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Walter Gaudino, AVP of information Technology at IDB Bank

Business Profile

Company Name:
Israel Discount Bank of New York

Headquarters:
New York, New York, USA

Industry:
Banking

Business Size:
2008 assets over US \$9. billion.

Business Environment:

- New York-based bank serving both U.S. and foreign clientele.
- Manages about 1.7 terabytes of data.
- Branches in New York, California and Florida
- Offshore Grand Cayman Island branch
- Representative offices in Tel Aviv, Israel and Santiago, Chile

Implementation Team:
Vision Solutions and IDB Bank

Vision Solutions Product:
• MIMIX HA

Critical Issue

All companies need to protect the availability of their critical data, but banks are unique in this regard. Their data represents money. If banks can't access their data, individuals and organizations can't access their assets. Consequently, bank auditors and regulators take data and application availability very seriously. Thus, for IDB Bank, fast recovery after a disaster or after any other unplanned downtime isn't just a "nice to have." It's mandatory.

Results

- Network switchovers to the remote backup site have been completed successfully without any impact on user operations.
- The bank can now recover banking operations much more quickly and cost-effectively than if it had to recover from tape.
- Ongoing administration and management of MIMIX HA requires only approximately two hours per month.

Technologies

- MIMIX HA
- OS/400 V5R2
- Various banking applications
- IBM iSeries Model 810-9406

Business Challenge

Banking industry regulators and IDB Bank's auditors are very strict when it comes to safeguarding bank data and protecting the availability of banking applications.

What's more, the bank can't just have a plan for recovering after a disaster or any other event that brings down its systems or destroys its primary databases. It must be able to prove to its auditors that the bank can restore data and applications quickly should the need arise. As a result, IDB Bank needed a high availability (HA) solution that would provide foolproof, real-time protection for its critical data and applications.

As is the case with any business, controlling costs is important to IDB Bank. As a result of running a lean IT shop, the bank needs infrastructure software that is easy to use and requires little ongoing maintenance and administration. Ideally, its HA solution should work unattended in the background, with little or no need for operator intervention.



Solution

For about three years, IDB Bank has relied on MIMIX HA to meet its need for highly available applications and thoroughly protected data. MIMIX is an IBM i-based HA solution designed to meet the needs of a wide variety of companies, including the most demanding of enterprises.

To create a robust, highly available environment that can survive a disaster, you must replicate data and applications in real-time to a remote location. However, the cost and labor required to maintain a remote replica server sometimes causes organizations to forgo a comprehensive HA solution. Yet, a bank has little choice. Downtime and data losses aren't options. However, rather than incur the cost of maintaining a duplicate data center, IDB Bank uses MIMIX HA to replicate data to a backup server located at a contracted third-party recovery site.

Whenever necessary, the bank can perform a quick network switch to transfer operations to the remote replica server, thereby virtually eliminating downtime for its banking application users.

The management and administration burden that MIMIX HA places on IDB Bank is about as close to zero as you can possibly get. Walter Gaudino, AVP of information technology at IDB Bank, does some management of the IBM i journals and he has some configuration work to do when IDB Bank adds a new branch, but that is about it. Gaudino estimates that he spends a total of only approximately two hours a month managing and administering MIMIX HA.

IDB Bank doesn't just think it can switchover quickly and cleanly to the backup replica server maintained by MIMIX HA. The bank knows it can.

The bank's auditors won't simply accept that a switchover will work in theory. They demand proof. To provide this proof, IDB Bank regularly tests the switchover process. The results are flawless. After a switchover, users don't even notice that they are now using the remote backup system.

Gaudino considers the expertise available through Vision Solutions, the company behind MIMIX HA, to be a great benefit. For example, Vision experts have helped the bank to clean up its journals and message queues, thereby reducing storage requirements.

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The bottom line is that Gaudino considers MIMIX HA to be a very good investment that more than pays for itself. "If we had to recover from tape it would be much more expensive and time-consuming because the downtime required for recovery would be so much greater," he explained.



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



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