

## Backing up data doesn't have to mean flying blind – Unique, operator of Zurich Airport, uses ReadVerify® Appliance to ensure maximum security and reliability during tape backup



Unique  
Operator of Zurich Airport

[www.unique.ch](http://www.unique.ch)

### Benefits

- Proactive information about the condition of tape media and drives
- Possibility to make corrections before backup errors and crashes occur
- Clear analyses of the condition of tapes and the utilization and performance of drives
- Optimization of backup throughput
- Reduction in backup time

*"Using ReadVerify® Appliance from Crossroads, we recovered information about tapes and tapes drives that we did not have in this form before."*

*~Martin Bhend, Head of the Computer Centre of Unique's IT Operations department*

### Unique – Operator of Zurich Airport

"All systems checked, ready for takeoff." That's roughly what the pilot says when he runs a final check on the plane, checks all functions and gets permission to take off from the control tower. The plane rolls along the runway and accelerates, gaining in speed all the time. The engines are running at full throttle. The plane takes to the air and makes a safe start to its journey through the skies.

At Zurich Airport, approximately 750 aeroplanes take off and land every day. And, every day, 24,000 employees do their very best to ensure that the air traffic runs smoothly for nearly 61,000 passengers. The latest technology and highly complex logistics have to work together perfectly if the gigantic machine that is an airport is to function properly. Unique, operator of Zurich Airport, is largely responsible for this. Unique has about 1,400 employees and is integrated into a system of 260 airport partners. Since 2000, Unique has been operating Zurich Airport. Unique's area of activity has many different aspects – from the power station to the aircraft control centre, and from accounting to IT, Unique is a part of each area.

### *IT Operations at Unique*

Unique's Information and Communication Technology department works behind the scene at Zurich Airport. In addition to network, SAP, project and navigation departments, the responsibilities of the IT Operations department include desktop support, a customer service desk and client engineering. The computer centre that is incorporated in IT Operations, headed by business data processing specialist Martin Bhend, provides the entire IT infrastructure, SAN storage and the Unix/Linux section primarily responsible for Unique's data backup. In each of two IBM TS35000 libraries (each with four drives), 200 tapes are available for data backup. A data volume of up to 30 TB must be backed up at Unique every week.

### *Remedy faults before they cause problems*

Before taking off, every pilot checks his aircraft, and technical or electronic faults in the plane are immediately corrected by specialists. This procedure is one of the reasons why the aeroplane is regarded as an extremely safe means of transport. This also applies to tape backup. Tape remains a popular and handy medium for backing up data. Nonetheless, Bhend's team often found it difficult to identify errors in tape backup promptly and correct them early on. What the tape backup process was lacking was a tool for proactive error analysis – a tool that can keep the quality and reliability of tape backup at a constantly high standard.

### *Tape backup does not mean you have to fly blind*

"In general, we at Unique do not have any major problems with the backup process," explains Christoph Richle, systems specialist in the IT Operations department. "Nevertheless, there are occasional faults with our drives or we simply have to battle with poor performance." Causal research into faults of this type takes up a lot of time and do not always prove successful without an appropriate tool. Corrective measures are taken that apparently work but without detailed knowledge of the actual source of the problem, they often have no real impact and do not bring about a real improvement. Thus, the risk continues to exist that backup jobs take too long, crash completely or the backed up data is no longer readable when restored. That's when you are really flying blind with tape backup. Unique was all ears when the

proposal was made to install ReadVerify Appliance (RVA®) from Crossroads into the existing backup environment. After only a short time, Bhend and Richle were convinced by the benefits offered by the information supplied by RVA. "The analyses carried out by the ReadVerify Appliance have revealed that neither our tapes nor our drives are particularly defective. That is what our past experience also tells us", says Bhend. "But there's more. By using Crossroads appliance, we have gained useful information about our backup environment that we never before had in this form."

*'Ready for takeoff' with ReadVerify Appliance*

Above all, as far as the utilization and performance of tape drives are concerned, RVA's analyses has given Unique the key to optimize their drives. General backup and restore performance, along with data throughput, can thus be improved considerably. All processes can now be designed to be less time consuming. Precise knowledge of the condition of the tape media gives Bhend's and Richle's team the certainty they need with regard to which tapes can be used and which should be replaced due to high error frequency. Since Unique gets all this information proactively from RVA, the IT Operations backup team is now in a position to correct errors before serious disruptions occur during data backups and the restoring of data. Thus, in the future, during backup and restores at Unique, the slogan will be: "ReadVerify Appliance installed, all systems checked, ready for takeoff."



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