



"We're impressed with iTera HA— we've seen very good results and it's exciting to have a system like this. I know that if we have any problems, the recovery process won't be convoluted."

Dennis Hessel, VP of Information Technology
TheBANK of Edwardsville

Business Profile

Company Name:
TheBANK of Edwardsville

Headquarters:
Edwardsville, Illinois

Industry:
Banking

Assets:
Over one billion dollars

Employees:
450+

- Business Environment:
- The leading community bank in Southwestern Illinois
 - Electronic banking applications must be available 24/7, 365 days a year.
 - Processes transactions for 30 separate banking facilities, 100 ATMs, and Web-based banking services
 - Originally called West & Pickett, founded in 1868

- Implementation Team:
- Steve Perry,
TheBANK of Edwardsville
 - Vision Solutions Technical Support

Vision Solutions Products:
iTera HA for i5/OS

Critical Issue

Online banking transactions represent a considerable amount of account activity at TheBANK of Edwardsville. Management was concerned that customers would not be able to access their accounts if a disaster occurred. TheBANK's customer account transactions are managed by a core processing system called Silverlake from the Jack Henry Banking division of Jack Henry & Associates. Silverlake runs on an IBM System i server that handles transactions for 30 separate banking facilities, over 100 ATMs, and Web-based banking services. These facilities belong to TheBANK and to other financial institutions in the Illinois counties of St. Clair and Madison, and also in St. Louis, Missouri.

Results

- A dramatic improvement in their ability to meet Recovery Point Objectives (RPO) and Recovery Time Objectives (RTO).
- Discontinued costly hot site services.
- Simplified backups which now can be performed during normal working hours.
- Dramatically reduced downtime caused by software upgrades, file reorganization, and database conversions.

Technologies

- iTera™ HA for i5/OS®
- Production IBM® iSeries™ model 820
- Backup System i model 520
- Silverlake® from Jack Henry Banking™, a division of Jack Henry & Associates™

Business Challenge

Over the years, TheBANK had hot site agreements with several vendors. But a gap always existed between TheBANK's availability requirements and the services that the hot site providers offered.

After analyzing the flow of transactions, Dennis Hessel, VP of Information Technology for TheBANK, reckoned that a disaster that rendered their banking systems unavailable would result in the loss of thousands of dollars, despite their best recovery efforts. He estimated that it would take between 16 and 24 hours to reestablish access under ideal circumstances, under the hot site arrangement that was in place.

After reviewing strategic recovery point objectives (RPO) and recovery time objectives (RTO), Hessel began to explore alternatives.



Solution

Determined to shorten his RPO and RTO, Hessel considered several options and felt a high availability solution was the most promising. "We would clearly benefit from a dramatic reduction in downtime if something happened, and in addition we could cancel the hot site agreements which were not meeting our objectives."

After doing some research, Hessel says he was most impressed with iTera HA from Vision Solutions. iTera HA uses remote journaling to move replication data from one System i computer to another. Remote journaling is an integrated part of the System i that operates in the SLIC layer of the platform.

According to Hessel, "Remote journaling capabilities and fast replication times were the primary reasons for choosing iTera HA, but we also liked the minimal effort needed to maintain system integrity on a daily basis. This product is very easy to work with."

Once TheBANK's board approved Hessel's plan, he ordered iTera HA and a new IBM System i model 520 to act as the backup system. He then sent Steve Perry, the company's vice president of operations, along with one other technician, to Vision Solutions for training. Says Perry, "It's not a generic class. This experience is much more pertinent. Vendors usually conduct training sessions on mocked-up training systems. But Vision helped us configure our actual production system remotely, from their training facility, as an integrated part of the training course." When Perry returned to Edwardsville, much of the configuration was finished.

Initially, TheBANK housed their backup server in a temporary off-site back up facility until a proper space was built within one of their branch banks in a neighboring town. The data center in that branch office was upgraded with fire suppression equipment, air conditioning, a generator, and a few other environmental necessities.

On a normal morning, Perry now spends less than 15 minutes on iTera HA's maintenance screens to make sure the system is running smoothly. "The 820 and 520 are synchronized in the morning when I come in and they stay that way during the day—they are very stable." Perry explains that at night, Silverlake runs separate batch processes for each bank and as a result there is some latency, but iTera HA's efficient processes quickly catch things up.

Hessel and Perry both say the investment in iTera HA has bought them peace of mind. "We have both seen very good results and it's exciting to have a system like this," says Perry.



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