TMC Marine

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S O L U T I O N S

"Vision's support is great. They're always a phone call away to make sure everything is working properly."

- Dhiresh Raghwani, IT Manager

Project Background

TMC Marine's consulting business depends on pictures, videos, documents and other online data that, in total, consume about five terabytes of storage—and growing constantly. Irrecoverably losing files would, to put it mildly, be a serious blow to the company. Thus, TMC needed a way to protect its online information, not just from minor local issues, but also from disasters that might strike its primary data centre.

Business Challenges

Losing important information is unacceptable. A variety of online files are vital to TMC's business, including Microsoft Office documents, PDFs, images and videos, some of which are very large.

TMC had software which did a good job of backing up data locally, but local backups would not protect essential files if a disaster destroyed the primary data centre. Physically transporting backups to a remote location was an option, but because this typically happens only once a day, it would leave a whole day's worth of data vulnerable to destruction. In addition, creating and shipping those backups would put an increased burden on TMC's small IT department. The company uses a VPN with limited bandwidth between its primary site in London and its disaster recovery (DR) site in Medway, about 50 to 60 miles away. Since some of the files that needed to be backed up were very large, transmitting them across the line every time they changed was not feasible. Doing so would have required leasing a fibre optic line for the VPN, which was not financially justified. TMC needed a way to protect its vital information using real-time remote replication, despite the bandwidth constraint.

Business Profile

Company Name:
TMC Marine

Headquarters:
London, UK

Industry:
Marine Consultancy

Business Environment:
- **Founded: 1979**
- **Employees: >40**
- **Provides a wide range of marine consulting services**
- **Offices in UK, USA, China, Singapore and Australia**

Implementation Team:
TMC and Vision Solutions

Solution

The answer to this dilemma was Double-Take Availability. It replicates changes made on a production server to a DR server. That DR server can be local, on the other side of the globe, or anywhere in between.

Double-Take Availability performs byte-level replication. It captures only the changed bytes, not whole blocks or whole files, and transmits them to the DR site. If, for example, a TMC user changes a single number in a CRM system, only that number is replicated to the DR site and updated on the file there.

In addition, the availability of efficient data compression further reduces Double-Take Availability's use of bandwidth.

TMC is confident that it will always have an up-to-the-moment remote copy of all of its vital data that will be available no matter what may happen at the production site.

The bandwidth constraint did present a problem when installing Double-Take Availability and performing the initial replication. However, Dhiresh Raghwani, IT Manager, was able to overcome this challenge easily with the help of Vision Solution's support.

Due to the narrow bandwidth, "installation wasn't straightforward for us," explained Raghwani. "That sounds like a negative, but it turned into a positive because the support from Vision was excellent, They walked me through the solution so we got where we needed to be quickly."

Of course, a solution isn't truly a solution unless it performs as promised. To ensure that this was the case, Raghwani took the time needed to review all of the files on the DR site. He is now confident that replication is functioning properly. Consequently, TMC no longer feels the need to create backups manually and also does not need to incur the workload normally associated with that task.

Results

- Facilitates real-time remote replication despite limited bandwidth
- Replicates only byte-level changes, not whole blocks
- All data is always available remotely
- Includes superior support from Vision Solutions

Technologies

Software:
- Microsoft Windows Server
- VMWare (production site)
- Microsoft Hyper-V (DR site)
- Double-Take Availability

Hardware:
- HP servers (production)
- Dell servers (DR)

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