

5 Backup Features to Help You Demonstrate Compliance



KEY CHALLENGES

- Eliminate the complexity associated with meeting and proving SOX compliance
- Ensure the accuracy of auditing data despite thousands of backup cycles that need to be tracked and documented
- Streamline auditing process and provide regulators with the information they need
- Include dynamic virtual machines in auditing process

Automatic data collection and data extensibility of APTARE solution ensures accuracy, eliminates complexity and streamlines auditing process

Fed up with numerous accounting scandals that rocked the country in the mid-2000s, the U.S. enacted new laws that enhanced financial disclosure standards for public companies. Named after its co-sponsors in Congress, Sarbanes-Oxley requires that publicly traded companies certify the accuracy of their financial information for the board, stockholders, employees and the public. The law also requires that companies prove compliance to independent auditors who have full access under the hood.

The mandate to prove compliance largely falls on the IT department and backup administrators who have to ensure financial data is reliable, accurate and accessible. The law states that every client needs to be backed up at least every two days and failed backup processes have to be identified and the resolution documented. Failure to meet these guidelines could render financial records incomplete and put the company in non-compliance, triggering penalties that range from documented warnings, sanctions, heavy fines and, in extreme cases, jail time for top executives.

“Regulatory compliance to standards like SOX are a huge deal, in both the actual execution of data protection, as well as assuring one’s compliance,” said Jason Buffington, Senior Data Protection Analyst at the Enterprise Strategy Group (ESG). “Auditors often demand complete transparency into a company’s data and the underlying IT environment to make sure that the data is protected and secured. The problem is that companies might have tens of thousands of end points that don’t have this level of visibility into their networks. It’s just too complex.”

Proving Compliance Can Be Complex and Disruptive

Most companies rely on manual processes to collect backup information and maintain multiple spreadsheets that can grow to tens of thousands of rows each. New virtual infrastructures are dependent on the ability to quickly spin up and spin down virtual machines, creating a dynamic and flexible pool of compute resources that have to be backed up and tracked. Keeping up with the dynamic changes and maintaining an accurate record of backup status can be cost prohibitive if managed manually and takes resources away from the team’s core responsibilities. Even then, administrators can’t be sure that the information is accurate due to network complexity and the potential for human error.

Auditing can be just as time consuming. Regulators often need handholding as they travel to remote data centers to search through the company’s documentation, taking weeks to track down and confirm compliance status. Many organizations conduct regular internal audits to eliminate surprises and ensure they are able to meet the demands of external auditors, but again, these also take time and sap resources away from other projects.

WHY APTARE?

- Automatically collects backup information in real time for easy access and documentation
 - Integrates with ticketing solutions to include remediation information for failed cycles
 - Identifies holes in the backup and data protection strategies for better analysis and long-term health
 - Data extensibility of the APTARE database collects just about any type of information companies would need for any regulation regardless of industry or market
 - Automated data collection mitigates possibility of human error and improves accuracy
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Automated Data Collection Eases Audit Requirements

APTARE® eliminates the complexity and manual labor associated with SOX auditing by automatically collecting backup data in real time and storing it in a central Web-based repository where administrators and auditors can access, analyze and record the information. By making backup data accessible at the touch of a button in easy-to-read reports, APTARE Backup Manager provides complete and real-time visibility into the backup status of every client in the environment on a single dashboard—including virtual machines. Organizations can leverage APTARE's cloud solution today, and take advantage of a planned hybrid cloud solution in the future to meet any storage reporting needs.

In addition to tracking backup status, APTARE integrates seamlessly with ticketing solutions by collecting documentation on failed cycles and how they were remediated. The information is centralized and accessible to administrators, help desk technicians, auditors and other stakeholders. Eliminating manual maintenance and the reliance on bloated spreadsheets, APTARE mitigates the possibility of human error and improves the accuracy of backup data.

Flexibility Allows Companies to Meet Any Compliance Challenge

Visibility into the backup status of systems, failed cycles and their remediation through APTARE makes it easy to meet, and just as important, prove SOX compliance. Instead of spending weeks with auditors holding their hands as they probe the storage environment, administrators can run a report in minutes and provide them with an APTARE login to let them access the data on their own. Not only do the audits go smoother they are much more reliable—painting a more accurate portrait of your SOX efforts and compliance.

Better visibility also makes the storage and backup environments much more effective, helping administrators identify and resolve holes in the data protection and security apparatuses. Cycles that constantly fail or take too long can be analyzed, fixed and documented, strengthening your strategies while relieving pressure from the help desk.

"Regulations come and go and are constantly being updated," said Walt Duflock, vice president of marketing, APTARE. "Having a central reporting tool that is complete, flexible and not complicated makes it easier to amend your policies to meet new regulations without adding complexity. APTARE helps companies meet the requirements of any law regardless of industry, market or country in an efficient and streamlined manner by automatically collecting any data that you could possibly need."