set among the rolling hills of Marin County. In addition to being a coveted place to live and work, it boasts acres of open space, making it a haven for outdoor activities of all kinds. The Novato Unified School District (NUSD), which started out as a one-room schoolhouse in 1859, today serves 7,500 students and employs 1,200 staff among its 16 schools.

Amir Kioumars, Data Systems Supervisor for NUSD, is part of the IT team of 13 that supports students and teachers. "IT is the heart of the organization because of the processes we create and the services we provide," Kioumars explained. "I'm part of the data team which focuses primarily on back-end data management and networking infrastructure."

DISASTER WAITING TO HAPPEN

When Kioumars first joined the NUSD IT team, he was surprised to learn that the district did not have a disaster recovery solution.

"Not having a DR plan in place caused me a number of sleepless nights because I knew that at any moment, we could get hit by a ransomware attack and we would be defenseless against it," Kioumars said. "At the district where I worked previously, we were hit twice by ransomware and were down for 10 days. I was afraid the same thing could happen at Novato at any time."

In addition to lacking ransomware protection that could ultimately result in business downtime, the legacy backup solution was cumbersome and risky. It required manual babysitting eating up the team's valuable resources and also posed a concern with data inconsistency as backups weren't routinely performed.

"It got to a point where we just had to change; the legacy solution was holding us back," said Kioumars. "My main goal was to have our mission-critical data backup application running 24/7 at a secure, offsite location. And I wanted to automate it as much as possible, allowing the system to do the job faster and more reliably, freeing up my time to focus on higher value-add initiatives for the school district. That's where Rubrik comes in."

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ENABLED BY RUBRIK AND WASABI

Kioumars evaluated data backup solutions from ten different companies, putting each through an extensive comparison process. He ultimately chose Rubrik to protect the district's critical data of student and financial data.

"I chose Rubrik because it is an all-in-one data management solution with built-in immutability to help protect us from future ransomware threats. The product truly is a cut above others," said Kioumars. "From the plug-and-play implementation that had us up and running in hours to its intuitive UI, Rubrik continues to impress me with its simplicity."

For its cloud storage needs, NUSD went with Wasabi hot cloud storage which serves as a highly secure, off-prem storage repository. "We chose Wasabi based on price, customer support, and ease of setup and use supported by Rubrik. Unlike legacy cloud storage services with confusing storage tiers and complex pricing schemes, Wasabi provides straightforward and predictable pricing with no charges for data egress. So even if I have to restore data from the cloud, I don't pay an egress charge penalty to do so. The difference between them and the bigger players in the market was staggering," reported Kioumars. "I am confident I made the right choice with Rubrik and Wasabi."

Additional benefits include:

- **85% TCO:** "We're looking at an 85% cost savings on our data backup with Rubrik and Wasabi over 5 years."
- **Eliminating Downtime Threat from Ransomware Attacks:** I can't stress the importance of the ransomware protection we now have thanks to Rubrik's immutability. If we went offline due to an attack, we would be out of business and not be able to support the district's kids, teachers, ad staff.

- **A Hands-Off Approach:** "Rubrik fits seamlessly into our automation strategy – we barely even touch the system as Rubrik simply works and does what we need it to do. Moving forward, we're excited to leverage Rubrik's APIs to custom code our integrations."
- **Unparalleled Support:** "I cannot emphasize enough how happy I am with the customer service and the decision to go with Rubrik Professional Services. We're working with a top-of-the-class team who are extremely knowledgeable and responsive. We're in good hands."
- **Simple, Fast Restores:** "It used to take us days to restore; with Rubrik, it's a matter of minutes. With the current Rubrik UI, it is already easy to recover data, but it will become even more so with the roll out of the Global Search functionality. We're very excited about that."
- **Peace of Mind:** "The stress of not having a backup and not knowing how we would recover is gone with Rubrik."
- **Reduced Data Storage:** "We went from backing up everything with Nimble to backing up only critical data with Rubrik. This allowed us to do an extensive clean-up of our VMs. As a result, we went from 80 VMs to 18 VMs."
- **Budget Tightening in a Pandemic:** "Due to Covid-19, our district has limited funds. That made it imperative that we choose an affordable offsite cloud backup solution. It was such a relief that Rubrik could integrate seamlessly with the most affordable solution on the market – Wasabi hot cloud storage."



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