



Solution: **Systems Software**    Industry: **Government**

# State of Ohio

Giving state agencies reliable access to data for exceptional citizen services

The Ohio Department of Administrative Services Office of Information Technology (DAS-OIT) provides IT managed services to state agencies across 88 counties. To ensure data is always available, the department deployed IBM® Spectrum Protect™ Plus solution to simplify protection of virtual machines (VMs), accelerating recovery and boosting efficiency.

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## Business challenge

Ohio citizens rely on state agencies. To prevent disruption to citizen services, Ohio DAS is always looking for better ways to ensure business continuity.

## Transformation

The State of Ohio became an early adopter of IBM Spectrum Protect Plus, deploying it to support backup and recovery for its remote office agency facilities, with plans to extend it to thousands of VMs.

## Results

100%	Near-instant	Raises
success rate of daily backups for hundreds of VMs protects against data loss	data recovery enables high service levels to citizens	user satisfaction and productivity through secure self-service and automation

## Business challenge story

### Committed to quality

Every government organization faces a balancing act: they want to provide exceptional services to citizens while controlling costs. The State of Ohio is no different. To raise quality while boosting efficiency through economies of scale, Ohio Department of Administrative Services (DAS) acts as a centralized service provider to state agencies, boards, commissions, local governments and state universities.

As part of DAS, the Office of Information Technology (DAS-OIT) delivers statewide information technology and telecommunication services. DAS-OIT is working towards standardized policies, while still meeting a diverse range of needs around data backups and retention policies.

Bryan Holmes, Team Lead of Backup and Recovery Services at DAS-OIT, explains: “We’re continually bringing in new agencies under the DAS-OIT umbrella. Doing this without disrupting services is essential. It’s vital that we get data protection right, and quickly, since agencies must enable access to information without delay to serve citizens effectively.

“For example, Ohio residents might visit their local state agency to get essentials such as food stamps or workers’ compensation, and they can’t afford to leave empty-handed. To provide these services, agencies must be able to access accurate historical data. If a previous data backup or restore failed, vital information might be missing that prevents us from delivering the exceptional quality of service that we strive to, each and every time we interact with a citizen.”

DAS-OIT saw an opportunity to enhance its backup and recovery procedures. Specifically, it wanted to simplify management of backups, and accelerate recovery and centralize replication for disaster recovery.

“We recently restored a 2.5 TB VM in less than three minutes with Spectrum Protect Plus. Since the user had rapid access to the data they needed promptly, they were able to focus on serving citizens.”

— Bryan Holmes, Team Lead of Backup and Recovery Services, Office of Information Technology, Ohio Department of Administrative Services, State of Ohio

## Transformation story

### Blazing a trail

IBM Spectrum Protect Plus, a data recovery and re-use solution designed for virtual environments and databases, quickly caught the DAS-OIT team’s attention. The organization opted to become an early adopter, taking advantage of IBM support and direct interaction with IBM development teams to overcome teething problems.

“IBM Spectrum Storage solutions are a key part of our IT environment,” says Holmes. “Therefore, trying out IBM Spectrum Protect Plus was a natural progression of what we were already doing. We have a trusted vendor relationship with IBM, so we were confident that the solution would offer great functionality and meet our needs.”

DAS-OIT deployed IBM Spectrum Protect Plus to manage backups and enable fast recovery of VMs at its remote agency offices. Using the solution’s virtual appliance and agentless architecture, DAS-OIT was able to achieve a rapid deployment.

“When we looked at competing options, most were physical appliances that added unnecessary cost,” recalls Holmes. “For an organization like ours, that doesn’t want to deploy lots of additional hardware, the software-defined approach offered by IBM Spectrum Protect Plus is ideal because it allows us to leverage existing storage systems. Since we were early adopters, there were a few bugs to overcome, but we had weekly calls with IBM team and quickly ironed out any issues we encountered.”

Today, DAS-OIT uses IBM Spectrum Protect Plus to back up hundreds of VMs daily, with plans to ultimately extend this to thousands of VMs across their data center environment. The IBM team also helped the organization tightly integrate IBM Spectrum Protect Plus with its ServiceNow platform.

Holmes adds: “Most service agencies hand the management of their entire IT environment over to us, but some only task us with backups. For the latter group, we will give them the ability to retrieve data for themselves by connecting Spectrum Protect Plus with our ServiceNow layer.”

“IBM Spectrum Protect Plus is designed for virtual environments, and it shows. Not long after implementation, we reached a 100 percent success rate for daily backups, giving us peace of mind that data is always properly protected.”

— Bryan Holmes, Team Lead of Backup and Recovery Services, Office of Information Technology, Ohio Department of Administrative Services, State of Ohio

## Results story

### Supporting citizens with rock-solid data protection

With IBM Spectrum Protect Plus, the State of Ohio is ramping up its data protection capabilities. The initial roll-out has proved successful, and DAS-OIT plans to continue adding new agencies to the deployment, as well as extend the solution to other parts of its main data center infrastructure.

“IBM Spectrum Protect Plus is designed for virtual environments, and it shows,” comments Holmes. “Not long after implementation, we reached a 100 percent success rate for daily backups, giving us peace of mind that data is always properly protected.”

When restoring VMs, DAS-OIT can use IBM Spectrum Protect Plus to reduce the time and effort required for this process. As a result, it can minimize the impact of any IT issues on citizen services.

“It’s rare that we need to recover data, because our infrastructure is so reliable,” says Holmes. “But we recently restored a 2.5 TB VM in less than three minutes with Spectrum Protect Plus, significantly faster than the hours it would take before. Since users have access to the data they needed promptly, they are able to focus on their job of serving citizens.”

Holmes adds: “We typically retain data for about a year, and this includes agency data, so we look forward to evaluating the new offload to the cloud capability provided by IBM Spectrum Protect Plus. We believe the cloud is valuable as a cost-effective option for data retention.”

DAS-OIT has gained greater control over its backup and recovery environment with IBM Spectrum Protect Plus, enabling the team to complete simple tasks more effectively and introduce new capabilities to users.

Holmes concludes: “We can do what we did in the past much more easily with IBM Spectrum Protect Plus, but we can also do more. It gives us deeper visibility of our backup environment, so we can address any problems faster than ever. Equally, we’ve got the flexibility to start introducing more self-service features. We’re excited about what’s next for Spectrum Protect Plus at the State of Ohio. This project is yet another example of how IBM solutions are helping us serve our citizens better.”



## About State of Ohio

The [State of Ohio](#) provides services for residents and visitors to Ohio. Employing approximately 50,000 people, the State of Ohio includes more than 20 agencies.

## Solution components

- [Spectrum Protect Plus](#)

## Take the next step

To learn more about IBM Spectrum Storage data protection, please contact your IBM representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website: [www.ibm.com/it-infrastructure/storage/data-protection](http://www.ibm.com/it-infrastructure/storage/data-protection)

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