

**CUSTOMER CASE STUDY**

**WEIS MARKETS OVERVIEW**

Leading Mid-Atlantic food retailer with stores, distribution, and processing facilities in five states

**BACKUP APPLICATION**

IBM<sup>®</sup> Tivoli<sup>®</sup> Storage Manager

**KEY BENEFITS**

- Cut recovery times from thirty hours to two-and-a-half hours
- Cut administration time
- Gain complete backup reliability

# Weis Markets Cuts Restore and Recovery Times with SEPATON S2100-ES2 Backup Appliance

Weis Markets, a leading food retailer, continually improves its data centers to ensure that its associates have continuous access to the data Weis needs to deliver the highest quality of service to customers. After experiencing significant problems, Weis IT systems managers recognized that their physical tape libraries could not deliver the level of data protection or recovery speed they needed. Weis implemented a SEPATON S2100<sup>®</sup>-ES2 backup appliance and cut restore and recovery times, while dramatically improving backup efficiency.



“We tested a recovery scenario on the same file server we lost a year ago. We could recover the full system and be completely operational with the SEPATON system in two-and-a-half hours, compared to thirty hours with tape.”

Tom Mowery  
IT Systems Manager  
Weis Markets

**THE ENVIRONMENT**

Weis Markets is a leading Mid-Atlantic food retailer with stores, distribution, and processing facilities in five states. Weis uses large SQL and Oracle databases, as well as a variety of file/server and application servers to manage its payroll, financial, distribution, and retail operations data. All of this business-critical data – approximately 5TB-20 TB daily – was backed up to IBM 3590-E physical tape libraries using IBM Tivoli Storage Manager (TSM) backup software. Tapes are shipped to a SunGard disaster recovery facility in Philadelphia.

**THE CHALLENGE**

IT managers need to ensure that more than 1,500 end-user staff members have continuous access to the data and applications they need to deliver the high level of service that Weis Markets' customers have come to expect. In the highly competitive retail industry, a single day of downtime could mean more than just lower revenues. It could mean damaged customer loyalty.

“Our operations are highly interconnected,” said Tom Mowery, IT Systems Manager, Weis Markets. “For example, our distribution facility uses information from the retail stores to manage inventory and to keep stores stocked. Our marketing staff uses sales information and distribution information to create sales programs and advertising campaigns. If one area loses access to key information, everyone is affected.”

Although Weis Markets' tape libraries were able to meet their backup windows, they could not restore or recover data fast enough to meet their 24-hour recovery time objective (RTO). This fact became evident when the company's main file server failed, cutting network access to all 1,500 users. “We wanted to restore operations in order of business criticality,” said Mowery. “Unfortunately, physical tapes are not organized like that. Each tape had to be mounted and read linearly to recover data for each user.” As a result, it took approximately thirty hours to return to normal operation – a recovery time that Weis Markets managers considered far too long.

## CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

### THE EVALUATION

Weis Markets set out to implement a data protection solution that would deliver the restore times the company needed. They wanted a solution that could be added to their existing data center without disrupting ongoing operations or requiring changes to their backup policies or TSM daily operations. They considered disk-based backup solutions from EMC, NetApp, and SEPATON. "The SEPATON system clearly had the edge in terms of ease of use, restore performance, and flexibility," said Mowery.

### THE SOLUTION

The SEPATON S2100-ES2 was configured and implemented in a few short hours. Because the system completely emulated the existing IBM 3590 tape library, Weis IT staff could move data over to it at their own pace without affecting ongoing operations. SEPATON's system's tape emulation and easy-to-use management console also enabled administrators to operate the system without extensive training.

"The SEPATON system is so automated and reliable that it frees our administrators to spend more time on tuning our TSM operations for efficiency. That saves us money."

Tom Mowery  
IT Systems Manager  
Weis Markets

### THE RESULTS

The SEPATON system immediately improved the Weis Markets data protection environment. It delivers restore and recovery times that are unimaginable with Weis' old physical tape systems. "We tested a recovery scenario on the same file server we lost a year ago," said Mowery. "We could recover the full system and be completely operational with the SEPATON system in two-and-a-half hours, compared to thirty hours with tape."

The SEPATON appliance also cut their backup windows in half, from more than six-and-a-half hours to three and a half. The SEPATON system lets them add virtual mount points as needed, an important advantage in a TSM environment. "We were limited to eight physical tape drives before SEPATON," said Mowery. "With the SEPATON appliance, we have forty-four virtual tape drives configured to handle backups with equal efficiency from all our media servers simultaneously."

Administration time constraints are also a thing of the past. The SEPATON system automates all the disk management tasks and runs in conjunction with the TSM policies, with nearly hands-free efficiency. "The SEPATON system is so automated and reliable that it frees our administrators to spend more time on tuning our TSM operations for efficiency. That saves us money."