

# MIMIX® Availability™ Case Study

## Gränges Sweden AB



### Testimonial

*“The first time we switched from production to backup with MIMIX the switch time was seven minutes. It’s gone down since then. Now, a switch takes us about two minutes.”*

- Tim Granroth, IT System Developer



### Critical Issue

With production facilities in Sweden, along with sales offices around the world, Gränges strives to operate 24x7. Yet, because the company eliminated paper-based work orders, if its systems are down, its operations will quickly come to a standstill. As a result, Gränges needs to be confident that its systems and data will always be available, without exception.



### Business Challenge

Gränges produces highly advanced rolled aluminum products at facilities in Finspång, Sweden. It sells those products from sales offices on four continents: Europe, Asia, North America and South America. Its business never stops. Consequently, Gränges has no time for downtime on the IBM i-based systems that run its operations.

Nevertheless, no matter how reliable a system might be—and the combination of IBM Power Systems and IBM i-based systems provide one of the most reliable platforms on the market—lack of system availability is always an issue. Even if a system almost never fails, regular maintenance, such as hardware and software upgrades and data backups, is unavoidable. In addition, there is always the possibility of a natural disaster and the occasional system failure to consider, rare though they may be.

Traditional tape-based backups don’t provide the level of system availability and data protection that Gränges needs. For one thing, restoring operations from a tape-based backup could result in several hours of downtime—which would place an unacceptable burden on the company. What’s more, backups are typically created only once a day, usually at night. Consequently, they leave as much as 24-hours’ worth of data at risk, and maybe more if the most recent backup tape is unavailable or unreadable for any reason.

Gränges needs a more comprehensive high availability and disaster recovery solution that fully protects its ability to keep operations going, no matter what.

#### Company Name:

Gränges Sweden AB

#### Headquarters:

Stockholm, Sweden

#### Industry:

Aluminum Manufacturer

#### Business Environment:

- Founded: 1898
- Employees: 380 (2014)
- Production facilities in Sweden
- Sales offices in Europe and the Americas



## Solution

Up until 2001, Gränges shut down its systems nightly to take backups. This was unacceptable for a company that aspired to 24x7 operations. To solve this problem, Gränges installed OMS/ODS from Vision Solutions to replicate data to a backup system in real time. This allowed Gränges to perform backups on the secondary system, without affecting operations on the production machine. In 2011, Gränges moved to MIMIX Availability, also from Vision Solutions, to take advantage of its more advanced ease-of-use features.

At one point, Gränges evaluated hardware mirroring as a possible alternative solution, but the company found that production-to-backup switch times would be too long and backup scenarios would be inadequate. In short, hardware mirroring couldn't compete with MIMIX Availability.

MIMIX Availability replicates data, applications and system values from Gränges' production IBM i-based Power Systems server to a second IBM i-based server in another building in real time. If the primary system is unavailable or needs to be taken offline for maintenance, Gränges can quickly switch operations to the backup server, virtually eliminating business interruptions.

How quickly? When Gränges adopted MIMIX Availability the company was able to switch in seven minutes. Switch times have decreased since then. Now, switchovers typically take about two minutes and, at time of writing, the most recent switchover took only one minute and 36 seconds.

The primary benefit of this increased availability is obvious. No matter what may happen—a disaster or simply the need for regular maintenance—the business can keep running with almost no downtime.

Some benefits are less obvious. For example, because users can continue working on the backup system after a switch, maintenance can now be performed on the production server during normal business hours. This reduces the need for overtime and eases the stress on the IT department.

In addition, because the backup system contains data that is always current, Gränges can create backup tapes on that system, eliminating any impact on production operations.

Gränges achieves these benefits with almost no need for day-to-day management and administration. Furthermore, switches, when necessary, are performed with the press of a button. That's the advantage of MIMIX Availability: It allows Gränges to fully protect all of its data, and virtually eliminate downtime, simply.



## Results

- Ensured all data is protected in real time
- Reduced switchover times to about two minutes or less
- Eliminated the need to perform maintenance on weekends and evenings
- Simplified high availability and disaster recovery management and administration



## Technologies

### Software:

- MIMIX Availability
- IBM i

### Hardware:

- 2 x IBM Power 720 (1 E4B & 1 E4C)



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