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About Kansas City Life Insurance Company

Kansas City Life Insurance Company offers life insurance and annuities, and is headquartered in Kansas City, MO. It has expanded tremendously since starting in 1895, and now employs more than 400 associates that insure over half a million policyholders across 48 states. Kansas City Life markets individual life, annuity, and group products through general agencies located throughout the United States. A promise of financial strength is only as good as the company that makes it. When Kansas City Life makes a promise, it stands behind it. Since 1895, it has assisted policyholders through world wars, the Great Depression, and various periods of recession and inflation. Kansas City Life's reputation is built on integrity, sound investment strategies, and honest business practices. To the company, integrity is not an outdated notion in today's fast-paced world; it is the guiding force behind every decision it makes. Every product it sells is backed by more than a century of quality service and financial security.







States & the District of Columbia



500,000+ Policy Holders

The Challenges

Consumers demand a nearly instantaneous response from businesses. Having a technology foundation prepared to deliver an incredible service experience without interruption is critical to the success of any organization in a technology-enabled world, and Kansas City Life understands that. One of its core values is security assured, and that transfers to the way it protects its clients' data and the systems its agents use. In order to protect its clients' data, support rapid product development, and test new markets, Kansas City Life needed to update its security footprint, modernize its infrastructure, and implement the next-generation technology it could build its business on.

Technology Challenges:

My Environment is at Risk of an Attack



My Team Lacks the Skills to Architect and Deploy a Scalable Technology Footprint

Business Challenges:



I Can't Keep Up with the Pace of Change



My Business is Exposed to Risk

How Meridian Helped

Kansas City Life sees technology as a way to grow its business and to enable its agents to deliver incredible service to clients. After a comprehensive evaluation of Kansas City Life's existing technology ecosystem, Meridian proposed a hyperconverged architecture with Cisco HyperFlex. The objective was to build a next-generation platform that could scale with its business. Meridian created a customized technology roadmap so that Kansas City Life had a plan for how to optimize, secure, and build out its data platforms. Previous vendors tried to get Kansas City Life to buy licenses and products that it didn't need. With Meridian, Kansas City Life had a trusted partner that recommended and designed technology solutions with its financial and business objectives in mind. Meridian acted as a consultative partner to Kansas City Life, providing a team of experts that offered both technical as well as industry expertise. Kansas City Life was able to go to Meridian to obtain the depth and breadth of professional and managed services it needed to transform its company.

Business Impacts

In addition to better performance and scalability, the use of Cisco HyperFlex has significantly decreased costs for Kansas City Life Insurance Company. With Meridian as its consultant, Kansas City Life saves by only using exactly what it needs to function and avoids overspending on services it may never use. Having the added flexibility has allowed Kansas City Life to maximize its IT investment while minimizing its overall infrastructure costs. This allows the company to provide a competitive suite of insurance products and services to its customers. Kansas City Life's IT department has a goal to deliver five times more at one third the amount of effort, and with Meridian assisting with its strategic roadmap, it has been able to accomplish that goal and help the company achieve its profitability targets.

We are fortunate that we have found someone

that has a really strong core competency in storage and backup, and that's a huge need for us

Noel Levasseur

Chief Information Officer

FIRST AMERICAN BANK

Company

First American Bank

Industry

Retail Banking



About First American Bank

First American Bank started as a regional bank in Northern Illinois and gradually grew through organic growth and acquisitions. From its humble beginnings, it has expanded to Southern Wisconsin and Miami, Florida, and currently has 59 locations. First American Bank has a clear focus on delivering the personal touch of a local community bank with the leading financial expertise and service of a regional bank. To deliver on this goal, customer experience is paramount, from the local teller to an online or mobile transaction.



Largest Privately Owned Bank in Illinois



59 Offices in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Florida



\$4.5 Billion in Assets



Enterprise Commvault Backup Solution across Netapp and Nimble Storage Plat-

The Challenges

With regulations increasing on protecting data and storing it for longer periods being compounded by the constant growth of data collected and analyzed each day, First American Bank struggled to meet storage and backup demands in a cost-efficient manner.

First American Bank was able to leverage the centers of technology excellence within Meridian IT to discuss options that served its needs today and aligned with its technology roadmap. Further, by eventually deciding on a Commvault backup solution, First American Bank was able to leverage the best in class solutions that complemented its existing technology.

Technology Challenges



My Legacy Systems are Old, Slow, and Failing



My Environment is at Risk of an Attack



My Team Lacks the Skills to Architect and Deploy a Scalable Technology Footprint

How Meridian Helped

According to Noel, the CIO of First American Bank, Meridian was more than simply an "order taker," but instead was a partner that brought deep expertise, and years of experience to First American's IT department. Meridian implemented a highly secure and readily-available backup solution to protect First American Bank's data. With 24/7 monitoring and technical services support, Meridian ensured its backups were functioning and up-to-date so First American Bank could focus on its customers and growing its business.

