

CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford Wins Against Ransomware with Datto SIRIS

CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford is a national IT organization that provides entrepreneurs the ability to launch and operate an MSP with vetted technology partners, systems, process within a rich national network that has operated since 1996. We spoke with Linda Koppersmith, the owner of the CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford, Connecticut franchises, about Datto BDCR solutions and how having a well-planned backup strategy helped their luxury hospitality client avert disaster at one of their busiest times of the year.

The hospitality industry works 24 hours a day, seven days a week, catering to its clientele. When you are a high-end resort with multiple services and offerings for guests, your IT services are essential to running every aspect of your business. Critical customer data flows through the networks that is sensitive making it a heavy target for hackers.



For CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford, a Datto customer since 2005, Linda's business works primarily in investment management, insurance, medical, tax prep, and legal industries, with a niche in hospitality. In the spring of this year, Linda got a call from a panicked client whose more than 180 room luxury hotel had been compromised by ransomware on one of the year's busiest days. Linda's organization provides co-managed IT services for this client, handling their data backup, and server disaster & continuity solutions. By the end of the day, her team would discover the value of their Datto SIRUS solution and partnership.

"We got a call from the client at 9 am on a Saturday, letting us know they had been affected by ransomware," Linda said, "we were only responsible for backup and disaster for this particular client, so we did not get any ransomware alert."

By 9:30 am, Linda and the CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford team were on a call with the client, property manager, internal IT, and another outside MSP to assess how many servers were impacted.

"We shortly discovered the backup was infected, that a backup failed at 4:20 am that Saturday," Linda explained, "we further discovered 9/10 servers and 30/100 workstations were hit with ransomware." The whole incident was catastrophic for the client freezing every transaction across the property, from restaurant services to check out. Worse, it happened at one of the busiest times of the year.

After the initial meeting, the CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford team discovered that the incident happened in the early hours of Saturday, and they could trace the original code injection to a known oracle vulnerability for which there is no patch. CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford then called Datto disaster services that morning. "We've got a real disaster," we told them "we had virtualized servers before but never this many at the same time."

By 10 am, the team had identified the date and time to restore the data. They would use the backups taken at 4 am from that Friday, as the infection appeared to have started at midnight Saturday. Next, they had to figure out which servers could be virtualized locally and which ones were in the cloud.



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Linda Koppersmith,
Owner, CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford

The client “was skeptical that recovery could be achieved without paying the considerable ransom, since anything more than 2 days would be catastrophic for the business. We stated we were confident it would take no where near that time to virtualize good snapshots of the effected servers”, said Linda. The main database virtualized at 12:10 pm and finished virtualizing at 11:00 pm for a 1 TB oracle database service.”

We were able to get them virtualized and have the VPN connection from the cloud to the local LAN,” Linda continued, “Their systems were up and mostly operational just 10 hours later, with the resort being fully operational 13 hours after the backup failed.”

The recovery process was challenging for the CMIT Solutions Stamford & Hartford team, working with 13 different Datto techs over the next month, diligently updating hardware, servers, backups, and systems to ensure they “came out of this better than before.”

“We fought hard internally to go with Datto.” Linda stated, “It is because of Datto that we were able to pull a recovery off like this. We take care of a relatively small fleet of clients. So to know that I can sell and position these products with clients knowing that when true disaster strikes, Datto will be there to help and perform, that’s what the partnership is all about.”