



CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Fourth Wall Restaurants

Designing a Recipe for Success with Symantec.cloud and Data Protection Solutions

Fourth Wall operates several upscale New York eateries. It was formerly part of the national Smith & Wollensky group, and then assumed ownership of the group's Manhattan restaurants—a change that required it to build an IT infrastructure from scratch to support its new business. The company turned to Symantec for endpoint security and data protection solutions. Results include no significant disruption from malicious code since deployment, 20 hours of backup administration time reclaimed for more valuable projects, and up to fourfold faster backups due to deduplication.

Adventures in gastronomy

Running the show at America's quintessential steakhouses takes more than consummate culinary skills. They may not be the stars of the production, but backroom business applications and infrastructure play an important supporting role in keeping diners, chefs, and staff happy. It's a lesson Fourth Wall Restaurants learned when it sold the national Smith and Wollensky Restaurant Group in 2007 to outside investors.

Fourth Wall's restaurants—Maloney & Porcelli, Park Avenue, The Post House, Quality Meats, and the original New York location of Smith & Wollensky—are the very definition of the upscale Manhattan dining experience, regularly gracing the pages of tabloids and glossies alike.

Deciding to narrow its focus to New York while the national group took the Smith & Wollensky name to a broader audience, Fourth Wall faced a new set of challenges—among them, the need to separate its data and network services from the national group and set up its own operations center.

Restaurant in the cloud

Ten years ago, this may have meant building a server and storage infrastructure to house data and drive business applications. But for Sumeet Lakhaney, director of IT at Fourth Wall, it was an opportunity to start taking services into the cloud, and at the same time, seek to ensure the compliance with payment card industry (PCI) regulations.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Website:
fourthwallrestaurants.com
Industry: Food & Management Services
Headquarters: New York, NY
Employees: 500

SYMANTEC SOLUTIONS

Endpoint Security
Data Protection
Hosted Mail Security

Why Symantec?

- Reduces total cost of IT ownership
- Delivers more than just protection against viruses and malware
- Improves productivity, giving back valuable time to employees

“Managing PCI compliance killed us in terms of the time and expertise—it really stretched us to be on top of our game,” Lakhaney explains. “Now, by taking PCI compliance into the cloud, the liability is really on someone else. We’ve done our due diligence—we just use our point-of-sale (POS) terminals, and as long as we have an active network connection, we have full POS connectivity.”

By helping manage increasingly complex business requirements while avoiding the purchase and maintenance of a physical server environment, taking services into the cloud is a model of efficiency for Fourth Wall. “Every service we can take to the cloud means a server that we don’t have to manage on-site,” Lakhaney says.

Security on demand

And they haven’t stopped there. To address security concerns with its 100-plus endpoints, Fourth Wall looked for a solution that would not just save them money upfront, but management time down the road as well. Having just purchased new PCs for the business venture, Lakhaney decided to do an experiment to see which protection software would work the best.

“A lot of the PCs came with six months of free antivirus trial, so I thought we’d take advantage of that. Some computers ran Trend Micro, some computers that ran Symantec AntiVirus, and I had some that ran the Norton flavor of it,” Lakhaney explains. But the situation was quickly becoming a headache.

With no way to manage the solution except by manually going to each computer, Lakhaney decided to standardize with Symantec. “So we asked ourselves, “is it going to be more cost-effective to deploy antivirus software onto all these PCs and go around checking it all the time, or should we go with a hosted solution?”” Lakhaney recalls.

SOLUTIONS AT A GLANCE

Key Challenges

- Provide centralized data backups for physical and virtual servers
- Minimize IT staff time dedicated to backups
- Reduce IT costs with hosted solutions

Symantec Products

- Symantec Backup Exec™ 2010
- Symantec™ Endpoint Protection.cloud
- Symantec MessageLabs™ Email Security.cloud

Symantec Services

- Symantec Basic Maintenance

Technology Environment

- Server platform: HP ProLiant DL380
- Applications: Microsoft Exchange Server, Blackberry Enterprise Server, VMware vSphere
- Databases: GoldMine SQL Server
- Storage: EMC CLARiiON AX4 SAN
- Tape Library: HP StorageWorks Ultrium

BUSINESS RESULTS AND TECHNICAL BENEFITS

- Up to 60% lower data center TCO with hosted security
- 99% backup success rate achieved, up from 70%
- Reclaimed 50 work hours per day company-wide with 99.5% of spam blocked
- Reclaimed each month for more valuable IT projects:
 - 15 security administration hours
 - 20 backup administration hours
- Up to fourfold faster backups

A gracious host

After learning that Symantec was launching a hosted endpoint solution, Lakhaney decided to safeguard Fourth Wall’s endpoints with a single antivirus, antispymware, firewall, and host intrusion prevention solution in the form of Symantec™ Endpoint Protection.cloud. Keeping in line with Fourth Wall’s cloud services philosophy, the solution delivers updates transparently and automatically, keeping endpoints continuously protected with definitions that are always up to date.

A Web-based console provides Lakhaney a single view of Fourth Wall’s endpoints, whether they’re in the office or in the field. With the ability to identify unsafe websites and suspicious activity, even in search results, Fourth Wall employees can work online knowing they’re always being protected.

“We’re professional in the hospitality and restaurant realm, and Symantec helps us become professional in the business realm.”

