

Cole Informatics Saves Time and Money With Datto's Business Continuity Solutions



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Terry Cole, Owner/Founder Cole Informatics, LLC



Back in 2002 Terry Cole saw the need for high-quality IT services for customers that showed little interest or comprehension of business critical technology. Cole understood that in order for these customers to do their jobs properly, they needed strong technology behind them. Since then, **Cole Informatics** has become the go-to provider of IT and business telephone services in West and Middle Tennessee.

Cole has made it a point to educate clients on the benefits of finding the right IT provider. He believes that the existence and livelihood of small and mid-sized businesses (SMBs) depends on highly reliable technology. Strong technology mixed with the right IT service provider creates an easier and more profitable life for SMBs.

In 2007 Cole learned a few things about a relatively new company called Datto.

"My experience with Datto goes back to the early days when there were only four employees! I recently found out that my partner ID is 72. I was literally one of Datto's first customers," explained Cole.

Getting in on the Ground Floor

As it turns out, Cole discovered Datto before it became a channel-only company. He chose to invest in an early edition Datto NAS device to use for network attached storage. When Datto released its very first backup and disaster recovery (BDR) products, they didn't meet Cole's needs and so Cole partnered with another company and began to offer his own business continuity service called PartnerSAFE™ Managed Backup & Disaster Recovery Service. The service was based on ShadowProtect, and Cole owned the hardware. He provided service for the client at a monthly rate. This method, while best for the clients at the time, proved to be cost intensive.

On a quest for the best backup and disaster recovery (BDR) solution for their customers, Cole Informatics partnered with a few different vendor partners over the next few years. They partnered with eFolder next. Still based on ShadowProtect, Cole moved their BDR units to eFolder for the offsite portion.

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The service proved to work well, but image chains on ShadowProtect were difficult to maintain due to the incremental nature of the imaging. Cole's team was often reseeding devices due to longer chains. As customer data grew, the cost to maintain it offsite was increasing. The increasing cost would also force Cole to incrementally bill customers. As Cole wanted to keep the service affordable for clients, and the overall management easier for his team, he decided to explore another BDR option.

He circled back to Datto and another vendor. At the time, Cole perceived Datto to be too expensive and opted for the alternate vendor. While the vendor had similarities to Datto, they lacked incremental chain technology and a single-pane management environment. When Cole ran into issues with the technology provided by the vendor, he then found it difficult to work with their technical support team since they only offered assistance through email. This solution also proved to be more expensive than anticipated to maintain. It became clear that this vendor was not the best fit for Cole Informatics.

"My vision of PartnerSAFE™ hit a wall. It became clear that the only way to scale up PartnerSAFE™ was to redefine it by selling hardware direct to the client, ensure it was completely supported by the manufacturer, and had a non-metered remote data option available to us. We needed to make it available at a variety of cost entry points and to be able to easily and quickly demonstrate the value to a prospect," explained Cole.

To achieve the PartnerSAFE™ vision, Cole retraced their steps back to Datto.

Home Is Where the Datto Is

Cole needed a true partner. He needed a partner that delivered high-quality and scalable business continuity solutions.

"Partner is an over-used term in the Channel. Partner, to me, means 'sharing the liability as well as the assets'. I believe Datto shoulders their part by the commitment to continually refining the solution, the availability of qualified support, the publishing of knowledge bases that we can use to normalize our operations, and the willingness to engage our prospects and clients with us. Additionally, Datto has been 100% focused on this business model since the beginning without trying to venture from that business model in ways that only benefit them. They are partner-focused and committed. This matters," stated Cole.

Upon the first Datto delivery, Cole's staff started smiling again. They began to replace the previous vendor devices with Datto devices. Migrating to new devices isn't always a seamless process, but the technicians were able to work through it with Datto's top-notch support team. No emails were exchanged- it became as simple as a phone call since Datto's tech support is 24x7x365.

About Datto

Datto is an innovative provider of comprehensive backup, recovery, and business continuity solutions used by thousands of managed service providers worldwide. Datto's 190+ PB purpose-built cloud and family of software and hardware devices provide Total Data Protection everywhere business data lives. Whether business data is on-prem in a physical or virtual server, in the cloud, or in SaaS applications, only Datto offers end-to-end recoverability and single-vendor accountability. Learn more at www.datto.com.

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"Datto tech support helps us right away, and they are transparent in their help. My junior tech's can get the same quality responses from Datto that I as an owner and technical lead can. The operational side has also been relaxed for us. We can focus on other aspects of our business knowing that Datto has us covered," explained Cole.

Cole also went on to explain how diverse his clients are. Circumstances are unique, workloads vary, and bandwidths differ. As there is no singular way to service these unique clients, Datto's flexibility matters.

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Additionally, the Cole staff is no longer burdened with manual testing for incremental backups. Datto's [Inverse Chain Technology](#) takes care of incremental backups for them by eliminating common problems in the backup chain. Backups are not dependent on previous snapshots and each backup is a fully bootable virtual machine.

Datto's [Screenshot Backup Verification](#) takes daily, automated 'screenshots' of completed backups and sends them to Cole's team to verify backups are successful. In turn, this technology allows the Cole team to easily demonstrate to clients that they truly are working for them around the clock. Clients can see the value behind business continuity with the Screenshot Backup Verification daily email reminders.

Cole also explained that the customers with file-based agents who were on eFolder can more easily scale at the same monthly fee using a [Datto ALTO](#). They are no longer limited by a lack of data space. With Datto's private 190+ PB cloud, Cole can offer customers as much space as they need to store their data. The ability to leverage Datto's data centers gives both Cole and his customers the room they need to grow their businesses.

"Datto is a company built for and by our partners - partners like Cole Informatics," said Austin McChord, CEO of Datto. "As one of our first partners, Cole Informatics has provided us with important product feedback and it's through this collaboration with the partner community, that we have been able to continuously innovate. While we never want to lose a customer, it speaks volumes when a partner comes full circle and enthusiastically returns to Datto as was the case with Cole Informatics."

At the close of January 2016, Cole Informatics has completely migrated over to Datto and is excited to be back where they originally started. Who says you can't go home again?