

Constellation Energy Leverages DocAve® to Migrate Business-Critical SharePoint® Data

CASE STUDY

Success Highlights

- Executed seamless migration of more than 1TB data from WSSv2 to WSSv3 with zero metadata loss
- Architected new platform topology to optimize performance and stability
- Deployed new environment incrementally - by business unit – to maximize end-user productivity and ensure zero platform downtime throughout process

Customer Profile

Constellation Energy is the largest wholesale power seller in the United States. With headquarters in Baltimore, MD, and a diversified fleet of power plants strategically placed throughout the United States, Constellation Energy is the largest supplier of competitive electricity to commercial and industrial customers throughout North America. As a Fortune 500 company with over 10,000 employees, Constellation Energy has delivered energy products and services to customers for more than 100 years.

The Challenge

In 2004, Constellation Energy deployed WSSv2 to enable better collaboration and digital asset management among its employees. The platform proved immensely popular, and soon business units throughout the enterprise were using the environment to facilitate team projects, manage workflows, share calendars, and store mission-critical business data. Within three years the platform maintained 1.2TB of data spread over 5,000 sites, utilized by more than 10,000 users, and supported by an architecture that included five WFE's, two backend clusters, and two Index Servers. Due to heavy adoption at an exponential rate, all data was maintained within one Content DB, and the management of site topology was not optimized.

Constellation Energy administrators determined that a migration to WSSv3 was necessary. They also identified the need for a comprehensive re-architecture of the environment, to prepare the environment for continued growth while improving stability.

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John Deermer – Senior SharePoint Engineer, Constellation Energy



Customer Location

Baltimore, MD

Industry

Energy, Utilities

Platform

- WSSv2; WSSv3
- 5 front end Web Servers; 2 SQL Clusters; 2 Index Servers
- 10,000+ End-Users; 1.2 TB Data

Critical Needs

- Granular, full fidelity data migration from WSSv2 to WSSv3
- Dual platform co-existence during staged, 10-month migration execution
- Ability to map content with precision, according to new platform topology

AvePoint Solution

DocAve SharePoint Migrator

Results

- Flawless migration, executed with zero platform downtime
- Improved platform stability and performance
- Re-architected topology providing both scalability and improved management efficiency

“SharePoint proved a vital platform for us, so we needed to commit significantly more resources to it”, said John Deermer, Senior SharePoint Engineer at Constellation Energy. “Because management embraced it as one of our primary business tools, we needed to deliver a platform that performed reliably and securely. So we began planning our move to WSSv3, a process that involved detailed projections about our anticipated growth and use of the platform.”

There were three vital components identified during Constellation Energy’s migration planning. Any migration strategy would have to allow for:

- ▲ Zero loss of production capacity throughout. Constellation Energy’s end-users needed to maintain platform access 24 hours a day, seven days a week, without exception.
- ▲ Granular, schedulable migration, so administrators could perform the platform upgrade in stages – by business unit and according to the training schedules developed for the company’s end-users.
- ▲ A complete restructuring of the platform’s site topology, to eliminate redundant SharePoint artifacts, streamline platform management, and accelerate end-user productivity.

To ensure these goals were met and the migration was successful, Constellation Energy needed a flexible and reliable solution. SharePoint’s native migration/upgrade capabilities proved insufficient, so a more powerful solution was sought.

The AvePoint[®] Solution

Constellation Energy had for several years relied upon AvePoint’s DocAve *Backup and Recovery* module to deliver item-level, full fidelity data protection. Because the solution proved such a reliable backup and recovery tool, administrators looked to AvePoint first for a migration solution. Deermer downloaded a trial version of DocAve *SharePoint Migrator* and ran several test migrations.

“It worked perfectly,” said Deermer. “We could granularly target the data we wanted to migrate, map discrete data to appropriate target destinations, schedule the migration for off-peak hours, and receive e-mail notification of migration status throughout the process. It was perfect. Every group, every customization we had, it all migrated perfectly.”

DocAve’s fully-integrated, browser-based interface proved a key selling point for Constellation Energy’s administrators.

“DocAve is so intuitive,” said Deermer. “Not only does it provide all the functionality you need to perform the task at hand, but it’s easy to configure and schedule every task. It is really a pleasure to work with it.”

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Following the successful test migrations, Constellation Energy purchased DocAve *SharePoint Migrator* and began the production migration process. Administrators segmented the migration by business unit, and mapped all content in accordance with their new deployment architecture – which now included 10 Content Databases. Using DocAve’s browser-based interface, administrators easily selected the precise data they wished to migrate, identified the data’s target location on the new platform, and scheduled the migration for a time when the data’s owners were not working. By the time these users returned to work, their accounts and content awaited them in the new deployment.

