



Commercial Real Estate Services, Worldwide.

## NAI UTAH GETS NEW SAFEGUARDS AND CONVENIENCE WITH vRANGER PRO™

# vizioncore™

### THE SITUATION

NAI Utah Commercial Real Estate had no true backup-and-recovery system in place — instead it relied on a high-availability IT system to keep business-critical servers and data available. When Systems Administrator Nathan Johnson joined the company after a career in the data recovery industry, he immediately set out to put a thorough backup system in place for its VMware ESX virtual servers.

### THE SOLUTION

NAI Utah installed vRanger Pro and now does nightly differential backups of every virtual machine.

### THE RESULTS

“vRanger Pro was built from the ground up for ESX servers. This is the fastest, easiest way there is to do virtual machine backups.”

Nathan Johnson  
Systems Administrator  
NAI Utah

### THE SITUATION

NAI Utah Commercial Real Estate is a leading full-service brokerage with offices throughout the state to serve the office, retail, industrial and residential markets. The firm provides brokerage, investment, property management and consulting services to landlords, tenants, investors and institutional owners, and is part of a network with 375 offices that provide services worldwide.

NAI prides itself on being a technology leader in the commercial real estate industry. To maintain the data to run its business, NAI Utah relied on location, location, location -- all business critical data was kept in a high-availability storage area network (SAN), which NAI Utah considered bulletproof.

“We relied on the SAN for everything. There was no backup and recovery plan, which was scary,” said Nathan Johnson, NAI Utah’s systems administrator. “I had spent my previous career specializing in data recovery. That gave me a lot of experience with what works and what doesn’t work for data protection. Disaster recovery is the last thing organizations think about -- until they need it.”

All of NAI Utah’s business-critical data and systems run on virtual servers. The company virtualized its Microsoft Windows 2003 servers to run on 10 VMware ESX virtual servers. Traditional physical servers run less important system. The virtual environment serves about 200 users and hosts all accounting and financial systems. NAI Utah used to back up its virtual servers to the SAN, then ran a tape backup from there every two weeks.

When Johnson joined NAI Utah, he reviewed operations and wanted a backup solution that didn’t rely so heavily on the SAN. He also set a recovery point objective (RPO) that would represent a major improvement over the bi-weekly backups to tape.

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## THE SOLUTION

NAI Utah now does differential backups nightly using Vizioncore's vRanger Pro virtual backup and restore solution. vRanger Pro executes automatically each night and sends Johnson a confirmation e-mail. When Johnson arrives in the morning he reviews the e-mail to make sure the backup was completed. It always has been. Johnson occasionally reviews the logs to make sure the backups went smoothly, and hasn't seen any problems.

"I selected vRanger because I had used it before and seen it work. When I worked in data recovery, I experienced about everything that's on the market," said Johnson. "This is the fastest, easiest way there is to do virtual machine backups. I look at everything that comes out, but there's nothing that comes close to vRanger."

vRanger Pro automatically backs up all of NAI Utah's virtual servers. It creates a compact virtual image that can be transferred to another server, which can be physical or virtual and doesn't have to be configured the same as the target VM, or to the SAN itself. The differential backup engine only captures changes made since the last full backup, which results in fast backups and small, easy to process images. vRanger Pro integrates with VMware Virtual Center has a VSS driver that uses Microsoft's Volume Shadow Copy Service to automatically pause application writes during backup.

"We run our backups at night, but we could do them any time of day because vRanger has almost no impact on the virtual machine while it's running," said Johnson. "vRanger Pro was built from the ground up for ESX servers. It just works."

## THE RESULTS

Since implementing vRanger Pro, NAI Utah has better data protection than it had before, and can restore more timely data. These gains did not require a corresponding increase in staff support time.

"vRanger is so easy to use, especially the GUI interface. It even installs easily, with no convoluted instructions," said Johnson. "All I have to do in the morning is look at my e-mail to know it worked."

Johnson discovered more benefits to vRanger Pro when he used it to restore VMs after performing system maintenance on the data store. When NAI Utah previously had to clear space on its data store, it had to take the system offline, resulting in costly down time. NAI Utah now uses vRanger Pro to do hot backups and automatically restores VMs, without shutting down and rebooting.

"It really automates, the process -- and anything in IT that automates for you saves you time and money," said Johnson.

Johnson hopes to improve backup and recovery operations even more by taking more systems virtual. "As an IT guy, I want all the machines to be virtual, because I don't want things to go down, ever, and I want that great recovery time that I get from vRanger," he said. "I'd look at something new on the market, but you'd never get me to switch. Why would I switch from something that has never let me down?"



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**NAI Utah**

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