

# AutoNation Accelerates Its Backups with Cohesity

**Industry:** Retail

**Use Cases:** Data protection, target storage and SQL protection

**Solution Partner:** VMware

**Channel Partner:** Champion Solutions



“ Our goal was to build a highly efficient and agile IT infrastructure that quickly adapts to evolving business requirements. By leveraging Cohesity, a software-defined, hyperconverged platform for secondary data, we substantially enhanced our operational capabilities, reliability and lowered our TCO.

- Adam Rasner, Vice President, Technology Operations, AutoNation

## Introduction

Founded in 1996, AutoNation (NYSE: AN) is the largest automotive retailer in the United States. It provides new and pre-owned vehicles and associated services. Headquartered out of Fort Lauderdale, FL, the company currently owns and operates over 360 retail operations throughout the U.S.

AutoNation has over 26,000 employees. It sells and repairs 35 different manufacturer brands and is ranked #138 in the 2017 Fortune 500.

## Challenges

AutoNation has a large IT environment with a primary data center in Denver, CO and a secondary disaster recovery (DR) site in Plano, TX. It has over 1300 virtual machines, 200 physical servers, and growing data of 1.2PB that supports retail operations.

Due to the company's legacy data protection environment, the IT team at AutoNation was experiencing a host of issues, including:

- IT team was spending 50% to 60% of one FTE babysitting frequent job failures.
- Not all applications were supported and protected.
- Storage appliances did not scale, which resulted in expensive forklift upgrades.
- Ongoing costs were getting out of control.

With a DR site refresh on the horizon, Adam Rasner, Vice President, Technology Operations, challenged his team to come up with a storage solution that would address infrastructure issues and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. The team began looking at available options, including hyperconverged secondary storage solutions, while applying the following requirements:

- Easy-to-install, configure, and manage
- Web-scale architecture
- Predictable cost

## Solution

The AutoNation IT team evaluated multiple solutions, including Cohesity and Rubrik. After an extensive proof-of-concept (PoC), the team selected Cohesity to be AutoNation's next-generation, hyperconverged secondary storage platform.

Out of the box, Cohesity offered a single, easy-to-navigate user interface (UI). In fact, during the PoC stage, the team immediately witnessed a substantial decline in the job-failure rate, and any failures that did occur were easily traced and addressed. Moreover, the team was able to take corrective actions to ensure that failures wouldn't repeat, which previously was not an option.

The team deployed Cohesity C2510 across AutoNation's environment, and consolidated data protection, target storage, and SQL protection on a single platform. With Cohesity's scale-out, pay-as-you-grow model, the IT team could easily introduce new nodes into the storage cluster and address growing requirements.

## Results

Adam Rasner and his team are always on the lookout for solutions that will make AutoNation's IT environment more effective. By deploying Cohesity, the team not only reduced complexity and built a highly-efficient secondary storage environment, it also lowered the total cost of ownership (TCO).

AutoNation is benefitting from

- A single, easy-to-configure and manage UI because Cohesity consolidated AutoNation's secondary storage silos onto a single platform – Instead of maintaining multiple copies of data across the silos, AutoNation consolidated its secondary data on a single platform and optimized storage performance with global variable-length dedupe and compression.
- Higher performance –
  - 50% reduction in overall backup windows, and much improved replication between data centers.
  - Substantial improvement in recovery times.
  - Reduced job-failure rate by 20x, bringing it below 1%; in the event of a failure, the team maintains all data needed to rectify the failure and prevent recurrence.
  - Instead of spending time babysitting failed jobs, the team can focus on other productive tasks.
- Lower TCO – As a software-defined solution running on industry-standard hardware, Cohesity allowed AutoNation to reduce its CapEx. Additional OpEx savings came as a result of adopting a more efficient operating model.

“ Instead of investing in higher-cost SAN for our tier 2, non-mission critical applications, Cohesity helped us to consolidate all secondary data and apps on a single solution.

## Recap

Since deploying Cohesity, AutoNation has dramatically reduced its backup windows and job failure rates. The IT team gained operational efficacy with a single, easy-to-manage platform.