CASE STUDY

Protecting thousands of AWS instances with ease (and saving hundreds of hours in the process)

How Cloudar supercharged their managed cloud services with N2WS

Born in The Cloud

Cloudar is a managed service provider and AWS Consultancy Partner dedicated to helping businesses run in the cloud. They manage thousands of AWS instances and hundreds of accounts for their growing customer base, ranging from startups to government and enterprise. Cloudar's customers operate large-scale environments with stringent availability demands (and specific SLA requirements).

A cornerstone of Cloudar's managed service offer is backup & disaster recovery: "Backup is one of the most important services one can offer in a managed services model", said Tom De Blende, Managing Partner at Cloudar. "It can be critical to the survival of a company. As a service provider you cannot be placed in a situation where you are unable to provide a customer with a restore."

Because Cloudar works with a wide range of businesses —all with different requirements— they needed a solution that could automate backup and recovery for AWS workloads, regardless of the environment. This would free up time to focus on helping their customers innovate in the cloud.

The Challenge: too many moving parts

Before they discovered N2WS, Cloudar was using a combination of 3 to 4 different tools to implement backup and recovery for their customers.

"***The biggest challenge we encountered in managing cloud backup and disaster recovery was the 3 or 4 different ways we used to back up systems: using open source software on EC2 instance, using Ansible, or using Lambda.***"

Cobbling together different tools proved to be inefficient. As Cloudar grew they needed a centralized solution that could scale with them, rather than piecing together multiple tools that weren't engineered for large-scale environments (and failed to meet their needs as a business).

"**No AWS environment is the same**. We have customers running hundreds of EC2 instances as well as RDS, serverless and SAP applications so we need to be able to provide the same level of data protection no matter what their set up looks like", said Tom.

"N2WS allows us to protect many different types of environments and services in a unified way, which is key for Cloudar as we grow and add more customers and accounts."

Challenge

An AWS-focused managed service provider needed a centralized backup and recovery solution to manage thousands of instances, complex applications and hundreds of accounts —including SAP systems.

Solution

Cloudar starting using N2WS Backup & Recovery to implement and monitor backup and recovery for their client's AWS workloads, with near-zero RTO, from a single pane of glass.

"Before we implemented N2WS, it would have taken around an hour to recover an instance using Lambda scripts. Now, we can have a client back up and running within a few minutes —without any disruption to their business."

Tom De Blende
Managing Partner at Cloudar

The Solution: unified, streamlined, scalable

Since installing N2WS Backup & Recovery, the Cloudar team has been able to provide a scalable, efficient, and reliable service for their customers. Now Cloudar has both a seamless way to manage backups for hundreds of AWS accounts and the ability to exceed their customer SLAs —providing them with a near-zero RTO for their critical data.

Cloudar's top 4 reasons for choosing N2WS Backup & Recovery:

1. Centralized management, monitoring, and real-time alerting
2. Significantly reduced RTO (and RPO) to meet high availability demands
3. Cross-region and cross-account disaster recovery (DR)
4. Compliance demands met with detailed reports and download backup logs

Cloudar needed to implement a fully robust and flexible backup solution, which would help them reduce costs and save time in the process. Ease-of-management and ease-of-mind were the prime reasons Cloudar chose N2WS over other backup solutions. "It allows the company to focus on its business." De Blende commented.

Protecting large-scale SAP environments

N2WS Backup & Recovery plays an important role in helping Cloudar to manage backups for customers running critical SAP systems on AWS. One of Cloudar's biggest SAP customers is USG People, a leading HR service provider, who run SAP Process Integration (PI). They use SAP as a message bus to connect both internal and customer systems —making their SAP PI a highly critical application.

Even one hour of downtime would cause huge disruption to the business. Cloudar uses N2WS to schedule backups of the SQL database every ten minutes with log backups taking place every hour. "N2WS helped us to guarantee reliable backups and to create a solid disaster recovery plan for USG Belgium."

Application-consistency is critical for databases like SAP as it allows users to create a reliable restore point. N2WS makes this easy —and, as Tom stated, achieving application-consistency using VSS would be "impossible" without N2WS.

"If you are running large transactional databases, crash-consistency is not sufficient. N2WS allows us to perform application-consistent backups which capture all in-memory and pending transactions", Tom concluded.

Results

With N2WS, Cloudar was able to meet stringent recovery time SLAs with cross-account and cross-region disaster recovery. They were able to achieve application-consistent backup for complex SAP applications. And they now manage thousands of EC2 instances and hundreds of AWS account from a single, easy console.

Benefits

- **Protect** production workloads on AWS with backup and one-click restore
- **Manage** data at scale with centralized reporting from a single console
- **Optimize** data life-cycling with cost-saving storage tiering
- **Meet** compliance needs with support for retention periods of 7+ years
- **Capture** all customer data with application-consistent backups

"With N2WS we can provide our customers with the reassurance that their SAP environment is protected from downtime and we can meet important SLAs such as RTO and RPO."

Tom De Blende
Managing Partner at Cloudar

About N2WS

N2WS is dedicated to creating "cloud-native" solutions for protecting workloads and data hosted in AWS. It adopts the AWS paradigm for backup and storage, providing customers with the confidence that their data is regularly backed up and can be recovered in mere seconds in the event of an outage or failure.

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