

Drake University

Drake University is a higher education institution located in Des Moines, Iowa, serving approximately 3,500 students across diverse schools including law, business, pharmacy, arts and sciences, and education. As a digitally driven university, IT plays a central role in delivering academic excellence and a seamless student experience.

To ensure uninterrupted access to critical systems - from learning platforms to ERP and CRM tools - Drake University needed a modern, secure, and cost-effective data protection strategy. With a lean infrastructure team managing core services, the university partnered with Choice Solutions, powered by Assured Data Protection (Assured), to streamline its backup and disaster recovery through a fully managed solution powered by Rubrik.

The Challenge

Prior to choosing Choice Solutions and Assured's backup and disaster recovery solutions, Drake University maintained two data centers and relied on a now-discontinued storage and backup platform (Datrium, later acquired and sunsetted by VMware). This model required extensive management, incurred high operational costs, and made disaster recovery planning difficult.

Datrium also served as both the university's primary storage and snapshot-based backup solution. This integration raised security concerns for Drake University, prompting an exploration of alternative solutions that would provide a clear separation of the two functions to enhance data security and protection.

With increasing cybersecurity risks, Drake University sought a simpler, more secure solution that eliminated the need for a secondary data center and enhanced recovery reliability. Additionally, compliance with the US Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA) added further pressure to implement disciplined, tested, and auditable backup procedures.



The Challenge

- Relied on a discontinued storage and backup platform.
- Maintained two data centers, increasing complexity and operational expenses.
- Faced rising cybersecurity threats and regulatory requirements.

The Solution

- Implemented Choice Solutions and Assured's fully managed BaaS and DRaaS solutions.
- Retired the secondary data center, avoiding hardware refresh costs and simplifying infrastructure.
- Conducted structured and regular DR testing to meet compliance requirements and ensure rapid recovery.

The Result

- Cut DR testing time in half (from 4 hours to 2 hours) with full system validation.
- Improved cyber resilience through immutable backups, proactive monitoring, and ransomware-specific defenses.
- Reduced TCO by eliminating legacy infrastructure and lowering internal IT workload.

The Solution

Drake University selected Choice Solutions and Assured to manage its backup and disaster recovery using the Rubrik platform. The standout features of the solution included its simplicity, cloud-based management, and ransomware protection. Additionally, the managed service provided added assurance with technical expertise on hand.

By choosing Choice Solutions and Assured, Drake University was able to:

- Retire its secondary data center and avoid hardware refresh costs.
- Deploy both Backup as a Service (BaaS) and Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS).
- Meet GLBA regulatory requirements through structured, auditable DR testing.
- Rapidly recover critical systems using Rubrik's Live Mount functionality.

The onboarding process was smooth, with responsive support and expert guidance ensuring a successful and efficient deployment from day one.

The Result

Drake University has seen measurable benefits since partnering with Choice Solutions and Assured:

- **Operational Simplicity:** A single, managed platform reduced internal workload and improved efficiency.
- **Reduced DR Time:** DR testing time dropped from 4 hours to just 2, with full systems now tested rather than partial restores.
- **Enhanced Cyber Resilience:** Immutable backups, proactive monitoring, and ransomware-focused features safeguard sensitive academic and student data.
- **Compliance Support:** Regular testing and reporting provided by Assured helped meet GLBA backup and recovery requirements.

Looking Ahead

As Drake University explores future opportunities to migrate more services to the cloud, Choice Solutions and Assured remain trusted partners, with Rubrik's scalable, flexible platform well-positioned to support the university's evolving IT strategy. With ongoing DR testing, responsive support, and cloud-ready architecture, Drake University is confident in its ability to adapt, recover, and thrive in today's threat landscape.

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Choice Solutions and Assured have simplified our lives. With their managed service, we sleep better at night knowing our backups and DR plan are tested and ready.

Ransomware is a real threat in higher education. Rubrik's security-first approach gave us the confidence that our data is safe.

We've cut our DR testing time in half. The Rubrik platform gives us near-instant recovery when we need it.

Chris Mielke

Director of Infrastructure,
Drake University

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A Partnership with Choice Solutions

Choice Solutions connects businesses with the technology solutions they need to succeed today and be prepared for tomorrow. The company is recognized for bridging the gap between digitally transformative technologies and workplace experiences, ultimately driving customers' productivity and profitability.

Choice Solutions works with over 750 companies across 45 states in a wide range of industries. It provides the expertise, services, and solutions to help business and IT leaders adopt simpler, more secure IT environments tailored to the unique needs of their growing organizations. Choice Solutions specializes in End-User Computing, Modernized Infrastructures, Managed IT Services, and Advisory & Professional Services.

Visit the [Choice Solutions website](#) for more information.



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Choice Solutions has been a trusted IT partner to Drake University since 2013. Through conversations with Drake University IT, exploring cloud security services, we learned of the university's desire to transition to a future state single data center approach and leverage a capable DRaaS service offering, instead of the cost in infrastructure and complexity in operations to continue to self-maintain a second data center for disaster recovery.

We shared our recommendation to look at our DRaaS services through our partnership with Assured Data Protection. Assured's services have become a standard offering as part of Choice Solutions' Managed IT Services, providing peace of mind, security, reliability, and recoverability for our clients.

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