

Farm Credit Bank of Texas Chooses Crossroads' ReadVerify™ Appliance to Provide Cost Savings Through Proactive Tape Media Management



Farm Credit Bank of Texas
Austin, Texas
www.farmcreditbank.com

Industry

Wholesale/Bank Lender

Annual Revenue

Privately-Held

Product

Rural Lending

Benefits

- Purchase justification
- Proactive tape media management
- Hardware-level reports
- Performance monitoring of new SAN hardware
- Ensure recoverability of data

"Farm Credit chose Crossroads' ReadVerify Appliance (RVA) because we need accurate performance metrics for our backups after migrating to an iSCSI storage area network and a Fibre-Channel (FC) based tape library. Our new environment is considerably more expensive, and we plan to use RVA to justify our purchases and make sure we get the best performance out of the new system."

~Budd Trippet, Senior Network Administrator, Farm Credit Bank of Texas

Farm Credit's Business

Farm Credit Bank of Texas, headquartered in Austin, Texas, is a cooperatively-owned wholesale bank. Farm Credit Bank of Texas is part of the nationwide Farm Credit System, established by Congress in 1916. Together with their affiliated lending cooperatives, the bank comprises the single largest rural lending network serving Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico and Texas. Farm Credit Bank of Texas provides loan funds and services to 20 retail-lending co-ops and four other financing institutions. These lenders make loans for rural real estate, agribusiness and agricultural production. The company is active in the capital markets arena, participating in large loan opportunities with the food, agribusiness, rural utility and rural communications sectors.

The IT Challenge

At its central data center, Farm Credit manages 120 file servers. Currently, the amount of data being backed up is four terabytes and growing—Farm Credit has had two terabytes of data growth over the past two years. Farm Credit's previous library processed two terabytes of data per backup session, but that was not enough. The bank's backup window for a full backup has grown to 40 hours. After careful research, the company now backs up SAN and server data to a FC LTO3 ADIC iScalar 500 tape library that has six independently-addressable tape drives, which provides Farm Credit with the performance it needs.

Crossroads' ReadVerify Appliance (RVA) gives Farm Credit some needed information on the performance of the FC-based LTO3 drives, justifying more-expensive storage hardware purchases. "We have been making the transition to a SAN, and we have always had tight IT budgets; therefore, we typically build and manage our own infrastructure. When you do that, you need good tools," said Budd Trippet, senior network administrator for Farm Credit Bank of Texas. "RVA offers a unique and necessary approach to tape and device management, and we are excited to see the reports as we put our new tape library into operation."

Disaster Recovery Assurance

Farm Credit conducts live disaster recovery testing every year. "Being able to monitor the use and performance in order to see if we have any potential problems with our tape library is critical to our disaster recoverability ability. This is something we need," said Trippet.

Farm Credit's backup application currently provides administrators with high-level log files, but administrators also need to identify errors at the machine level. "One of the things that impressed me about Crossroads' RVA is that it is out-of-band and able to directly query the hardware while bypassing the applications," Trippet continued. "This way, the system performance is not affected while reliability concerning backup and disaster recovery is greatly improved."

Identify Cause of "Slow Downs" During Backups

In Farm Credit's former environment, if there were any errors or failures in the backup process, every job was affected. Farm Credit received performance metrics and summaries from their backup application, but they were often unsure why a backup becomes slow. "We were not getting the information we needed off of the old drives," said Trippet. "All we could see in the backup application is that there is trouble with the media." With RVA, Farm Credit can now proactively identify problems with tape media, saving time and offering peace of mind.

Proactive Tape Media Management

Currently, Farm Credit Bank has been replacing tape media upon a backup failure, and plans to use RVA to remove media from rotation before it reaches its effective end of life. Also, Trippet will use RVA to trend the lifespan of his media in order to gain a general idea of how long their media is lasting. "Currently, we are on a 13-month rotation," said Trippet. "With RVA showing tape media errors that could impact the backup process, we will be able to remove media before it causes a backup failure—a much more proactive process."



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ABOUT CROSSROADS

Headquartered in Austin, Texas, Crossroads Systems delivers flexible solutions to protect, secure and restore business-critical "data-at-rest." Crossroads (symbol:CRDS) is currently traded on Pink Sheets and also posts its financial disclosure reports, press releases and other related documentation on the OTCIQ webservice of the Pink Sheets website. For more information, please visit www.crossroads.com.



Crossroads promotes institutional and personal environmental responsibility within the company, with our partners and with the users of our products. We are committed to providing the best products and services while encouraging practices consistent with sustainable living and resource conservation.