Rather than having isolated conversations about a single solution, Meridian's engineers implemented regular health checks to give First American Bank much-needed visibility into its system's performance. They presented a variety of tactics and strategies while also acknowledging the impact that it would have on other parts of the system if each were implemented. Meridian provided a team of experienced engineers that ultimately transformed how First American dealt with its systems and data to support its growth.

Business Impacts

Initially, Meridian IT helped First American reduce the overall risk of daily operations to reinforce its user protection and overall privacy of data. With a smooth transition from old to new systems, the overall experience for customers was seamless in avoiding any disruption to networks that would have created substantial brand damage for First American Bank. With Meridian's work in place, First American has greatly reduced the potential for reputational damage with little risk of interruption to First American's banking operations.









and they are able to help us roadmap what our Commvault environment should look like, in the future as well as now."

Paul Slager

Vice President of Technology

ENVISTA FORENSICS

Company

Envista Forensics Atlanta, GA

Industry

Consulting





About Envista Forensics

The recovery from natural disasters has grown more complex and, in response, Envista Forensics has associates located around the globe to provide assurance and comprehensive services no matter the type of loss or location of the disaster. Envista is a global, multi-disciplinary, and highly-skilled forensic engineering partner trusted by insurance claims and legal professionals. With over 500 professionals located in 30 offices on 4 continents, the Envista teams are industry leaders committed to providing the best possible service, vast experience, thought leadership, and certainty, in an uncertain world



Hours



Contract Savings



Investina in **New 3D Mapping Technologies**

The Challenges

Managing large amounts of data and guaranteeing privacy were a constant challenge for Envista's technology team; the team was spending 20+ hours a week maintaining their Commvault environment. Envista risked dangerous security vulnerabilities and significant downtime, which affected key business applications and productivity. Most importantly, they were no longer able to stay true to their mission of delivering certainty when their clients needed it most.

Technology Challenges:



My Environment is Vulnerable to Attack



My Team Lacks the Skills to Architect and Deploy a Scalable Technology Footprint



My Budget Holds Me Back

Business Challenges:



My Business is Exposed to Risk



I Don't Have the Technology Thought Leaders to Support My Business Strategy



I Don't Have the Insight I Need to Make Informed Business Decisions

How Meridian Helped

Envista Forensics selected Meridian for a collaborative and proactive approach to managing IT as a strategic platform. Meridian equipped Envista with subject matter experts to understand their IT environment and provide professional advice on solutions designed specifically with their business in mind. Meridian's monitoring and management helped effectively diagnose backup issues and stabilize their IT environment.

Additionally, Meridian's team helped Envista optimize and right-size their IT footprint through a service called MACO (Maintenance, Asset, and Contract Optimization). Meridian extracted operational cost by analyzing Envista's maintenance contracts line-by-line to determine and eliminate coverage on products that were no longer in use. In turn they consolidated products and coverage into a single, longer term contract which allowed Envista to lower their operating expenses.

Business Impacts

Meridian's hands-on approach has reduced the time dedicated to managing their Commvault environment by 90% and greatly improved confidence against the threat of catastrophic events. Time spent maintaining backups has been reduced from 20 hours a week to 2, and scheduled downtime has been virtually eliminated. Meridian enabled a cost-effective business continuity strategy so Envista now has a scalable and reliable solution to execute for the future. With significant resources uncovered from MACO, Envista Forensics has been able to reinvest the capital to fund innovation projects such as a drone program that takes footage of disaster areas to help their clients understand the extent of the damage.



They are a trusted partner that helps us do more and they have a vested interest in our success."

Steve Jaeger Chief Information Officer

Quada

Company

Quad

Sussex, WI

Industry

Marketing Solutions



About Quad

Technology is at the forefront of Quad's business. From automating their shop floor with AGVs, to streamlining back office operations, Quad is always striving to find a better way to serve their clients and drive efficiencies for their employees. Being a part of a dynamic industry means that needs and trends change often. Although print is still at the foundation of their operations, Quad now offers a suite of marketing solutions. The company is often considered an extension of their clients' marketing department because they help design, execute, and manage all aspects that a marketing team would. One of Quad's main objectives as a company is to drive innovation and technology. The company leverages IT as a competitive edge to bring value for their customers and remain the leader in the industry.



