

# Restoring Business-Critical Research Stored in SharePoint Is Dramatically Faster at RAND, Thanks to Quest

Established in 1948, the RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis. The company employs approximately 1,700 people from more than 50 countries. For fast and reliable SharePoint backup and restore, RAND turned to Quest Software.

## The Challenge

RAND was running SharePoint 2007 in an ESX 4.1 virtual server environment for some 3,000 users. Those users rely on SharePoint every day to collaborate on documents that support RAND's core business of research and analysis. Therefore, having reliable backups and fast restore capabilities for SharePoint is essential to RAND.

"Researchers at RAND are always working on multiple documents, collaborating and sharing a lot of different information for their research projects," explained Adrian Salas, Sr. systems engineer at RAND Corporation. "Sometimes they accidentally delete a document or need an older version. Those documents are critical for their work, and we need to be able to perform item-level restores quickly."

Unfortunately, RAND's current restore tool, DocAve Backup and Restore, was so cumbersome that recovery of a single item could take more than two days of work by support staff. "With DocAve, trying to find a simple content item to restore was an arduous process," said Salas. "Help desk staff had to get into the administrative console, and then try and dig through the backups using a terrible UI. Restore times were far too long, and sometimes the data was not restored at all. We needed to reduce our SOA times for the customer and reduce the hours our support staff was spending on backup and restore and free up that time to do other tasks."

RAND's backup process using DocAve Backup and Restore was similarly cumbersome, requiring long backup windows. Moreover, the backups took double the storage that should be required, increasing costs dramatically. "DocAve actually doesn't read the native SQL backups that we can take, but duplicates them out," said Salas. "So that's more stress on the SAN, which is very costly."

To make matters worse, RAND was preparing to migrate to SharePoint 2010, which was not supported by their version of the DocAve solution. "We would have had to pay to upgrade to the version of DocAve that was compatible with SharePoint 2010," explained Salas. "Given the poor performance and reliability of the tools and the fact that they were so difficult for support staff to use, spending money on upgrading those tools didn't make sense." Instead, RAND began to investigate other options for SharePoint backup and restore.

## The Quest Solution

RAND evaluated several solutions, including the newer version of DocAve, other third-party products and Quest Recovery Manager for SharePoint.

*"Before Recovery Manager for SharePoint, a user needing a restore had to wait an average of 8-16 hours before select support staff was available. Now, the average wait is 1-4 hours, because Recovery Manager for SharePoint's easy-to-use interface allowed us to train service desk staff to take on support tasks. If a customer calls in and says they are missing such-and-such item, it's very easy for help desk staff to just pop it in the search, go through the results, and with a click, do the restore."*

— Adrian Salas  
Sr. Systems Engineer  
RAND Corporation

## OVERVIEW



### Headquarters

Santa Monica, California

### Services

Research and analysis

### Critical Needs

Fast and reliable SharePoint backup and restore

### Solution

Recovery Manager for SharePoint

### Results

- Reduced restore times for SharePoint user content from 8–12 hours to 1–4 hours
- Enabled help desk staff to take on restore tasks, improving response time for recovery requests from 8–16 hours to 1–4 hours
- Reduced storage costs by reading native SQL backups without duplicating them

## CASE STUDY

Quest Recovery Manager for SharePoint uses existing backup infrastructures to enable rapid, scalable SharePoint content restores and full farm recovery. Recovery Manager also schedules and performs backups as well as provides granular search and detailed previews. You can be sure that your critical business information will be preserved, whether you lost one file or an entire farm. Recoveries are fast and simple, saving you time and money.

RAND was particularly impressed with Quest's ability to use the native SQL backups. "Quest Recovery Manager for SharePoint offered the unique advantage of reading the native SQL backups, instead of duplicating backup data like competing products," said Salas. "That was very important because getting the raw backup from SQL itself means the data is going to be the most reliable and storage use is going to be significantly reduced."

Recovery Manager for SharePoint also proved easy for support staff to use—even those with little experience with backup and recovery tools. "We needed a flexible tool with an easy-to-use interface, and Recovery Manager for SharePoint met those requirements," noted Salas.

### The Bottom Line

At RAND, Recovery Manager for SharePoint has slashed restore times for SharePoint user content from 8–12 hours to an average of 1–4 hours. Moreover, recovery tasks now begin many hours sooner. "Before Recovery Manager for SharePoint, a user needing a restore had to wait an average of 8–16 hours before select support staff was available," explained Salas. "Now, the average wait is 1–4 hours, because Recovery Manager for SharePoint's easy-to-use interface allowed us to train service desk staff to take on support tasks. If a customer calls in and says they are missing such-and-such item, it's very easy for help desk staff to just pop it in the search, go through the results, and with a click, do the restore."

The end result is that users no longer have to wait 16–28 hours from the time they request a restore to the time they get the item they need for their work; with Recovery Manager for SharePoint, the elapsed time is just 2–8 hours. For RAND, this improvement in recovery time translates not only to improved end-user satisfaction, but to real cost

savings in improved employee productivity and reduced support overhead.

RAND has reaped additional cost savings from Recovery Manager for SharePoint's ability to read from native SQL backups. "DocAve doesn't actually read the native SQL backups but duplicates them—which basically required us to double our backup storage," said Salas. "And SAN space isn't cheap. Sometimes it ranges from \$1.00–\$1.50 per gig for maintenance. When you add that up for 500 GBs plus, it can be a lot of money just to store duplicate data."

For RAND, the most important benefit of Recovery Manager for SharePoint is the peace of mind that comes with knowing that its business-critical data can be quickly restored. "Our business is the research we produce," explained Salas. "So reliable backup and restore of SharePoint, which hosts that research content, is highly critical for the company. For every hour the system is disrupted, the company stands to lose thousands of dollars, depending on the type of research projects and deadlines. Recovery Manager for SharePoint ensures that our business is protected."

### About RAND

Established in 1948, the RAND Corporation is a nonprofit institution that helps improve policy and decision making through research and analysis. It focuses on issues that matter most, such as health, education, national security, international affairs, law and business, and the environment. For more information, visit [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org).

### About Quest Software, Inc.

Quest Software (Nasdaq: QSFT) simplifies and reduces the cost of managing IT for more than 100,000 customers worldwide. Our innovative solutions make solving the toughest IT management problems easier, enabling customers to save time and money across physical, virtual and cloud environments. For more information about Quest solutions for **administration and automation**, **data protection, development and optimization**, **identity and access management, migration and consolidation**, and **performance monitoring**, go to [www.quest.com](http://www.quest.com).



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