

# Total Communications Goes Beyond BCDR with Datto SIRIS



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CEO, Total Communications

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When an MSP's customer fully grasps the importance of business continuity and disaster recovery (BCDR), that can be a major revelation. It's an IT a-ha moment the Connecticut-based MSP Total Communications has sparked many times.

"When you start talking about backups, and then expand that into business continuity, they often say, 'Wow! We haven't really thought about this - how will we outfit our people when disaster strikes?'" says Scott Lennon, CEO of Total Communications. "Helping customers prepare is a major part of our offering."

When Total Communications was founded in 1980, selling Executone phone systems was its sole business for a decade. Fast forward to today and they've evolved into a full service MSP with deep expertise in data centers, network, security, continuity, and more. Its client base is focused on the SLED (state, local and education) market, including almost 60% of the Boards of Education in Connecticut municipalities. Commercial clients are also a growing sector, including regional finance and banking.

## Datto SIRIS



This MSP's consistent growth comes from listening carefully to its customers. "Our goal is to be the right-fit technology partner by working with each client's needs," says Shawn Silver, COO of Total Communications. "We work to understand what they currently have for infrastructure and business continuity, then develop a plan that works within their budget. The goal is to be a whole-service client consultant."

When it comes to BCDR, the answer is Datto SIRIS, an all-in-one solution for backup, recovery and business continuity.

"We have a big footprint with Datto appliances - we're currently overseeing more than 100 devices," says Andrew Shmer, Computer Services Engineer for Total Communications. "SIRIS provides multiple recovery options in physical and virtual environments, for small and medium-sized businesses. Using SIRIS we can bring an organization back up and running within minutes when there's an outage. Our customers are truly amazed by what SIRIS can do in those situations."

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SIRIS is central to Total Communications’ comprehensive business continuity package, Total360, which includes unlimited support, restoration assistance, DR testing, training, updates and monitoring. “That offering wraps our services around Datto SIRIS,” Lennon says. “The customer doesn’t have to do anything but call us.”

**Datto BCDR: Support and simplicity**

With its growing client base, Total Communications depends on SIRIS to help them scale. That starts with Datto’s renowned 24x7 support, which is on call to immediately assist the MSP.

“We’ve been a Datto partner for 10 years – there is no other organization that offers Datto’s level of support,” states Lennon. “When we call there’s no contact center and no queuing, an engineer answers the phone. If we can’t resolve an issue ourselves, I have the confidence I can pick up the phone and get somebody at Datto who can help me very quickly.”

The simplicity of SIRIS has also been a major factor in helping Total Communications sell Total360 to its clients with relative ease. SIRIS’ cloud-first architecture is a complete solution that spans backup to disaster recovery as a service (DRaaS), all administered from a secure, multi-tenant cloud portal. Immutable backups and the secure Datto Cloud make SIRIS the best protection against ransomware and other threats to business-critical data.

“SIRIS is an appliance that does everything,” Lennon says. “The holistic approach that Datto took by having its own integrated secure cloud is beautiful – there’s nothing else like that. It’s an all-in-one solution, which means we didn’t have to buy a server from one value-added reseller (VAR), software from another VAR, operating systems from another VAR, another cloud solution, and try to piece it all together.”

According to Steve Carman, Computer Services Engineer for Total Communications, the efficiency of SIRIS makes it like “a home theater in a box.” He explains, “It’s perfect: You’ve got your speakers, your receiver, your DVD player – it’s got everything you need right there. A lot of companies are looking for that cloud virtualization component. Once they realize everything they have to do to assemble it themselves, however, they see that number start adding up and it doesn’t make sense. The way that Datto has bundled everything together as an all-encompassing solution is great.”

**“A Magical IT Box”**

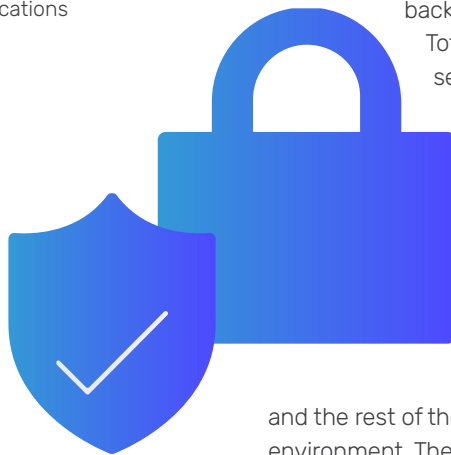
Designed from the ground up for the MSP, SIRIS empowers Total Communications with powerful features that make a difference every day. “SIRIS is a magical IT box,” Scott Lennon states. “It has terrific flexibility in its local virtualization and cloud virtualization capabilities.”





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The Total Communications team emphasizes the importance of SIRIS' Screenshot Verification, which allows MSPs to not only see if the backed up system is bootable, but provides the ability to verify that applications are accessible. "The fact that it spins up your virtual machine (VM) in the backup every day, just to prove that your backups are working, is invaluable," says Steve Carman. "We can generate a report for our clients that proves it's working, by showing them an actual screenshot that their PC is up and running."

SIRIS' malware defense capabilities adds even more value to MSPs, with multiple levels of backup verification that include ransomware scanning. Additional security features include mandatory 2FA access to the cloud-based administration portal, the immutable Datto Cloud with exclusive Cloud Deletion Defense, and backup snapshots that can't be corrupted by ransomware. When a Total Communications client providing critical state government services was attacked by ransomware, 90% of their systems became instantly encrypted. "We initiated the emergency protocol and got their business environment quickly up and running by virtualizing it with SIRIS," Carman says. "SIRIS did exactly what it was supposed to do: It brought their environment back to what it was prior to the ransomware attack. They were able to work off of their critical infrastructure in the cloud while we recovered their physical servers.

"There were only two hours where they were actually down, and the rest of the time they were either running a hybrid solution or a modified environment. They didn't miss any deadlines."

Afterwards, the company called on Total Communications to do a complete overhaul of their dated infrastructure. When Carman arrived onsite for an install, he received a hero's welcome. "I was introduced to everyone as 'the guy that saved the company!'" he recalls. "If it weren't for SIRIS, they would have been out of business."

### Building confidence and business for MSPs

Being a Datto partner is valuable to MSPs. By combining their own expertise with Datto technology and support, Total Communications can continuously grow their business and add new revenue streams.

"SIRIS is beyond backup: It's a foot in the door to all of the client's IT," says Lennon. "Before we know it they've got confidence in us. They're calling us for what SIRIS can do, and next we're selling them data center systems, server products and more infrastructure. Because you've got an eye on everything, you become their trusted advisor."