Sumeet Lakhaney

Director of IT
Fourth Wall Restaurants

Reclaiming three network days per year

It's not something Fourth Wall employees take for granted. "We were lucky never to experience downtime before, but we were definitely impacted by performance loss due to security issues," Lakhanev recalls. "It was enough to slow our systems down to a crawl—we were losing the equivalent of three days per year in performance loss."

Since deploying Endpoint Security.cloud, Fourth Wall has not experienced any significant disruptions or losses of compute power due to security issues. The solution enables the Fourth Wall staff to be more productive because they no longer have to struggle along with infected PCs.

15 hours per month reclaimed with simplified management

The hosted solution means Fourth Wall is always up to date against potential threats while it avoids the long-term investment of maintaining and repairing a hardware solution of its own.

And for Lakhanev, the ability to manage the solution from a single screen means fewer headaches and better visualization of Fourth Wall's security profile.

"By logging in to the Symantec portal, I can be in total control of my network security within a few clicks," Lakhanev illustrates. "The convenience is saving us 15 hours each month and helps us avoid hiring a part-time security management assistant."

Blocking 50 hours of wasted productivity

In addition, Fourth Wall has been using Symantec MessageLabs™ Email Security.cloud, a Symantec.cloud solution, to protect its business from threats that can be introduced via email outside the network, such as spam, viruses, and unauthorized or inappropriate content.

Fourth Wall used to receive about 1,000 spam messages each day, which translated into a half hour of extra work for each end user. Since implementing its hosted mail security solution, Fourth Wall has reduced its unwanted message load to almost zero. "Across our 100 endpoints, we're reclaiming 50 hours a day by just not having to delete spam," Lakhanev recalls. "Email Security.cloud is blocking 99.5 percent of unwanted messaging."

The hosted email security solution extends the protection Fourth Wall receives from its hosted endpoint protection service, delivering protection of everything from windows-based endpoints (laptops, desktops, and file servers) to threats that can be introduced to the network via insecure endpoints.

A new recipe for data protection

Still, not all of Fourth Wall's technology is hosted in the cloud. At the company's New York offices, Lakhanev maintains a small, virtualized environment which delivers communications via Microsoft Exchange and Blackberry servers, a GoldMine SQL server, and a management server hosting a time-and-attendance application.

To protect Fourth Wall's data, Lakhanev used various network and local USB-based backup solutions. "But not all of our servers were even getting backed up every week," Lakhanev recalls. "It became part of my daily process to check on the server schedules and make sure our most important data was getting backed up."

As the new company's data grew, concern increased when backups weren't successful. "There were definitely times when backups failed. And if it was something important, I would have to back it up during production hours when people were still accessing data," Lakhanev says.

“Before, I’d say only about 7 of every 10 jobs got completed successfully. Since deploying Symantec Backup Exec 2010, our backup success rate is right up at 99 percent.”

Sumeet Lakhanev

Director of IT
Fourth Wall Restaurants

Reclaiming 20 hours per month in backup administration

In search of a more robust solution, Lakhaney discovered many of his peers were using Symantec Backup Exec™. After performing some test runs in the Fourth Wall environment, he decided to standardize his physical and virtual server backups on Symantec Backup Exec 2010. "I liked the graphical interface right away, and it seemed like a good solution for us in our tests, so we decided to pull the trigger and deploy it," Lakhaney says.

Already, Lakhaney is spending fewer hours manually managing the business of backing up Fourth Wall's data, reclaiming almost 20 hours a month for other projects. "Before, I was spending an hour a day staying on top of our backup solutions, and with Symantec Backup Exec 2010, that's gone down to about 10 minutes a day just scanning the successful results from the night before," Lakhaney relates. "The fact that this is a centralized solution helps me manage our data backups in a much more timely manner, saving me about five hours a week."

Boosting backup success to 99 percent

Backup Exec 2010 also offers Fourth Wall a substantial increase in its backup success rate. "Before, I'd say only about 7 of every 10 jobs got completed successfully. Since deploying Symantec Backup Exec 2010, our backup success rate is right up at 99 percent," Lakhaney says.

The solution has significantly reined in Fourth Wall's backup window. Since embarking on its new restaurant journey the company's data has expanded from about 20 gigabytes at the outset to about 2 terabytes today. The group is anticipating further growth with the opening of a new restaurant in the near future.

Because the restaurants stay open late and open early, Lakhaney and his IT team don't have a very forgiving backup window. "Our restaurants are open typically until 11 p.m., and our new restaurant will be open until 4 a.m.," Lakhaney explains. "And by 10 a.m. the next morning, it's starting all over again."

Up to fourfold faster backups with deduplication

Previously, Fourth Wall's nightly backups had about eight hours to complete their run, according to Lakhaney. "Most times, we could complete our jobs within about six hours." With newly added NetBackup PureDisk™ deduplication technology built into Backup Exec 2010, Fourth Wall is able to reduce the amount of backup data going to storage. Deduplication detects a single instance of each file for backup and eliminates redundant data to minimize backup time and bandwidth.

"With deduplication running within Backup Exec 2010, we've trimmed our backup times from up to eight hours down to as few as two hours per night," Lakhaney relates. "It's saving us 20 hours of backup time per week, and the more we use it, the more it's helping us to decrease our backup times further."

As Fourth Wall continues to open fine dining establishments in the city that never sleeps, those benefits will continue to pay off. "We're professional in the hospitality and restaurant realm, and Symantec helps us become professional in the business realm."