The Challenges

Since opening their doors in 1979, the once privately held company has completed numerous acquisitions and is now public. In order to keep up with the rapid rate of growth while demonstrating business continuity. Quad needed an IT environment that was secure and could scale with their ever-changing needs. Starting back with Quad's founder in 1971, Quad would seek to find a better way to do things, often through technology. As Quad grows and continues to innovate, it is extremely important that they have access to a wide range of technology solutions that help them remain agile and responsive to their business needs as well as their customers' needs. Quad wasn't looking for a vendor; they were looking for a strategic partner that could design solutions to support the next generation of products and services to deliver for their clients, regardless of technology and manufacturer.

Technology Challenges:



My Legacy Systems are Old, Slow, and Failing



My Team Lacks the Skills to Architect and Deploy a Scalable Technology Footprint

How Meridian Helped

Quad selected Meridian as their strategic partner because previously they weren't getting access to the expertise and solutions they needed to grow their business. When Quad was struggling with database performance issues. Meridian was commissioned to vet a new solution as a proof of concept. As the relationship continues to grow, Meridian brings resources and new ideas, and challenges Quad to think differently in pursuit of implementing the best solution at the lowest cost.

Meridian operates as part of Quad's team by getting to know their business from the inside out. As a result, Meridian has become an extension of Quad's IT department. If they need something, they pick up the phone and call, any time day or night. With Meridian, Quad has found a partner that is truly vested in their company's success, providing solutions that meet their needs for today and for tomorrow.

Business Impacts

After discussing several different storage strategies, Quad decided on moving forward with a solution that is three times faster than their previous solution. Meridian has provided a forward-thinking strategy built from Quad's data so that they can operate smarter and more efficiently. To support Quad's client-first approach, Meridian has become an extension of their IT department. As a result of this partnership, Quad is able to provide a world-class computing environment that is not only high performing, secure, and reliable, but is also cost-efficient.

Meridian is like a security blanket filling in our knowledge gaps.

Bob ValdezAssistant Director of Technology



CompanyBrewster Central School District Brewster, NY

Industry Education





About Brewster Central School District

The Brewster Central School District serves approximately 3,000 students, employs 450 staff members, and holds classes and activities in four different school buildings with varying grade levels from elementary school through high school. Brewster has earned a reputation as a high-performing school system with students who consistently perform at or above the levels of districts with similar demographic and economic profiles.

Technology plays a large role in every aspect of Brewster Central School District as educators leverage IT as a tool to enhance the curriculum and instruction they deliver to their students. Brewster Central School District provides Chromebooks for students K-12 and supports a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) network for instructional flexibility.







Buildings

The Challenges

With every student receiving a Chromebook, and thousands of devices dependent on the network every day, Brewster Central School District started to hit limitations on their Palo Alto firewalls, creating access issues and traffic limitations for staff and students. Education at Brewster heavily relies on this IT ecosystem for both curriculum and instruction so failure was not an option.

To add to their challenges, a former Brewster employee had set up the Palo Alto firewalls for the school and when he left the district, there was a knowledge gap on the team. Plus, the team needed assistance adding redundancy to their network.

Technology Challenges:

My Environment is at Risk of an Attack



My Team Lacks the Skills to Architect and Deploy a Scalable Technology Footprint

Business Challenges:



I Can't Keep Up with the Pace of Change



My Business is Exposed to Risk

How Meridian Helped

Brewster Central School District turned to Meridian to support them through this growth and transition. Meridian stepped in to act as an expansion of their team and fill the Palo Alto technology expert gap. In addition, the Meridian team analyzed their current environment to uncover how policies were structured, assessed the current configuration, and made recommendations on what needed to change for maximum security and performance for today and for tomorrow.

Once the proposed strategy was discussed and approved to ensure it met all of the tactical and strategic needs of the Brewster team, Meridian adjusted where the ARP table was stored moving it from their firewall to their core switch. This created a significantly larger table thus eliminating the firewall limitations that were crippling their network. Meridian also worked with the Brewster Central School District to add a second Palo Alto firewall for redundancy, a DMZ, and an automated fail-over to prevent any disruption to the network.

Business Impacts

Brewster looked to Meridian as a partner to design and execute a plan. By creating and intelligent response system and providing additional Palo Alto support, Brewster now has a granular and protected view of their ecosystem. Brewster's IT department has more time to focus on meaningful projects, such as addressing the new state laws regarding security requirements and taking preventive measures to stop ransomware. The students at Brewster are experiencing the benefits of advanced technology without disruption. Their students can now effectively collaborate and utilize the abundance of online resources while allowing teachers to track and measure student progress.



Leaders Like You Choose Meridian

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Meridian Group International is a privately held organization headquartered in Deerfield, IL. Since its founding in 1979, Meridian has become an innovative world leader in Equipment Leasing and Financing, and Technology Services by focusing on delivering positive outcomes for its clients. The company has more than 750 employees operating from 58 offices located in North America, Europe, and Asia Pacific.