

GLOBAL LAW FIRM ENSURES AGAINST IT SYSTEMS FAILURE WITH CONTINUITY ENGINE

Ashurst is a leading international law firm established in 1822. They have offices and clients around the world who depend on them for advice and legal services supporting large scale mergers and acquisitions, procurements, bond offerings, and other transactions.

The firm's management realized they needed to implement a business continuity system after a major snow storm shut down their New York offices for a full week. While they were able to recover operations using the disaster recovery system they had in place, that process took two days, which was costly for the organization in terms of billing and could have damaged the firm's reputation as a trusted partner in a crisis situation.

AGGRESSIVE RECOVERY TIME AND RECOVERY POINT OBJECTIVES

The Ashurst team was able to determine quickly that even a few hours of downtime was unacceptable. The direct cost of a single hour of downtime in one office can easily top 10,000 GBP, making it clear that the RTO had to be measured in minutes and seconds, and not days and hours. In addition, given the nature of the firm's business, the team needed a system that would ensure access to 100% of the files and applications used in any given office on a 24/7/365 basis. This type of resilience is critical for Ashurst, since many of their lawyers work during weekends and holidays and they must be able to access documents and systems at any time.

The team also determined that they needed a system that would automatically fail over in the event of an application-level issue. Depending on a manual failover process was not an option given their tight RTO requirements.

The team did their research and discovered Continuity Engine, and then met with the Neverfail team at the VMWorld conference in London. Based on those discussions, they proceeded with technical due diligence and began planning a Proof of Concept.

PHASE 1: PROOF OF CONCEPT

The team conducted a Proof of Concept over a period of three weeks that involved three data centers in three different cities in Europe. As part of this project, they conducted failovers under several conditions



DESCRIPTION

Major law firm with offices on five continents providing services to major corporations, national governments, non-governmental organizations, and financial institutions.

CHALLENGES

Maintain access to critical applications and data sources, including the firm's document management system, in the event of natural disasters or smaller scale problems at any location. Support 100% uptime during system maintenance and upgrades.

SOLUTION

Deploy 50 Continuity Engine at all sites around the world with help from Neverfail's professional services team.

RESULTS

All servers remain accessible regardless of the scale of threats to service disruptions

to simulate how the system would respond under a series of realistic scenarios, including large scale natural disasters like earthquakes, man-made disasters like fires or terrorist attacks, and routine operations like hardware replacement and software updates.

PHASE 2: DEPLOYMENT

After a successful Proof of Concept, the team moved into the implementation phase. Ashurst installed over 50 instances of Continuity Engine in its facilities, and configured each site to have a distantly located secondary site. For example, Milan fails over to London, Sydney fails over to Hong Kong, and Tokyo fails over to Singapore. This strategy provides the firm with an extremely resilient platform that enables their people to continue working from any location where they have internet access.

One of the things the team noticed right away was how unobtrusive a failover is in practice. In one instance, an outage in Milan occurred over a weekend and caused a failover to the London data center; the workers in Milan employees carried on working, completely unaware of the fact that they were connected to the secondary servers in London.

RESULTS: GLOBAL HIGH AVAILABILITY AND DISASTER RECOVERY

Before implementing Continuity Engine, Ashurst depended on a disaster recovery system based on backup tapes. In the event of a serious problem, an entire office could be out of commission and unable to perform useful work for several days while waiting for a restore to be completed.

Today, the firm can depend on High Availability IT systems powered by Continuity Engine at all of its worldwide offices. Their staff can continue to work and access their document management systems, databases, and printing systems — all critical to the functions of a law firm — with no disruptions in the event of any type of outage, including routine system maintenance or hardware and software upgrades.

“As a major law firm, our business depends on maintaining the respect and trust of some of the largest public and private organizations in the world. We must be able to continue operations regardless of the scale of any disaster or IT issue. Our clients expect it and we are able to deliver on that thanks to our implementation of Continuity Engine in our data centers around the globe ”

Senior VP of IT Operations
Ashurst

About Neverfail

Neverfail enables businesses to achieve 100% uptime through the world's most resilient business continuity and secondary storage solutions. Made for mission-critical businesses, Neverfail solutions mitigate the risk of downtime in the face of any potential outage. By delivering seamless business continuity, we empower our partners and clients to realize their full potential without the risk of downtime.

Honeywell

vmware

Mitel

McKESSON

citi

Bank of America

NEVERFAIL
CONTINUOUS AVAILABILITY

NEVERFAIL.COM | 888.988.8647 | SALES@NEVERFAIL.COM