



## SUCCESS STORIES

# NETAPP TECHNOLOGY ENABLES LIGHTEDGE TO STORE 70% MORE VOLUME WITH SAME FOOTPRINT



“The combined technologies of Syncsort and NetApp are supplying the platform that enables us to provide all of the managed business solutions our clients require to ensure the highest quality services at the lowest price.”

**JOE SHIELDS** Director of Systems Engineering and Operations, LightEdge Solutions Inc.

### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

**Location** Des Moines, IA

**Industry** High Tech/Internet

#### Customer Profile

LightEdge Solutions Inc. is a leading provider of fully managed network and business services, voice services, and hosting for small- and medium-sized businesses in the Midwest and Southwest.

#### The Challenge

- Provide fully managed network and business services, voice services, and hosting for small- and medium-sized businesses in the United States
- Improve data protection capabilities for all clients

#### The Solution

NetApp NearStore® R200s in Fibre Channel SANs and FAS250 storage server provide co-located and remote data protection.

#### Benefits

- More reliable backups and less time to recover data
- Two-thirds reduction of data footprint on disk
- Client self-service restores save support costs
- Low-cost disaster recovery solution
- Ability to meet service-level agreements

### IMPROVING DATA PROTECTION

LightEdge provides IP network and value-added services, including business Internet, remote access services, managed security, wide area networking, and LAN monitoring. The service provider owns a high-speed, extremely secure, high quality of service backbone network connecting IP points of presence in Des Moines, Omaha, Kansas City, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Eastern Iowa, and other locations around the United States.

In addition to these services, LightEdge also provides data protection services for many of its clients. In the past, its solutions were based on regional tape-based replication at the company's physical data facilities. Although tape backup did provide some degree of data protection to its clients, the tape backup process was slow and difficult to administer, and restores were unreliable.

The limitations of the tape backup system became evident as more and more clients complained about lengthy recovery times. In addition, the company was having difficulty meeting its service-level agreements and contracts. LightEdge then began investigating more robust storage and data protection solutions to upgrade its service offerings to its 3,000-plus circuit-based customers with on-premise data.

### UNIFIED STORAGE ENVIRONMENT WITH NETAPP NEAR-LINE STORAGE AND SYNCSORT OSSV

After evaluating the existing solutions, LightEdge decided that the Syncsort software backing up to NetApp storage was its best choice. “We looked at the offerings of some other OEM providers and asked our partners to suggest alternatives,” explains Joe Shields, the company's director of systems engineering and operations. “But none of the solutions looked attractive. If we just wanted a Windows solution, we could have gone with a lot of vendors. But to get the kind of unified storage environment we needed, there just wasn't any combination like NetApp and Syncsort that could provide a viable, enterprisewide data protection solution.”

LightEdge selected two NetApp NearStore R200 near-line systems and a NetApp FAS250 storage system. The R200s are the primary devices used for backing up clients' data and applications. LightEdge uses the NetApp FAS250 exclusively to do the initial backups for WAN-connected sites, after which the tapes are shipped back to one of the company's two data storage facilities.

After making the initial copy of the customer's data on the FAS250, LightEdge uses NetApp Open Systems SnapVault (OSSV) and NetApp SnapMirror to make a copy of the customer's data onto one of the R200s. LightEdge also selected Syncsort OSSV, the Open Systems SnapVault agent for Windows. "The Syncsort OSSV agent is the front end to all of the SnapVault activities we do," says Shields.

LightEdge uses a range of protocols, including Fibre Channel, iSCSI, and CIFS. Both of the NetApp R200s backup targets participate in the Fibre Channel SANs in the company's two co-location facilities in Des Moines and Minneapolis. LightEdge also uses NetApp SnapLock for compliance. The SnapLock software helps ensure the permanence, accuracy, integrity, and security of LightEdge client data by making it possible for business records to be both unalterable and rapidly accessible online for long periods of time.

"The combination of Syncsort software and NetApp core OSSV technology made the solution irresistible," says Shields. "Now we can offer new services to our clients, including straight-to-tape, file-based backup or a NetApp/Syncsort OSSV backup."

#### **STREAMLINING MANAGEMENT, REDUCING TCO**

"Before we started using the NetApp storage appliances and OSSV, our hosted or co-located clients could only use tape-based replication," explains Shields. "NetApp OSSV has allowed us to extend our disk-based replication services out across our connections to the customer premises, providing the customer with more reliable backups and shorter time to recover lost data. We are now supporting 72 customers with this solution and almost 200 with the service.

"One of the biggest benefits we see in the SnapVault technology is the space savings. We don't have to duplicate any type of data that doesn't change from backup to backup or snapshot to snapshot." Incremental storage delivers even more space savings with a block-level server such as SnapVault. In fact, across the LightEdge customer base, block-level incrementals on average write 6% of the volume, compared to 20% for the Syncsort file-based backups. LightEdge can store two-thirds more volume with the SnapVault footprint, which gives the company a more efficient use of data center space.

"Once we put the initial engineering effort into getting the NetApp and Syncsort solution running, it just maintains itself from an implementation standpoint," Shields concludes. "It takes only three people to manage the R200s, the master server of Syncsort, setting up jobs, and scheduling and managing those jobs. And this is not their dedicated job, either."

Using Syncsort, LightEdge is able to expose portions of its management portal to customers, allowing them to perform file-level recovery in certain instances. For example, if a client loses an Excel spreadsheet, they can restore it themselves, without calling LightEdge. This capability reduces the total cost of ownership associated with the platform.

For geographic redundancy, LightEdge provides replication services between its Des Moines and Minneapolis facilities. Using SnapMirror to create a Snapshot™ copy between the two locations provides a disaster recovery solution at a very low cost.

OSSV alone doesn't necessarily provide the archival capabilities needed by a lot of small- to medium-sized business customers. "Having the ability with the Syncsort product to layer on top of OSSV to actually

do things like archive the tapes and then ship them off to an off-site archival location is a pretty big value for our customer base," explains Shields.

"The partnership between Syncsort and NetApp allows us to do many things that we couldn't do before, including centralized management of all data across all media, reducing our footprint on disk, lowering costs, increasing our SLAs associated with the service to our customers, and much more," says Shields. "The combined technologies of Syncsort and NetApp are supplying the platform that enables us to provide all of the managed business solutions our clients require to ensure the highest quality services at the lowest price."

#### **ABOUT NETWORK APPLIANCE**

Network Appliance is a world leader in unified storage solutions for today's data-intensive enterprise. Since its inception in 1992, Network Appliance has delivered technology, product, and partner firsts that simplify data management. Information about Network Appliance™ solutions and services is available at [www.netapp.com](http://www.netapp.com).

#### **SOLUTION COMPONENTS**

##### **Products**

NetApp NearStore R200s  
NetApp FAS250  
NetApp Open Systems SnapVault® (OSSV)  
NetApp SnapMirror®  
NetApp SnapLock®

##### **Services**

NetApp Global Services (NGS) Support  
NGS Professional Services

##### **Third-Party**

Syncsort OSSV Open Systems SnapVault Agent for Windows®

