

> SMB SNAPSHOT Child Advocates, Inc.



Child Advocates, a Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program help abused, neglected, and abandoned children in the Child Protective Services (CPS) system. For 27 years, the CASA program in Houston, Texas has been run by Child Advocates, a 50-employee nonprofit

that leverages more than 700 volunteers—students, business people, retirees, and others—to support Houston’s children in family courts. The Houston Press recently named it the region’s “Best Charity.”

Network systems engineer/Project Manager Mayank Sharma is one of just two people on Child Advocates’ IT team. They manage all the technology systems including enterprise server infrastructure, disaster recovery, cloud based email and IP Phone systems, application development, file services and all other technology that enables the staff and 700+ volunteers to provide their vital service.

THE CHALLENGE

Creativity and operating with limited resources are hallmarks of Sharma’s work. “The biggest challenge any nonprofit faces is its budget,” he says. “We want to put our money toward our mission, so we’ve been very creative with our resources.”

At Child Advocates that means extensive virtualization. Three of its five physical servers are virtual hosts holding 20+ guest servers. Because Houston sits in a hurricane zone, it’s vital to protect the data on those servers—some of which is highly confidential—with reliable backups and offsite data storage.

THE SOLUTION

Child Advocates uses both Symantec Backup Exec™ 2010 and Symantec Backup Exec.cloud to safeguard its data. The two solutions are used in ways that leverage their strengths: on-premise Backup Exec is used for multiple virtual servers, while Backup Exec.cloud provides ongoing, non-disruptive backup for 235 gigabytes’ worth of confidential, mission-critical data and applications on one physical server.

Sharma notes that Backup Exec.cloud is not Child Advocates’ only Symantec hosted solution. The organization also relies on Symantec Email AntiSpam.cloud™ to keep its email system spam-free with minimal staff effort. “It works perfectly for us,” Sharma says. “We just set it and forget it.”

THE BENEFITS

Symantec Backup Exec.cloud addresses four challenges for Sharma and Child Advocates. First, it cuts administrative time. “With the cloud, management is so much simpler,” he says. “You just install the tool, run the agent, and configure your data. It does the rest on its own. I don’t have to monitor it every day.”

Second, it relieves the IT team of backup-related storage-management issues. Third, cloud-based backup transports vital data off-site, which supports disaster recovery and business continuity directives. “We’re in a hurricane zone, so there’s peace of mind in knowing that my data is safely out of Houston if something happens to my office,” he says. And fourth, Symantec Backup Exec.cloud shifts backup costs from Child Advocates’ capital budget to its operating budget. “That’s a big benefit for us,” Sharma says.

Sharma noted that he will soon deploy Backup Exec 2012 in Child Advocates’ virtual servers to take advantage of deduplication, enhanced support for virtual systems, and other features. “We’re highly virtualized,” he explains. “With Backup Exec 2012, the footprint of our [backup-related] storage will be dramatically reduced.”

Used in concert, the two versions of Backup Exec help Child Advocates focus on providing services to Houston’s children. “Backup Exec.cloud and Backup Exec 2012 definitely reduce management hassles, and save time and money for our organization,” Sharma says.

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Mayank Sharma

Network Systems Engineer/Project Manager
Child Advocates, Inc.

THE ORGANISATION

WEBSITE: childadvocates.org

INDUSTRY: Non-Profit

EMPLOYEES: 50

HEADQUARTERS: Houston, Texas, U.S.A.

WHY SYMANTEC?

- Robust protection of endpoints
- Simple back ups
- Security of cloud protection

THE INFRASTRUCTURE

- Servers running Windows Server 2008 R2
 - Microsoft Hyper-V

THE SOLUTION

- Symantec Backup Exec .cloud
- Symantec Backup Exec 2012