

A photograph of a small green seedling with roots growing out of a cross-section of soil, set against a blue sky with clouds.

Project Summary:

Renewable energy company Infinis needed to protect its critical applications in real time. The company chose Double-Take Availability for its data replication capabilities, ensuring that information is protected as it is created.

Introduction

Infinis is one of the largest renewable energy companies in the UK, providing more than eight per cent of the country's total renewable energy. With more than eighty sites across the UK, the company has developed a portfolio of renewable energy sites, producing energy from landfill gas and wind.

Challenge

With the renewable energy market expanding rapidly, and as part of the company's growth plans, Infinis chose to update its business continuity strategy. This meant evaluating methods of how to protect the company's critical business applications and data. Working with Softcat, Steve Merrell, Infinis' Head of Systems decided to look at data replication technologies and the role that these could play.

Steve Merrell worked with Softcat to evaluate the solutions available on the market, and was recommended to look at Double-Take Software's workload optimisation products.

"Softcat plays an important role within our IT strategy, and have been trusted advisors to Infinis for more than 4 years. When they suggested Double-Take Availability, we could immediately see how it would fit in with our business continuity objectives and budgets."

Infinis energises business continuity strategy with Double-Take® Software Case Study

Statement:

"As an organisation with mobile workers across the UK, our applications have to supply data in real time. Any incident of downtime could affect our scheduling of work, and lead to systems not being seen in the right order. Double-Take Availability provides us with a simple, cost-effective approach to business continuity that ensures we don't have this problem any longer." Steve Merrell, Head of Systems, Infinis.

Implementation

Steve Merrell brought in Double-Take Availability as part of a pilot phase that ran from October 2008 to January 2009. Following this trial, Infinis decided to move to a full production roll-out of Double-Take Availability for its business critical applications, which was completed in March 2009.

Double-Take Availability is installed across 25 servers in Infinis' main data centre, which is based in Birmingham. These machines are Dell PowerEdge servers running Microsoft Windows Server 2003, and connected to an EMC Network Attached Storage device. Applications currently protected with Double-Take Availability include bespoke applications for job allocation and asset management to engineers, Microsoft SQL Server databases and Microsoft Exchange Servers for email.



Infinis Case Study

"The applications that we are protecting using Double-Take Availability are all real-time systems: our job scheduling application provides our engineers with their workflows for the day, and if an important job needs to be scheduled immediately then this can be done. Similarly, email is a really critical application for our staff across the organisation. With Double-Take Availability, we can replicate data from these applications and ensure that we have back-up systems in place that are as up to date as possible. Even if we have a full site failure, we can have our critical applications back up and running within a couple of hours," said Merrell.

Data from the Infinis servers is replicated in real-time across a WAN link to the company's second site in Birmingham. Here, the secondary server instances are hosted within virtual machines running on VMware ESX and Dell PowerEdge servers, again connected to an EMC NAS. This enables Infinis to host five or six virtual machines per server, decreasing the amount of physical equipment required and reducing the cost of the business continuity solution significantly.

"With Double-Take, we can replicate data and workloads in real-time between our main data centre and our recovery site. By using virtualisation at our secondary site, we can run multiple workloads per server and increase our efficiency. Double-Take supports both physical and virtual server instances, so it is a very cost-effective way to provide Infinis with the level of protection that is required," said Merrell.

Conclusion

With Double-Take Availability installed, Infinis now has a full business continuity strategy in place that can expand with the organisation in future. In fact, Double-Take Availability is now a standard part of the company's IT strategy going forward. *"We are adding Double-Take to other servers across our business, as they become more important to the company's everyday activities. Examples of machines that will be protected with Double-Take in the future include our Citrix XenApp 5.0 and BlackBerry Enterprise Server implementations. In total, another 15 servers will have Double-Take Availability implemented,"* commented Steve Merrell.

Steve Merrell has run several tests with the servers that are protected by Double-Take Availability, as part of the company's overall business continuity plan. Each of these has been completed successfully, with workloads failed over and back between the company's two data centre environments, *"Overall, Double-Take Availability has performed as expected during each test. We are confident that it provides us with the protection we need for our critical systems, and it gives both the IT team and the business peace of mind going forward."*

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If you would like to know more about how Double-Take® Availability can resolve your **Pain Points**, find out **What it is - How it helps** and **How it works** then go to: www.doubletakeavailability.com

About Double-Take® Software now part of Vision Solutions

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