

A global pharmaceutical company needed to ensure all data could be restored from more than 5,000 tapes with suspected water and corrosion damage.

The company needed to establish whether to restore just the definitely water-damaged tapes or others also as the condition of the tapes was not known. They turned to Kroll Ontrack for advice on how to proceed.

The Situation

A fire at the company's premises activated the sprinkler system, and water fell directly onto data archive storage tapes. Out of a total of 5,128 tapes on the premises 346 were identified to definitely have internal water contamination.

The water-damaged tapes required data recovery techniques to restore the data. Although an initial visual inspection of the remaining tapes indicated no water contamination, the ability to restore data from them was unclear. It was difficult to be sure of the condition of the tapes as high humidity environmental conditions subsequent to the fire may have caused moisture to condense inside the tape casings and the metal oxides on the tape media to corrode. Corrosion would prevent the data restoring correctly.

The Solution

The company contacted Kroll Ontrack for data recovery from the water damaged tapes and asked for a quotation for evaluating the condition of the remaining tapes. Once the company had the evaluation results it conducted a risk analysis to decide how to proceed (i.e. whether to restore, re-key the data or leave the data on the tapes).

The Outcome

The company decided that all of the data on the tapes needed to be restored as the risks of not doing so were too high.

Three hundred of the water damage tapes needed to be cleaned and dried before restoring. Also, a number of these tape needed thawing first as they had been stored in a freezer to help slow down any corrosion on the tape media.

There were several different backup software and tape formats used. There were estimated to be: 1,200 DLT; 400 LTO; 1,000 Exabyte 8mm; 600 DDS and 1,928 tapes of undefined format.

Once restored to a central storage device the data was consolidated onto new LTO 5 tape media, using the company's current backup software - CommVault. This gave the company a single restore infrastructure for all their archives and backups. The project was completed over a 6 month period.



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