



Lockheed FCU Safeguards Data, Speeds Backups with nCipher CryptoStor

In more than 70 years of operation, Lockheed Federal Credit Union (LFCU) has never lost a penny of members' deposits...

...or a byte of their data. The \$3 billion, 100,000-member credit union wants to keep it that way.

Not only does LFCU owe its membership to take every measure to safeguard valuable information but, because the California-based credit union is subject to the state's strict breach disclosure requirements, a loss of member data would be devastating to their public relations.

"We didn't want to ever have to announce to the media that we had lost members' data," said Joe Gates, data processing manager at LFCU. "That's about the worst publicity a credit union could ever have."

For any financial institution, loss of account-holder data understandably leads to a loss of confidence and questions about the institution's ability to conduct business. Additionally, regulatory pressures continue to mount, demanding better safeguards around consumers' private information.

“We would hear news stories several times a year about other companies that reported data loss. That hits close to home when you learn it's a data tape that was lost by a third-party vendor or the shipper.”



How it works

nCipher CryptoStor® Tape is a high-speed tape security appliance that compresses, encrypts, and cryptographically authenticates data as it is recorded to tape media or virtual tape without disrupting backup processes. CryptoStor dynamically intercepts backup and restore communications between hosts and tape drives, centrally managing and fully off-loading tape media security and encryption functions.

The case for encryption

LFCU assessed its data security strategy and identified the tape data backup process as an area of potential weakness.

Although LFCU had evaluated and trusted its backup media storage vendor, the reality is that once tapes were out of LFCU's possession, they were out of its control. The credit union needed an ironclad assurance that member data would not be compromised regardless of what happened to backup tapes, and encryption was the answer. LFCU began encrypting its backup tapes with the nCipher CryptoStor Tape encryption appliance in 2007.

A key differentiator of CryptoStor in the encryption market is the platform's global key management capabilities. CryptoStor incorporates a tiered strategy that provides central management of keys, including key management recovery of encrypted tape information, from tape appliances distributed across many locations. CryptoStor appliances also offer the strongest commercially available encryption algorithms and are certified as FIPS 140-2 level 3, one of the most stringent security benchmarks in the industry.



LFCU chose CryptoStor not only for its encryption capabilities, but for its prebuilt integration with the Symitar™ Episys® core processing solution, which the credit union has used since 2003. Symitar's partnership with nCipher means that CryptoStor has been fully certified for use in the Episys environment and that Symitar provides support for the encryption solution.

“With the compression of CryptoStor, what had been an hour-long backup process now takes about 35 minutes.”

Even so, Gates was impressed with how easily the system was installed. “Usually, with a new system installation, you're ready for a half dozen things to go wrong, but this device was really plug and play,” Gates said. “Symitar came in, installed CryptoStor in a matter of hours, and we were using it that night. It was just that easy and we haven't had one failure.”

Deployed on the storage network between the servers and tape infrastructure, CryptoStor required no server, SAN, or tape upgrades and has minimal operational impact at LFCU. In fact, Gates reports that CryptoStor's data compression has helped speed the credit union's backup process.

“Part of our ongoing data backup strategy is to look for ways to keep our system offline time to a minimum,” Gates explains. “With the compression of CryptoStor, what had been an hour-long backup process now takes about 35 minutes.”

A web-based user interface and access to Symitar training resources made the system easy for Gates and LFCU's data processing staff to learn and use. And finally, the solution has fully passed all LFCU's data restoration and disaster recovery tests.

Partner



Symitar, a division of Jack Henry & Associates, Inc. (Nasdaq: JKHY), is a recognized technology leader. Symitar combines proven core processing with robust complementary solutions to meet the needs of any credit union. Symitar offers the most widely accepted core platform amongst credit unions over \$25 million in assets. Symitar's Episys core platform has the highest client retention rate in the industry (>99%) among major data processing systems. Learn more at www.symitar.com.

Institution

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Assets

\$3 billion

Locations

10

Members

100,000

Founded

1937

Data Processing Manager

Joe Gates

Impact leads to additional deployment

Given LFCU's success with its initial CryptoStor tape deployment, the credit union purchased two more encryption appliances in 2008, one for its recovery site and another for a planned server co-location site.

Today, if LFCU's data backup tapes are ever lost or stolen, member data is unreadable without the encryption keys. Additionally, by being encrypted, any lost data tapes would now be exempt from California's disclosure laws.

Gates said that LFCU fully understands the value of the CryptoStor system. “It was important to put the CryptoStor system in place,” he said. “From the standpoint of protecting our members' information, as well as the peace of mind it brings us, the system is well worth the investment.”

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