"We feel the product is a proven solution providing significant benefits to our organization," said Pope. "We would recommend it as a viable solution to organizations that are looking for a solid, easily maintained, and fully functional replication technology."

John Pope, Project Lead, Newfoundland Power

Business Profile

Company Name:
Newfoundland Power, Incorporated

Headquarters:
St. Johns, Newfoundland, Canada

Industry:
Public Utility

Founded:
1924

Business Environment:
• Operates as an investor owned utility that generates and distributes electricity.
• Serves more than 225,000 business and residential customers.
• Customers rely on the company for uninterrupted access to electrical power.
• Currently operates 23 hydro generating plants, three diesel plants and three gas turbine facilities.

Vision Solutions Product:
Double-Take® Availability™

Implementation Partner:
Vision Solutions

Critical issue

An existing Disaster Recovery strategy that was based on tape left business critical file and print servers, among others, offline for 24 hours or more. Apart from server inaccessibility, the financial looses associated with lost data were deemed unacceptable.

Results

• Met their RTO of 30 minutes and their RPO of 1 minute.
• Eliminated the likelihood of data loss in all but extremely dire circumstances.
• Dramatically reduced the effort involved in recovering from a system failure.
• Integrates seamlessly with their physical and virtualized computing environments.

Technologies

• Double-Take Availability
• Microsoft Windows
• Microsoft Exchange Server
• Microsoft SharePoint Server
• MS SQL Server

Business Challenge

With more than 225,000 customers in over 600 communities relying on Newfoundland Power for electricity, the need for application availability is incredibly important. Vital to the success of their business, Newfoundland Power relies on file and print services, Exchange Server, their corporate website, Microsoft SharePoint and a host of other Oracle and SQL Server based applications. As such, sound business continuity and disaster recovery plans are an integral part of their overall data protection strategy. That said, their existing disaster recovery procedures for these systems were tedious and based on tape-based backup solutions. Newfoundland Power risked being down for up to 24 hours or, worse, losing 24 hours worth of data.

With the continued focus on providing superior customer service the requirement to provide high availability for supporting applications and infrastructure has increased, Newfoundland Power recognized the need to match their infrastructure with their overall business requirements. They required a solution that not only enhanced their business continuity plan, but improved application availability and streamlined data recovery. In addition to performance and reliability, ease-of-use was a major evaluation criterion for them while searching for a solution.

Newfoundland Power required a solution that:
• Provided 24x7 application availability
• Enhanced their existing data protection strategies
• Streamlined the data recovery process
• Worked within a virtualized environments
• Leveraged their existing hardware and software investments

Solution

Newfoundland Power went into the research phase of their project with an open mind. However, they very quickly ruled out hardware-based replication solutions. After learning more about the features and functionality of Double-Take Availability and researching other products, Newfoundland Power chose Double-Take Availability to meet their business needs.

Double-Take Availability is a real-time data replication and failover solution that continuously captures byte-level changes as they happen and replicates those changes to one or more target servers at any location either locally or at a recovery site far away. In the event of a disaster, Double-Take Availability allows Newfoundland Power to recover their data and applications within minutes, if not seconds.

"We looked at a couple of other products," said John Pope, Project Lead at Newfoundland Power. "Based on price, feature set and alignment with our own roadmap, our support team felt that Vision Solutions provided the best solution to meet our business needs."

Implementing Double-Take Availability has allowed Newfoundland Power to streamline their disaster recovery and business continuity exercises. It has dramatically reduced the effort involved in recovering from an outage during their tests and has given the team confidence that they will be able to minimize downtime and application interruption if something should happen.

Newfoundland Power first implemented Double-Take Availability on their file and print servers. Their first drill with Double-Take Availability met their Recovery Time Objective (RTO) of 30 minutes and their Recovery Point Objective (RPO) of 1 minute. Given this dramatic reduction in data loss and recovery time, Newfoundland Power will be better prepared for a real disaster and has even seen major cost savings in the setup and execution of regular disaster recovery testing.

"Utilizing a product such as Double-Take Availability along with virtualization technologies allowed us to remove much of the complexity and shortened our recovery time to minutes," said Pope. "What's more, our recovery point now is to the minute before the issue occurred."

To date, Newfoundland Power has now implemented Double-Take Availability on their corporate web server, Exchange server and IVR application server in addition to the file and print servers with which they started. They are now working on implementing Double-Take Availability to protect their SharePoint servers, Microsoft Great Plains Dynamics environment and their main operations and engineering applications such as Outage Management.

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