Zerto | Case Study

UK-based Law Firm meets mission critical RPO and RTO Objectives with Zerto

Overview

One of the fastest growing law firms in the UK, ranked in the top 25 with over 2000 employees, is relying on their robust IT infrastructure and information availability to provide a clear competitive advantage. However, their current snapshot-based replication solution was not able to meet their aggressive recovery point objectives (RPOs) and recovery time objectives (RTOs). They needed very aggressive service levels to minimize data loss which could directly impact their revenues. Any update or research done to a customer case is a billable activity, if that activity is lost, it needs to be redone, increasing costs. With Zerto Virtual Replication, they are seeing RPOs of seconds and RTOs of minutes, laying a strong foundation for their continued growth. Their DR solution ensures information availability to case lawyers and accurate billing for customers, enabling them to continue to deliver exceptional service and legal counsel.

The Problem

At the heart of the law firm is the availability of information. The ability to effectively manage a case, find case law and other relevant documents and ensure the best and most accurate information is available when it is needed. They have 80 virtual machines supporting their most critical applications — case management, Microsoft SQL Server, Elite 3E and others. If any of these applications are not available, there is a loss — revenue, clients, cases and productivity. The previous replication solution, a Backup and Replication solution, was VMware snapshot-based and did not meet the required aggressive RPOs and RTOs. Additionally, the solution would slow the application performance, which made a direct impact on the productivity of the users. The IT team had to change the frequency of the snapshots so they would only execute during off-hours to ensure productivity was not lost — contributing to the deterioration of the SLAs.

Additionally, the law firm needs to protect their IP. Any work that a lawyer does on a case is billable to the customer. To ensure accurate billing, this law firm breaks out each hour into ten, 6 minute segments. They want to be very granular and accurate in terms of the billing. With over 700 lawyers, if they lose even just one 6 minute segment, they will have lost 70 hours of billable time — a significant loss in revenue. With Zerto, and an RPO of seconds, they ensure accurate and complete billing of all lawyer consulting time.

Why Zerto Virtual Replication?

There were several features available only with Zerto Virtual Replication that appealed to them and enabled the protection of their clients, cases, and revenue.

Challenges

The business continuity solution must:

- Deliver very aggressive service levels
- Not impact application or end-user productivity
- Support cost efficiencies

Solution

The Zerto Virtual Replication solution:

- Delivered RPOs of seconds and RTOs of minutes
- Did not impact lawyer productivity in anyway
- Supported costs controls to maximize profits

" **With Zerto Virtual Replication, we are able to deliver an enterprise-class DR solution within our commercial infrastructure. We didn't have to upgrade our network, storage or servers and we are seeing RPOs of seconds. To get this same service level with array-based solutions, we were going to have to invest in a costly network upgrade. Zerto Virtual Replication fits seamlessly into our existing infrastructure and is delivering extremely high service levels."**

— IT Infrastructure Manager

- **Hardware-agnostic:** Zerto Virtual Replication (ZVR) is storage agnostic so it can replicate from any kind of storage to any kind of storage — an older array or different type of storage altogether can be leveraged at the target site.
- **Low network requirements:** ZVR replicates only what is needed — the write I/O from each VM. Also, as the replication is continuous, the write I/O is compressed and moves over the network just as it is created, significantly reducing bandwidth requirements.
- **Simple failover testing:** The testing of the BC/DR process is simple and can be done with one click, giving the customer the peace of mind that the solution will perform as advertised and their information and applications will be protected.
- **Ease of migration:** The ability to pre-seed the replication site provided a simple migration from the current solution to Zerto Virtual Replication.
- **Very high ROI:** The cost of one hour of downtime is £100,000. This more than covered the cost of the product which made the purchase decision very easy.
- **Continuous replication with no performance impact:** The Zerto Virtual Replication Appliance is a very light piece of software that installs on the ESX host, delivering aggressive RPOs. This company was seeing just 10 seconds, with no measurable performance impact on the application.
- **Application consistency and journaling:** The Zerto VSS Agent ensures application consistency across all VMs. The 24 hours of journaling eliminates the need for SQL transaction log backups between the nightly full SQL backups as they can failover to any point in time in the last 24 hours in the event of a data corruption.
- **Great support from the Zerto team:** The user support was more than helpful. No matter when the IT team called for support, the Zerto team was available and able to resolve the issue quickly.
- **Very low RPOs and RTOs:** In order to ensure accurate billing, the customer broke out each hour into ten 6 minute segments.

With over 700 lawyers, if they were to lose this billing data, even for one 6 minute segment, they would not be able to bill for 70 hours of time. With Zerto, and an RPO of seconds, they ensure each segment can be recovered for complete billing of all work for any client.

> **"Zerto represents the future of replication technology and we are now on the cutting edge of disaster recovery solutions. The actual RPO and RTO now exceed the expectations of the business and allows me to sleep easy at night knowing all of the critical virtual machines are replicated in near real time."**
>
> — IT Infrastructure Engineer

About The Law Firm

This is a business law firm with a distinctive approach, bringing everyone together under a common framework which is helping to build one of the most cost effective and highly regarded business law firms in the UK. A cornerstone of how they conduct their business is building and strengthening the quality client relationships by providing useful, practical advice that cuts through to their clients' results. A key differentiator is their continued focus on values, culture, leadership and dialogue to involve and encourage everyone in the firm, regardless of role, seniority or location, to stand behind and actively promote the brand. To continue to build their reputation and meet their goals, the firm continues to deliver exceptional legal expertise and services while building an information infrastructure based on enterprise-class technology solutions for successful execution.

About Zerto

Developed exclusively for virtualized and cloud environments, Zerto is rapidly becoming the standard for disaster recovery and business continuity in the modern data center. The company's award-winning solution, Zerto Virtual Replication (ZVR), is the industry's first hypervisor-based, virtual aware, data replication software, offering simplicity and greatly reduced operational and maintenance costs compared to legacy array-based replication. ZVR received 'Best of Show' at VMworld 2011, as well as 2012 and 2011 'Product of the Year' Gold Awards. For more information, please visit: www.zerto.com. ∎