

Case Study: Bird & Bird

BIRD & BIRD

Double-Take® Software Customer Profile

Company: Bird & Bird – www.twobirds.com

Business: Bird & Bird is an international law firm which aims to provide a unique service based on an extensive knowledge of key industry sectors and legal practice. The firm has 20 offices spread across Europe and Asia, and works across areas such as aviation, financial services, sport, life sciences and IT. Originally formed in 1846, Bird & Bird now has over 780 fee-earning staff working on behalf of clients. Bird & Bird was awarded the title of 'International Law Firm of the Year' by The Lawyer Awards in 2008.

Needs: The London office supports over 250 lawyers, all of whom rely on email as a critical means of communication with clients and others. For these individuals, any outage of the email service would have a serious impact on their ability to provide the high quality work and level of service that their clients expect.

Bird & Bird ensures continuity of email with Double-Take®

Project Overview

The London office supports over 250 lawyers all of whom rely on email as a critical means of communication with clients and others. For these individuals, any outage of the email service would have a serious impact on their ability to provide the high quality work and level of service that their clients expect.

Jon Spencer, Infrastructure Manager at Bird & Bird, is responsible for the Firm's messaging systems. Whilst the firm employs a clustered Exchange system and a reliable storage platform to support its staff and maintain availability of email, there was still a risk that a full site failure would lead to messages not being received and service being affected. He therefore decided as part of the business continuity planning to evaluate and review replication tools to provide an additional level of protection.

"Our employees rely on email," said Spencer. "Even the shortest period of downtime is simply not acceptable. The local Exchange environment provides us with a high degree of resilience; however there was an awareness of how a site failure would lead to an outage. Consequently, we began investigating the replication and disaster recovery tools that were on the market for protecting email."

Purchase Process and Decision

After looking at the solutions available on the market, Spencer chose Double-Take® Software's data replication technology as the most suitable way to provide a disaster recovery solution. *"In speaking to experts on Exchange, their feedback was that Double-Take provided the best product available for ensuring continuity of email,"* continued Spencer. *"It was clear to us the value that Double-Take would offer to us, based on the speed that we could recover the email system."*

Double-Take provides asynchronous replication of data from the production server to a remote target server. This replacement server can be hosted on either a LAN or WAN. In the event that the production servers fail, failover to the target server enables the application service to be fully restored within minutes. For Bird & Bird, recovery of the email service even after a full site failure can be achieved within fifteen minutes.

Double-Take implementation

Working with VAR Jcom, Spencer implemented the disaster recovery platform and completed installation in February 2008. Double-Take automatically replicates data from Bird & Bird's email servers to a remote disaster recovery cluster, consisting of three virtual machines hosted on a HP DL380 server running VMware ESX Server and attached to a HP MSA storage array. In the event of a site failure affecting the Exchange server, service is automatically moved over to the remote site.

"Our approach for this project has been based on taking a proactive approach to stopping downtime from affecting our primary users. Exchange is so critical to our business, that making the case for investment in Double-Take was very easy," explained Spencer. *"Overall, the firm has a full business continuity strategy in place to deal with both local issues and site failure in a way that is both cost-effective and simple to manage in the longer term."*

Conclusion

Bird & Bird now has a full off-site disaster recovery service in place to protect its critical applications, and the firm benefits from a significantly decreased window of downtime in the event of a failure. Spencer commented, *"We completed a full test of our failover processes in May 2008 and everything went according to plan, it was a very successful test. Double-Take will play a key part in our business continuity plan, it's simply the best replication product for Exchange that exists on the market."*

About Double-Take® Software

Headquartered in Southborough, Massachusetts, Double-Take® Software (Nasdaq: DBTK) is a leading provider of affordable software for recoverability, including continuous data replication, application availability and system state protection. Double-Take Software products and services enable customers to protect and recover business-critical data and applications such as Microsoft Exchange, SQL, and SharePoint in both physical and virtual environments. With its unparalleled partner programs, technical support, and professional services, Double-Take Software is the solution of choice for more than ten thousand customers worldwide, from SMEs to the Fortune 500. Information about Double-Take Software's products and services can be found at www.doubletake.com.

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