"We now have four servers fully replicated to the Hong Kong office that can be failed over, and up and running in less than three hours. This is a vast improvement over the 48 to 52 hours that a complete failover and recovery would have taken us before implementing the solution."

on Scales, group infrastructure manager, Tufton Oceanic

Business Profile

Company Name:
Tufton Oceanic

Headquarters:
Isle of Man, UK (Parent co.: Cyprus)

Industry:
Funds Management

Business Size:
Tufton Oceanic, a leading fund manager for investors in the maritime and energy-related industries, as well as in the wider global transportation and infrastructure sectors, has offices in London, Isle of Man, Dubai, Cyprus, Hong Kong and Singapore.

The firm is committed to the provision of excellence in structuring, investing and managing its Asset-Backed Investment and Equity Funds. Employing highly qualified fund managers and investment banking professionals who possess comprehensive experience in the target sectors and then providing those people with the technologies they need to do their jobs helps Tufton to achieve this excellence.

Business Environment:
• Fund manager in the maritime, energy and related infrastructure sectors.
• Uses various applications to monitor and administer its portfolios, investments and funds.
• Committed to excellence through its highly qualified fund management and investment banking professionals and supporting technologies.

Vision Solutions Product:
Double-Take Availability

Implementation Team:
Tufton Oceanic, Double-Take (now Vision Solutions) and Riverbed

Critical issue

Tufton Oceanic's fund managers use various applications to monitor and administer its portfolios, investments and funds. Considering the pace of change in asset pricing in today's financial markets and the intensive scrutiny of financial industry players by investors and regulators, being unable to monitor and maintain its funds for an extended period due to system downtime could be financially disastrous.

Results

• Recovery times reduced from 48-52 hours to less than 3 hours.
• WAN acceleration overcomes issues associated with data transmission over great distances.
• Requires minimal day-to-day administration.
• Better able to meet Service Level Agreements.

Technologies

Software:
• Double-Take Availability
• Various funds management and administration applications

Hardware:
• HP Proliant Servers
• Riverbed Steelhead® Appliance

Business Challenge

When managing financial portfolios, the expression "time is money" carries a much greater significance than in everyday life. The price of an asset in a portfolio can change in an instant. If fund managers are unable to actively monitor and manage their portfolios for a significant period, the cost could be enormous.

Obviously, today's funds managers are dependent on the systems that help them do their jobs. If their applications stop, information flows cease and the complex ongoing analysis that is fundamental to the managers' success would be next to impossible if they had to revert to paper and pencil.

Hardware and software have become very reliable, but that doesn't mean that they are always available. Disasters and other serious downtime events, despite being rare, are a constant threat. And because Tufton's Isle of Man office is located on a comparatively small island, ordering and receiving replacement hardware takes at least 48 hours. Consequently, Tufton needed a way to ensure that its portfolio monitoring and management applications could be restored and fully functioning quickly, including the complete, rapid recovery of close to 100 percent of the underlying data, should a disaster shut down the firm's primary systems.

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Solution

To ensure that it would be able to achieve its recovery time objectives, Tufton Oceanic used Double-Take Availability to replicate over 300GB of data on four Isle of Man-based production servers to virtual servers running on a system in the company's Hong Kong offices. Double-Take Availability keeps the production servers continuously synchronized with their remote replica counterparts, simplifying server management in a mixed physical and virtual environment. This single management of both physical and virtual servers allows Tufton to quickly failover to the backup servers in Hong Kong should the need arise.

The Isle of Man is more than 6,000 miles from Hong Kong. The actual distance that data must travel along the available transmission routes is even greater, resulting in latency of 240ms between sites. To overcome this high-latency challenge, Tufton Oceanic needed a way to accelerate its data transmissions. The company met this challenge with Riverbed WAN Optimization solutions using Riverbed Steelhead® Appliance.

Riverbed Steelhead products are designed to accelerate and optimize all applications over the WAN by up to 100 times. Steelhead products intercept and optimize all traffic, regardless of the application that generated it. Riverbed's Data Streamlining algorithms remove redundancy from traffic to reduce bandwidth utilization, typically by 60 to 95%.

Tufton replicates its production servers to the Hong Kong location using a 10 Mbit Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network. It optimizes the replication by employing Riverbed Steelhead Appliances between the firewalls at the sites. As a result, Tufton now has a full failover option that will allow its business to be up and running quickly should a disaster strike the primary data center.

This configuration significantly reduces data latencies between the sites, allowing Tufton to set a realistic recovery point objective (RPO) of no more than 10 minutes' worth of lost data. This is a substantial reduction in the amount of data at risk compared to the RPO that the company had to live with when it relied primarily on tape-based backups for its disaster recovery operations.

"We were able to transfer 400 GB of data in 4 days," noted Jon Scales, group infrastructure manager at Tufton Oceanic. "This was a considerable improvement over what we experienced before we implemented Riverbed. And thanks to the combination of innovation from Double-Take and Riverbed, we now have four servers fully replicated to the Hong Kong office that can be failed-over and up and running in less than three hours. This is a vast improvement over the 48 to 52 hours that a complete failover and recovery would have taken us before implementing the solution."

The success of the existing Double-Take and Riverbed installation has given Tufton confidence in the solution, so much so that the company is now considering employing this optimized recovery solution in its London office.

What does Tufton Oceanic consider to be the biggest benefit of the Double-Take and Riverbed solution? In three words: peace of mind. Because Tufton now has a ready-to-run, replica server that is available to take over operations quickly and seamlessly if necessary, the company won't be caught unprepared if a disaster strikes. And, in a business like Tufton's, no surprises are best.

About Riverbed

Riverbed is the IT performance company. WAN optimization solutions from Riverbed liberate businesses from common IT constraints by increasing application performance, enabling consolidation, and providing enterprise-wide network and application visibility – all while eliminating the need to increase bandwidth, storage or servers. For more information, go to www.riverbed.com.

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