

United States Air Force, Robins Air Force Base: Legacy Media Archiving, Storage Costs Reduction & Data Modernization Services

Overview

Robins Air Force Base (AFB) is located in middle Georgia, 100 miles south of Atlanta and 16 miles south of Macon. Robins AFB is the largest industrial complex in Georgia. The base covers more than 6,934 acres, including Georgia's largest runway. Warner Robins Air Logistics Center (WR-ALC), the host unit at Robins Air Force Base along with the 78th Air Base Wing and more than 60 other units contribute affordable combat superiority, readiness, and sustainability to the Air Force war fighting team which is the worldwide manager for a wide range of aircraft, engines, missiles, software and avionics and accessories components. It is one of three Air Force Air Logistics Centers, the others being Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center (OC-ALC) at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma and Ogden Air Logistics Center (OO-ALC) at Hill Air Force Base, Utah.

Opportunity

The Software Control Center (SCC) at WR-ALC is responsible for managing, duplicating, distributing, tracking, and retaining legacy mission-critical information for the Air Force and other branches of the Armed Forces of the U.S. and NATO allies. The data stored here on magnetic tape and other media will assure current and future information distribution capability for its customers as well as provide immediate access when needed. Many of the stored media formats are aged and degrading to the degree that the data will soon be unrecoverable or cost prohibitive to recovery. There was a 25% discrepancy in tapes that could not be accounted for. Additionally, this project will also accomplish a disaster recovery effort for the SCC. This will ensure the continuity of operations for SCC and its customers in the event of natural or man-made disaster. Finally, WR-ALC spends an exorbitant amount of money each year for storing, maintaining, and retrieving this legacy information.

For this opportunity, WR-ALC selected Virtual Tape Storage (VTS) solutions from Data Source Inc. to perform legacy media archiving services to transfer its magnetic tape libraries and other media to modern file-based storage systems.

VTS VIRTUAL TAPE STORAGE

Solution

A VTS solution was implemented to transfer legacy magnetic tape data to more efficient, longer life, and less-costly to maintain file-based storage systems including RAID, Net/corporate storage, and the Cloud. Physical storage space efficiencies of 30,000 to 1 were achieved using VTS. The original tape based data and logical formats were unaltered when archived to file-based VTS tape-images. This allows the original tape data and format to be accessed and reproduced to physical media when required. VTS archived tape data is also accessed directly from other logistics support applications. The VTS at the SCC at WR-ALC transformed their aging, legacy data into a modern corporate data storage system that preserved key information, made it accessible to the USAF ALC's ALC and its customers, and significantly decreased storage and related costs. Upon project completion, the VTS system (along with training and documentation) was retained for SCC to use to produce physical media for distribution

Results

- Preservation of legacy mission-critical information and logistics data needed to maintain combat superiority, readiness, and sustainability.
- Eliminate future operational costs to attempt recovery of data from aging, deteriorating magnetic tape media. Some estimates are as high as 20% of magnetic tape information is unreadable.
- 100% accountability of mission-critical data using file-based storage versus 75% accountability using older magnetic tape libraries.
- Immediate, fast, 24/7 data access instead of finding, loading, and reading magnetic tapes or similar legacy media.
- Elimination of storage space and associated costs. SCC freed up thousands of square feet of storage for more important mission usage.
- Elimination of using and maintaining legacy tape equipment and device software.
- Overall reduction/re-deployment of labor costs in tape and related handling. (Storage Strategies NOW estimates that it costs around \$2,000 to process and restore a single backup tape, and that expense adds up with each backup tape that is processed).
- Implementation of disaster recovery plan for the SCC at WR-ALC.
- Provided on-going sustainment and efficient capability of redundant library backup in multiple locations for future use by the customer.
- Project was compliant with the Green Procurement Program FAR 23.404(b).

VTS VIRTUAL TAPE STORAGE

BEFORE VTS



AFTER VTS



(Photos are representations of space savings, not actual USAF facility)

For more information on VTS, please see:
<http://www.virtualtapestorage.com>