

Case Study: Cassling

Double-Take® Software Customer Profile

Company: Cassling
Business: Full line sales and service dealer for Siemens Healthcare
Problem: Required an updated and refined disaster recovery solution
Solution: Double-Take availability and Double-Take backup

About Cassling

Cassling is a full line sales and service dealer for Siemens Healthcare. Founded in 1984 and headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, Cassling has continued its service tradition for 25 years. The company provides their customers with imaging equipment and IT solutions to help increase efficiency and decrease costs. Cassling serves health-care organizations throughout the Midwest including Nebraska, Iowa, South Dakota, Kansas and select counties in Missouri and Illinois. Their customized, integrated health-care solutions ensure patients get the care they deserve. With a business built on the latest technology solutions to help improve workflow and increase efficiency, it's no wonder their IT team appreciated that it was time to update and refine their own disaster recovery (DR) plan.

The Business Problem

The loss of network services, data, their facility, or any downtime, is "not an option" for Cassling. Lack of readiness in the face of a disaster, can cause lost revenue, lower productivity, and damage to brand reputation, all things the company wants to avoid. Given advances in technology, the IT team at Cassling was aware that their previous DR solution was somewhat outdated and provided risk for data loss or downtime. In fact, keeping pace with changing data is one of the most important challenges before all disaster recovery officials, not just Cassling. The fact that data is constantly changing means that there is the possibility of backups becoming obsolete unless extreme care is taken. Fortunately, Cassling understands that having a solid and effective DR plan can make or break a company. The problem of obsolete backup marring the prospects of successful disaster recovery can be avoided only if there is a real time backup.

"We needed a current, more effective DR solution with real-time replication for the day-to-day backup and recovery operations of our MS Exchange 2007, SQL Server 2005, Blackberry for Exchange, and our web servers," said Roger Hill, Director of IT, Cassling. "It was time to update and refine our DR solution for these business critical applications, which called for the right installation of the right infrastructure at the right price."

The Solution

Cassling was introduced to Double-Take® Software at a local seminar, and after careful research, Cassling believed that Double-Take Software had the best solutions to meet their needs.

"The Double-Take Software products proved to be simple to use and would enable us to protect and recover critical IT workloads on any combination of physical servers and within any combination virtualized environments," said Mr. Hill. "Also, the Double-Take for Virtual Systems product provided an excellent solution to handle the multiple virtual machines (VM's) required in our production environment."

Today, Cassling has updated and refined their existing DR solution with the Double-Take availability and Double-Take backup solutions from Double-Take Software. These solutions include the following products: Double-Take, Double-Take for Virtual Systems, Livewire and TimeData.

The Double-Take availability solution provides continuous data replication so Cassling always has access to a current copy of their data, applications and OS. Double-Take monitors every instance of changed data and replicates only the bytes that change. What's more, in the event of an outage or disaster, Double-Take can replicate virtual machines from one virtualization host to another in real time and automatically fail over those VMs to the host. At Cassling, Double-Take is being used specifically to replace an outdated email solution to replicate their production databases and MS Exchange to their DR site in a virtual environment.

Livewire, which is part of the Double-Take backup solution, is an affordable disaster recovery solution that combines full-server data protection and on-demand recovery (without the need for failover). Cassling is far too familiar with the fact that recovering an entire production server from tape can be a cumbersome and stressful process. Fortunately, Livewire provides a better alternative – real-time data protection with a streamlined recovery process that reduces the time and effort involved with server recovery. Livewire or Livewire Option in conjunction with Double-Take protects the entire production server, including system state data, so there's no need to provision a new server or reinstall applications.

"Tape backups were taking too many hours to complete and worse, some jobs were not completing successfully for us," said Mr. Hill. "When we needed to restore, it was convoluted and then failing. Livewire provided an easy, reliable and faster backup and restore solution to replace our tape-only approach."

The other product from Double-Take Software being leveraged to remove a dependency on tape for Cassling is TimeData. TimeData is a continuous data protection (CDP) software that is a simple and cost-effective way to recover data to any point in time and resume workflow without the pain of recovering from tape.

"We chose TimeData because it gives us the ability to schedule snapshots, replace corrupted data and use real-time data in a test environment. It also leverages standard infrastructure and skills, making it the ideal choice for companies like us that want to increase data protection effectiveness, not cost and complexity," said Mr. Hill.

Dashboard Management Made Easy

A very important feature of the Double-Take Software suite of products, yet often overlooked, is the Double-Take Dashboard Management Console.

"The Double-Take Dashboard is important to mention in this story," said Mr. Hill. "The fact that we could take our business critical applications alongside Double-Take, Livewire, and TimeData and manage them all under the Double-Take Dashboard Management Console makes this a very easy process to view and monitor how our systems are working."

The Double-Take Dashboard feature provides the ability to monitor the health of Double-Take source servers on one screen. The screen displays red, yellow or green visual indicators of status. The indicators are updated continually based on the monitoring interval selected by the user. Double-Take servers already present in the Management Console are imported into the Dashboard to allow the company to quickly and easily begin monitoring their protected servers. The Dashboard also provides one-click sort and filter for monitored source servers. Cassling can sort and filter by server name, repset name, mirror status, repset status, disk queue and many other key variables. All they need to do is simply select a monitored server and open other Double-Take features, such as the Management Console or Application Manager with one click. Additionally, the Dashboard provides the ability to view event log information and mirror status.

Future

It is clear that every DR plan needs to be constantly updated and tested to be effective. More often than not, what happens is that once a bare bones disaster recovery plan is in place, those concerned with it tend to push it to the bottom of the list and get on with things of "greater importance". Fortunately, Cassling believes in providing an updated, refined and comprehensive DR plan not only for their company, but also their customers.

Mr. Hill said, "First and foremost, the Double-Take availability and Double-Take backup solutions provide us with the ability to bring more of our day-to-day operations to our DR site. Second, it provides us with a current and more effective data solution for day to day backup and recovery operations. Last but not least, replacing the annual cost of our previous DR email solution alone offset the cost of purchase and implementation."

Ironically (or not), taking the time to update and refine their DR plan with Double-Take Software is saving Cassling money *and* providing better business protection. It's no wonder the Omaha 25 Excellence in Business Awards recognized Cassling in 2008 for its contribution to the positive growth of the Omaha business community. They are a very smart company.

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About Double-Take® Software

Headquartered in Southborough, Massachusetts, Double-Take® Software (Nasdaq: DBTK) is a leading provider of affordable workload optimization products that are simple to use and enable IT managers to easily move, protect, recover and more flexibly run critical IT workloads in physical and virtual environments, regardless of platform or location. With its unparalleled partner programs, technical support, and professional services, Double-Take Software is the solution of choice for more than 19,000 customers worldwide, from SMEs to the Fortune 500. Information about Double-Take Software's products and services can be found at www.doubletake.com.

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