

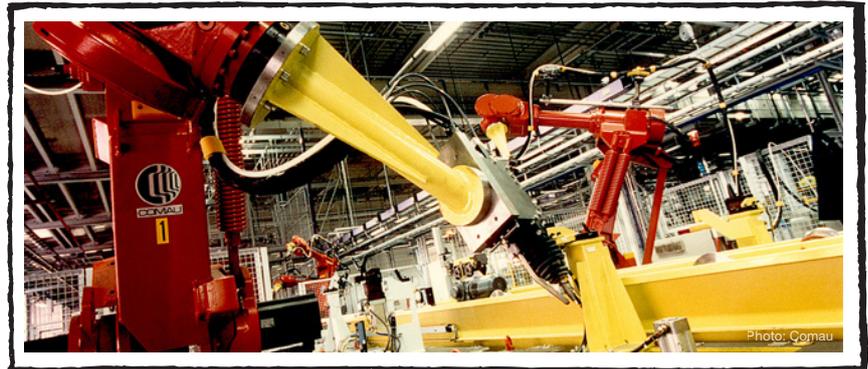


Success Story

Comau Romania Relies Again on NetApp and Gains Seamless Data Protection for Complex Design Projects



Another NetApp solution provided by:



KEY HIGHLIGHTS

Industry

Welding robot design and manufacturing

The Challenge

Raise the level of data protection in a design-driven environment with increasing amounts of CAD data and a growing work force.

The Solution

Enhance the existing NetApp® storage solution with disk-to-disk backup managed by NetApp SnapVault® software and include Microsoft® Windows® servers under a single backup umbrella.

Benefits

- Solved network performance and time bottlenecks
- Accelerated the backup by a factor of 5
- Saved 40 hours per week of backup and restore administration
- Applied deduplication and reduced data by 65 %
- Increased user productivity through higher backup density
- Gained users' trust in safe data
- Prepared to scale for future storage needs

Customer Profile

Comau (www.comau.com), a multinational company based in Turin, Italy, is part of the Fiat Group. Founded in 1973, Comau develops and produces process automation, manufacturing, and service solutions and specializes in welding robots. It currently has 23 operative centers, 14 manufacturing plants, and 5 research and development centers throughout the world. All major automotive manufacturers use Comau systems and machinery at facilities in Europe, America, and Asia. The company employs more than 14,500 people in 13 countries.

Comau Romania is located in the city of Oradea, near the border with Hungary. Established in 2001, the subsidiary focuses on design projects and the production of components for welding lines. Today, Comau Romania hosts about 16,000 m² of production space in two buildings.

The Challenge

Raise the level of data protection

One out of three vehicles in the world, more than 20 million per year, is manufactured with Comau technology. Comau's Romanian site mostly supports third parties with design projects. A team of more than 130 designers often works in parallel

on two or three projects. To stay on track with delivery dates, they need rapid file restore options. However, a growing work force, more data and projects, design complexity, and time pressure made it difficult to proceed with the current backup solution.

Comau Romania used the Microsoft Robocopy tool, because Microsoft Windows servers dominate their IT environment. When users needed older versions of design data or an already deleted file, the IT team could not always fulfill their requests. Although they ran a backup every night, there were issues with performance and capacity, so that it was impossible to protect all project data regularly.

The Solution

Deploy disk-to-disk backup with NetApp SnapVault

Marin Balaian, area IT manager at Comau Romania, wanted to put an end to this situation. There were two options: Either invest in a tape backup solution or carry on with a backup-to-disk model, but with a more integrated and simpler approach. Because a tape solution would not have improved the rapid restore challenge, option two came into play: NetApp FAS storage with NetApp SnapVault software.

Comau Romania has had good experiences with NetApp solutions since they started to consolidate the Windows files on network-attached storage in 2009. Today, almost 95 % of their data resides on a NetApp FAS system. Even though suboptimal air filtering in the server room might put the storage system at risk, it has proved its robustness and has been running reliably since the first day.

NetApp partner ETA2U proposed another NetApp solution, because it would deliver the largest benefit. “We recommended keeping the NetApp line to gain also for the backup as much agility, performance, and reliability as possible. With consistent data management, Comau Romania would also have a wealth of options to adapt to future needs—something a tape solution could never deliver,” says Daniel Dumitriu, account manager at ETA2U.

ETA2U has supported Comau Romania for years, and now tailored a second FAS system as the new backup solution. NetApp SnapVault software manages the backup and replication routines for 42 terabytes of data. The software builds on NetApp Snapshot™ technology for highly efficient, incremental backups directly on the primary storage, and it also protects data on open systems such as Microsoft Windows based servers.

“The SnapVault software is easy to handle. Once everything was set, it worked just fine,” says Balaian. “Now we can protect all project data every day, and we can provide users with various recovery points.”

His team set the backup frequency to four hours, with four Snapshot copies a day and availability for a fortnight. The daily Snapshot copy summarizes the backups of each working day, followed by a weekly Snapshot copy. NetApp SnapMirror® replicates all backups to the secondary storage. NetApp replication also has a business continuity effect: If the primary storage is not available, the IT team can turn the backup system into a data-serving mode to support their users’ work.

Business Benefits

Simplified data protection brings peace of mind

At Comau Romania, backup is no longer a resource-intensive process with team interventions necessary even on weekends. The new solution eased the management burden and solved network performance and time bottlenecks.

Today, the backup is at least 5 times faster than before. This is also a result of NetApp’s storage efficiency features, including deduplication. By eliminating redundancies, Comau Romania reduced the amount of data by 65 %.

“Simplicity and reliability are definitely great characteristics of NetApp solutions. What impresses me as well is the AutoSupport service. Whenever you notice a failed disk drive, you can bet that a new drive is already waiting at the reception desk,” says Balaian.

Increased user productivity and trust

When a restore request comes in, the IT team is able to deliver the file in only a fraction of the time they needed before. “Today, restores are done with a few mouse clicks. This is a huge relief for the team and saves us about 40 hours per week,” says Balaian. “Our users know that they just need to call us and we react promptly.”

Designers trust that their data is safe. There is no need to recreate deleted files or design modifications, and it has become much easier to meet timelines, work smoothly, and maintain productivity. This is an important achievement, because Comau Romania will soon break new ground: They want to broaden their scope from supplying design work to delivering seamless processes, from design to execution.

Scale for the future and enhance security

NetApp solutions at the core of an IT infrastructure support server virtualization with fast and reliable storage. This topic is moving up on the agenda, because Comau Romania plans to deploy servers with specific engineering applications on site to avoid slow remote data traffic. Balaian also plans to increase the storage capacity to provide users with an even denser backup history. In the short run, the team aims to raise the security level by moving the backup storage to the second building.

Balaian is satisfied with his investments in NetApp solutions: “We have quite some plans for the future, and I trust we are set to deliver on them. Given our good experiences with NetApp, it was right to rely again on their solutions.”

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

NetApp Products

2 NetApp FAS2200 series systems (primary and secondary storage)
AutoSupport™
Data ONTAP® 8 operating in 7-Mode
Deduplication
SnapMirror
Snapshot
SnapVault
Open Systems SnapVault

Protocols

CIFS, NFS

Third-Party Products

Design applications such as AutoCAD, CATIA, NX, and Robcad
Microsoft Office applications
Microsoft Windows Server® 2003 and 2008
Red Hat Linux®

Partner

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