The entire migration was executed over ten months, with no migration failures. All 1.2TB of content, configurations, customizations, and groups transferred flawlessly. Presently, all of Constellation Energy's 10,000 end-users access an optimally architected and far more stable WSSv3 environment.

Throughout the process, Constellation Energy's interactions with the AvePoint team proved highly satisfying. "We deal with many software and hardware vendors here," said Deermer. "AvePoint's sales team is extremely professional, and their support team is simply amazing. They provide a level of proactive, personal assistance that reveals just how proud they are of their product. Throughout the process, whenever we had a question – they walked us through it and made sure the initiative was successful."

The Bottom Line

Using DocAve, Constellation Energy was able to perform a seamless, cost-effective platform upgrade according to their business needs and schedules. As a result of the migration, Constellation Energy's SharePoint deployment is more stable, its end-users are more productive, and its system and storage resources are better utilized.

With the migration successfully behind them, Constellation is now looking to further optimize management and governance of the platform. To support this effort, the company has already tested and procured DocAve's Administration Suite, which includes DocAve's *SharePoint Administrator*, *Replicator*, *Extension Archiver*, *Deployment Manager*, and *Content Manager* modules. With this powerful array of solutions, Constellation Energy will have the tools required to ensure their platform continues to be managed efficiently and effectively.

- A DocAve *SharePoint Administrator*** will provide Constellation Energy administrators with additional control over their enterprise-wide SharePoint deployment, all from a single pane-of-glass. Administrators will be able to easily view, search, manage, report, and replicate settings, configurations, and securities of SharePoint objects – individually or in bulk – with drag and drop ease. As the company's deployment continues to grow, they will be better prepared to perform top-down, centralized management and governance, and equipped to deliver sophisticated reports upon all SharePoint activities.
- A DocAve *Extension Archiver*** will help Constellation Energy optimize its SQL Database resources and ensure that SharePoint continues to run with appropriate speed, efficiency, and stability – all without interruption to the end-user. With enterprise-strength compression and full BLOB API support, *Extension Archiver* will unburden the company's SQL Databases of inactive data, while still allowing unfettered end-user access to archived material through SharePoint via an object-stub viewable within the interface.
- A DocAve *Replicator*** will empower Constellation Energy to perform live, event-driven, scheduled, and offline replication of all SharePoint content, configurations and securities. As the company's deployment grows into a multi-farm environment, administrators will ensure all end-users are accessing the same content, regardless of location or network latency.
- A DocAve *Deployment Manager*** will let Constellation Energy deliver consistency across all pre-production environments and production systems, with each distributed SharePoint environment within the staging process cloned appropriately. *Deployment Manager* will empower administrators to ensure that complex system changes will be systematically and accurately propagated throughout their staging environments, resulting in a consistent and dependable production system.

- ▲ **DocAve Content Manager** will give Constellation Energy the ability to perform seamless, live migration of SharePoint content from one location to another, within or across any of their farms. With this real-time replication tool, the company will be able to deftly move content with the agility and speed their business operations demand.

“DocAve SharePoint Migrator was precisely the tool we needed to transfer our SharePoint data”, said Deermer. “Now, our goal is optimize administration and management of the platform, and DocAve continues to be the tool for us. When it comes to SharePoint infrastructure management tools, DocAve provides enhanced functionality, as well as ease of use, reliability, and customer service. We are very happy we found AvePoint.”

About AvePoint

Since 2001, AvePoint has been a global leader in enterprise-strength infrastructure management solutions for all Microsoft SharePoint Products and Technologies. Propelled by one of the world’s largest SharePoint-exclusive development teams outside of Microsoft, AvePoint’s award-winning DocAve Software Platform delivers comprehensive and flexible infrastructure support for backup and recovery, geo-replication, migration, administration, deployment management, archiving and compliance solutions for Microsoft SharePoint.

AvePoint’s globally recognized pioneering technology pilots the products of OEM partners such as NetApp and IBM. Headquartered in Jersey City, NJ, AvePoint serves over 3000 enterprise customers, including many Fortune-500 companies, across 6 continents, via offices in Jersey City, San Jose, Los Angeles, Chicago, Washington D.C., Atlanta, and Dallas, USA; London, UK; Melbourne, Australia; Singapore; Tokyo, Japan; and Changchun, Dalian, China. Winner of the *Best of Tech Ed It Pros* award for “Best SharePoint Product” in 2008, AvePoint is a Managed Gold Certified Microsoft Partner and GSA Certified Provider.

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