



"Vision Solutions' implementation team was excellent to work with. Double-Take Availability worked immediately and instantly I was struck by how easy it was to use and yet how sophisticated the technology was. Double-Take Availability is the Cadillac in this industry—it lives up to my expectations, offering the solid reliability, sleek design and dependability that Microsoft had impressed upon me."

Jay Wessel, Senior Director of Technology, Boston Celtics

Business Profile

Company Name:
Boston Celtics

Headquarters:
Boston, Massachusetts

Industry:
Professional Sports

- Business Environment:
- 75 employees work in offices in Boston and Waltham, Massachusetts.
 - High-profile brand must deliver excellent service to ticket holders and fans.
 - The Celtics organization is most vulnerable during peak-season.

Vision Solutions Product:
Double-Take® Availability

Implementation Partner:
NSI Professional Services,
Vision Solutions

Critical issue

Recovery from tape could take the Celtics one to two weeks if new servers had to be built or procured. Tape was used in both the Waltham and Boston offices and was stored at an offsite location. With tape backup conducted nightly only, the Celtics were left each day with 24 hours of new, unprotected data.

Results

- Near-zero RPO has been achieved and recovery can occur in minutes if not seconds.
- Data is replicated to the backup server in near real-time and is instantly protected.
- The management of the backup environment has been centralized and simplified.
- The amount of money spent on backup media and drive maintenance has been greatly reduced.

Technologies

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

Business Challenge

Behind every great sports team there's a great support system. For the Celtics, 75 people work in offices in Boston and nearby Waltham. "What happens on the court is only part of what the Celtics are about," says Jay Wessel, the Celtics' senior director of technology. "In the NBA world, success is also about balancing cash flows, managing profitability, analyzing statistics, communicating with fans, maintaining our reputation and doing everything possible—from an information standpoint—to stay competitive."

With so many vital business processes to manage, the Celtics support staff would be lost without access to critical data and applications. As such, Wessel feared for an emergency in which the Celtics' critical systems in Boston or in Waltham—an Exchange server, two SQL servers, a file server, and their statistical scouting database—were to go down and the staff was unable to analyze statistics, send emails, and conduct business as usual. Especially during the Celtics' busy season, data failure would be intolerable.

The Celtics had been backing up data to tape nightly when users were not online. Concerned that this dependency on tape backup and day-old data may prove disastrous during an outage at one of the main production centers, Wessel met with top executives to discuss the benefits of business continuity and the major data protection holes he saw across the IT infrastructure.

Wessel and the executive team considered the significant risks proposed by tape backup and realized that tape fell far short of their goal. First, backups had to happen overnight at each of the facilities to avoid interrupting users. Because saves occurred in 24 hour intervals, a great deal of new data was unprotected for much of the day. There were expense issues too: The cost of supplying and maintaining tape cartridges and hardware was significant. And worst of



all, recovery from tape could take one to two weeks if new servers had to be built or procured.

“Considering our role in the NBA, our large fan base, our namesake—we realized it was time to step it up and protect our assets better,” Wessel says. “Our organization has been growing from an SMB to a large-scale corporation in terms of size, capabilities, complexity, and revenues. It was time for our contingency planning to grow as well. No matter what the circumstances, we wanted to work in real-time recovery mode, so our applications and office staff could be back up and running with core functions almost immediately.”

Solution

Wessel considered several solutions, including replication and recovery offerings from XOsoft and SteelEye. But when Microsoft recommended that the Celtics take a look at the Double-Take Availability from Vision Solutions, the choices narrowed.

“We needed a solution that would be rock-solid and would integrate with our current Exchange and Windows environments,” Wessel says. “When Microsoft recommended we look at Double-Take Availability, we knew we were on to something. If something happened, we didn’t want Microsoft to turn to us and say ‘told you so.’ Double-Take Availability, therefore, was the clear solution.”

With its patented Sequential Transfer Asynchronous Replication (STAR) technology, Double-Take Availability is a leading high availability and data replication technology, continuously capturing and replicating changes to data files at the byte level as they occur. Double-Take Availability offers the flexibility to replicate selected files, directories, or entire volumes to one or more target servers over existing network connections.

Double-Take Availability also provides failover capabilities that enable businesses to quickly resume operations after a disaster or system outage—without the time and complexities of restoring from tape.

With the help of NSI Professional Services, the Double-Take implementation was much simpler than Wessel had expected for a full-fledged disaster recovery solution. Within two days, Wessel and NSI had set up Double-Take Availability on the Celtics’ Exchange and SQL servers, file server, and statistical scouting databases. They also set up a remote data center in Manchester, N.H. Double-Take Availability was set up to replicate and recover critical data from Boston and Waltham to a single, safe location.

Double-Take Software Case Study – Boston Celtics

With Double-Take Availability, the Celtics can now continue statistics analysis, financial transactions, and email communications should one or both of its two office buildings experience a data failure or emergency situation. Double-Take Availability’s failover capabilities enable end-users to access both their data and applications from the disaster recovery facility in Manchester, so they can continue to work seamlessly; downtime and lost productivity are minimized or eliminated.

“With Double-Take Availability, we now have peace of mind across our organization,” says Wessel. “Down the road we plan to expand the applications and data sets that we protect with Double-Take Availability and soon we’d like to work with key vendors to make sure systems that could adversely affect our business are protected, as well.”



15300 Barranca Parkway, Irvine, CA 92618
1-800-957-4511 ▪ 1-801-799-0300 ▪ visionsolutions.com



- ◆ High Availability
- ◆ Disaster Recovery
- ◆ Systems and Data Management
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