



WSECU

Executive Overview

After 10 years with their previous backup and disaster recovery (DR) solution, WSECU (Olympia, WA) wanted a change. Their old solution had to constantly be rebuilt, and it wasn't demonstrating the stability they needed for their large, busy databases.

To protect their IT environment, WSECU wanted the ability to confidently recover from potential disruptions. They found these capabilities in Zerto.

"Zerto looked like one of those too-good-to-be-true options, but we were never really let down from that."

Travis Pate
Infrastructure Engineer, WSECU

WSECU Runs Faster with Zerto

Challenges

- Stabilize an uncertain DR stack
- Reduce maintenance and upkeep time
- Protect a large, complex IT environment

Solution

- Consult with Zerto to configure a best-fit solution for their IT environment
- Protect 41 VMs with Zerto, with plans to double that number in a year
- Automate failover testing and DR maintenance

Results



Reduce RPOs from hours to seconds

WSECU reduced their RPOs from 1-8 hours with their previous solution to RPOs of seconds with Zerto.



Streamline maintenance, minimize overhead

WSECU gained back at least five hours a week thanks to Zerto automation and ease of use.



Automate failover testing

WSECU reduced testing time by 20-50% and automatically generates reports with Zerto scripts.

WSECU Sees Massive Reduction in RPOs, Testing Times, and “Cognitive Load” with Zerto

For over 60 years, WSECU has been putting members first in Washington. Its not-for-profit credit union services, delivered across 24 locations, are dedicated to the common good, and it regularly gives back by encouraging volunteer leave and donating to Washington’s communities. WSECU’s unparalleled service and commitment to its community earned it Forbes’ 2023 spot for Best Credit Union in Washington.

To continue achieving this standard of service in today’s digital landscape, WSECU has been modernizing their IT infrastructure. They completely redesigned their online banking service with Backbase, an engagement platform that helps financial institutions better connect to customers through seamless, rapid, and personalized financial transaction architecture. They were the first in the United States to adopt this Dutch service, and other American financial institutions followed suit after seeing WSECU’s success. WSECU is also setting their sights on the cloud as they adopt more SaaS applications and prepare for a full migration from on-premises. And they upgraded their DR infrastructure, which until now had been consistently underperforming.

Modernizing DR, Gaining Speed

Like most financial institutions, WSECU has large and complex databases to protect, and the stakes are high. As they modernize, they want to provide better, faster services while still maintaining the security they require.

They had been using a previous recovery solution for 10 years, but when it came time to renew their license, they opted out. They were tired of regularly rebuilding the solution, which was not demonstrating stability they could trust.

“We wanted to make sure we had DR capabilities that were going to be reliable,” said Travis Pate, infrastructure engineer at WSECU. “And our prior solution’s options just weren’t working for us. It didn’t seem to be stable.”

Pate explained that the replication component would break, the servers would die, and the previous solution was unable to fix it. In these situations, WSECU had to tear the solution down and then rebuild it to get things running again. “Because we had to rebuild it multiple times a year,” said Pate, “we were kind of done with it.”

When the search for a new solution began, they did not have to look for long. WSECU briefly considered Rubrik and Carbonite Cohesity, but on paper, Zerto was the only DR solution that met their needs. It was the only solution for which they did a proof of concept, and the decision was a no-brainer.

“When we looked at alternatives, Zerto came out on top,” said Pate. “It kind of looked like one of those too-good-to-be-true options.”

The other factor they tested during the proof of concept was Zerto’s ability to recover large, busy databases with minimal data loss. After working with the Zerto team to calibrate the solution for their infrastructure, they were able to demonstrate failover times for large databases just as low as those they were getting for their smaller applications, with virtually no data loss.

WSECU consulted with the Zerto team to install and configure the solution after purchasing it through SHI, a Zerto value-added reseller. They now protect 41 VMs, with plans to grow to 80 VMs within the next year. Some of these applications include on-premises services for single sign-on on SQL, key banking services, and line of business specific applications that support daily operations.

After implementing Zerto, WSECU quickly saw a massive reduction in their RPOs, confirming Zerto's reputation for industry-leading recovery times. In the past, WSECU had set RPOs between one and eight hours. Now, they set their RPO target between 10 and 20 minutes—and see actual RPOs of seconds with Zerto.

These kinds of results fuel WSECU's digital transformation and ability to continue growing and serving their members with the quality and reliability that earned them the title of Washington's best.

"It's kind of incredible, being able to have an RPO that low," said Pate. "There's very little data loss that we would have to make up for."

Getting Time Back

Reliable, scalable DR and RPOs of seconds are just some of the improvements WSECU realized by switching to Zerto. They have also gained back the time that they used to spend maintaining and upkeeping their previous solution—five or more hours a week. With Zerto orchestration and automation taking care of previously time-consuming manual tasks, WSECU employees have had more time to continue finding innovative solutions for their IT environment and less management to worry about.

"Zerto has been set it and forget it," said Pate. "It gives me more time to make sure that our other systems are better maintained, and we can decrease overall employee cognitive load." Employee ease of mind is important for an organization that encourages its employees to volunteer in the community and provides leave time for them to do so.

WSECU now uses Zerto automation for failover testing too. What was before a taxing process demanding manual, timestamped documentation for every task is now a breeze with scripts. Because scripting automates tasks that were previously manual, WSECU has reduced test time by 20–50% and still receives the same detailed reports when testing is complete.

Speedy, automated testing is a boon to compliance, which requires WSECU to annually test their systems and validate results with significant amounts of documentation. Because "fantastic" documentation is built into the Zerto process, Pate and his team do not need to submit extra work with screenshots and manual timestamps to stay compliant—they simply let Zerto do the heavy lifting.

Serving Washington into the Future

WSECU's goal is to put members first. Their IT modernization—which has seen them transform their online banking with Backbase, upgrade their DR to Zerto, and take the first steps to the cloud—is helping them get there.

With massively reduced RPOs, faster testing, automation that returns time to WSECU employees, and an overall 80% reduction in DR upkeep, WSECU is extremely happy with the results they have seen using Zerto.

For Pate, Zerto has kept its original too-good-to-be true promise. "So far," says Pate, "it's done everything that we were told it could do and more." As a crucial pillar of their modern IT strategy, Zerto is powering WSECU's service to the community, now and into the future.

About Zerto

Zerto, a Hewlett Packard Enterprise company, empowers customers to run an always-on business by simplifying the protection, recovery, and mobility of on-premises and cloud applications. Zerto eliminates the risk and complexity of modernization and cloud adoption across private, public, and hybrid deployments. The simple, software-only solution uses continuous data protection at scale to solve for ransomware resilience, disaster recovery, and multi-cloud mobility. Zerto is trusted by over 9,500 customers globally and is powering offerings for Amazon, Google, IBM, Microsoft, and Oracle and more than 350 managed service providers. www.zerto.com