



"We found that Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX is a strong solution with solid references from our implementation partner Avnet Technology Solutions. We benefited from rolling Double-Take RecoverNow out as a DR solution."

Ajay Khanvilkar, General Manager, IT, Hindustan Dorr-Oliver Ltd.

Business Profile

Company Name:
Hindustan Dorr-Oliver Ltd., India

Headquarters:
Mumbai, India

Industry:
Engineering, Procurement and
Construction

Employees:
1,300

Business Environment:

- A leader in industrial engineering and construction
- Employs over 1,300 engineers and other professionals
- Publically held
- Operates six offices in India

Vision Solutions Product:
Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX

Critical issue

When existing backup processes failed to save mission-critical production data for an extended period of time, IT department management grew disillusioned with their backup capabilities. This event led to infrastructure improvements that would enable the company to meet its backup, recovery and compliance requirements with real time disaster recovery and data replication capabilities.

Results

- Easy to deploy and user friendly
- Met their RPO objectives
- Seamless data transfer

Technologies

- Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX
- IBM AIX OS v5.3
- SAP ERP ECC 6.0

Business Challenge

Hindustan Dorr-Oliver grew from a small proprietary business to be a leader in the industrial engineering procurement construction for the mining, fertilizers, chemicals, pulp and paper as well as wastewater management areas. Its 1,300 strong workforce comprises largely of engineers working at 30-odd sites at any point in time. HDO is publicly listed and headquartered in Mumbai. Established in the 1930s, HDO has offices and project facilities in Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkota, Delhi and Ahmedabad.

Managing large-scale projects is all in a day's work at India's giant industrial engineering and procurement construction conglomerate, Hindustan Dorr-Oliver Ltd. There was not a problem or challenge that could not be resolved by its able workforce. Similarly, rolling out IT projects was as routine as it goes. Hence, the implementation of a disaster recovery (DR) backup solution to fulfill its corporate compliance requirements was expected to be equally straightforward. However, the implementation took a surprising twist that turned out to be an enlightening experience for HDO's IT team.

According to HDO's General Manager for IT, Ajay Khanvilkar, transferring the data from the primary to secondary server was the biggest challenge. The IT team was in the midst of backing up its mission critical data running on SAP onto brand new IBM System P6 secondary servers when it realized that the data was being replicated at the primary server.

"We discovered on the 20th day that the back up to the disaster recovery site had failed because the data was not being replicated onto the secondary backup server," he added.

Khanvilkar quickly dispatched his team to investigate the matter and identify the error. It turned out to be a configuration issue unrelated to the disaster recovery system. The matter was quickly sorted and a review of the backup process prompted Khanvilkar to double the bandwidth and conduct the back up after office hours.



“We transferred the data over the WAN link between 6 p.m. after work and 7 a.m. the next morning and manage to complete the data replication activity within five days,” he said. While most IT managers would cringe at the memory of 20 wasted days, Khanvilkar embraced the experience as a key learning point to share with his peers who are also planning to implement disaster recovery solution at their organizations.

“When we began the initial backup process, we did it during office hours as most typical organizations would. But after discovering the error, we looked at how we could speed up the process and found a solution by doubling the bandwidth from 1Mbps to 2Mbps WAN link,” he added. This was a brilliant strategy considering the large amount of data – roughly 170GB – that needed to be replicated. To Khanvilkar’s delight, once the process started, the data backup went smoothly and synchronized seamlessly with its other systems.

Solution

Prior to Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX, HDO did not have a business continuity plan in place even though it had rolled out SAP for its entire operation that included production planning, supply chain management and sales & distribution more than two years ago. “Putting DR in place is part of corporate compliance,” said Khanvilkar.

He added that the choice of Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX was a given as it was proven as the most stable solution on the AIX platform. “We found that Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX is a strong solution with solid references from our implementation partner Avnet Technology Solutions.”

Although Double-Take was a natural choice, the team spent three weeks evaluating the solution to ensure that it would fit seamlessly and smoothly with other applications already in place. And the careful evaluation proved worthwhile as the transition proceeded so smoothly that the end users were not aware that the primary site was down and that data was being retrieved from the back-up server.

Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX performance stayed robust during the drill test as when the primary site was taken down, the back up disaster recovery site kicked in within minutes. HDO invested in two IBM System P6 boxes as backup servers.

Other benefits that HDO enjoys with DR include the almost real time response when data is synchronized. “Our files, especially the engineering drawings, are huge and take up a lot of space, but we can see that backing it up onto the DR server has proven to be speedy and smooth. This saves us time and resources manning the system as it is updating,” said Khanvilkar.

If in the past the IT team would spend 14 to 15 hours on the process, the implementation of Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX has managed to reduce the time taken by half.

“The best thing about Double-Take RecoverNow for AIX is that the data transferred from primary to secondary server is faster than any previous solution that we know of. And it is super fast especially when bandwidth is high,” said Khanvilkar.

He added that the three main takeaways were its user friendliness and ease of deployment; seamless data transfer and negligible data loss.



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