

# LEADING GLOBAL ENERGY SUPPLIER PROTECTS ITS MICROSOFT EXCHANGE ENVIRONMENT WITH HELP FROM EMC CONSULTING

EMC Consulting architects an automated, state-of-the-art disaster recovery infrastructure for a virtualized Microsoft Exchange environment



## ESSENTIALS

### Challenge

- To better protect a business-critical Microsoft Exchange environment

### Solutions

- EMC Consulting
- EMC Symmetrix DMX system
- VMware ESX
- VMware Site Recovery Manager
- VMware vCenter

### Key benefits

- Extensive knowledge transfer from EMC during setup and implementation phases
- Greatly improved disaster recovery point and time objectives for the company's business-critical, virtualized Microsoft Exchange environment

## OVERVIEW

A respected leader within the highly competitive energy marketplace embarked on an initiative to better protect its business-critical Microsoft Exchange environment and other vital applications from prolonged downtime in the event of a disaster. In addition to replacing cold-site capabilities with an automated hot-site disaster recovery infrastructure, the initiative also included an upgrade of the firm's existing Microsoft Exchange 2003 environment to a virtualized Microsoft Exchange 2007 messaging solution.

Major aspects of the company's IT and application infrastructure were already built around EMC and VMware® solutions and they wanted to use a similar setup at their disaster recovery hot site, initially for the virtualized Microsoft Exchange environment, with other business-critical applications to follow. EMC's long-standing relationship with the company as a trusted provider of proven information infrastructure solutions and VMware technology, combined with its Microsoft Gold Certified Partner status, uniquely positioned EMC® Consulting to offer the organization a comprehensive, single-vendor solution to successfully achieve all of its project objectives.

## SOLUTION: RAPID RECOVERY CAPABILITIES FROM EMC

A recent revisiting of recovery point objectives and recovery time objectives (RPO and RTO) with the company's business unit clients revealed a need for more-rapid recovery capabilities than the organization's existing cold-site disaster recovery solution could provide.

To better protect data and safeguard uptime of the organization's growing number of key application environments, they engaged EMC Consulting to help them develop and deploy a new disaster recovery hot site that could accommodate an RPO in under 10 minutes and an RTO of an hour or less.

Because effective communications is crucial to day-to-day operations, the company wanted to focus first on migrating the organization's existing Microsoft Exchange messaging environment, which included both Outlook and a Blackberry Exchange server, to a new virtualized Microsoft Exchange 2007 environment. The next step was to architect a fast and

effective means to recover that virtualized environment at the new hot site, located 1,700 miles away from the main data center.

During the planning stage, an executive steering committee was formed to oversee the entire initiative. It included the company's global director of IT operations and director of information management, as well as the EMC account manager with whom the organization had established a trusted relationship based on the success of several previous EMC engagements. The team met one to two times per week over the course of two months, bringing in project team members from both EMC and the company to prepare a complete statement of work. They included every network engineer and IT team member who was going to be involved in the project, and the EMC account manager did the same, bringing in EMC hardware and software specialists, project managers, VMware experts, and EMC Microsoft consultants. An EMC project management leader was assigned to direct and coordinate the efforts of EMC and the company's personnel throughout all active phases of the five-month project.

The project included the upgrade to a virtualized Microsoft Exchange 2007 environment; the setup and testing of the hot-site hardware and software at the main data center; equipment delivery and implementation of the new disaster recovery infrastructure at the actual hot site; and automated and manual disaster recovery testing between the main data center and the hot site.

A Microsoft SharePoint Server site was also put up to support collaboration and help streamline deployment. The site helped simplify the ability to effectively track project progress, identify and relay information about issues or potential problems and possible solutions, and report on outcomes.

The time spent on project planning and developing the statement of work helped keep the number of issues to relatively few, and when things did come up that did not work, it did not matter which side of the table it was on, it was quickly resolved.

## FAST AND EASY RECOVERY

Mirroring the EMC Symmetrix® DMX™-3 storage environment within the main data center, the company's new hot site is equipped with a Symmetrix DMX-4 system, EMC's powerful, reliable, and scalable enterprise networked storage solution. The disaster recovery hot site also incorporates the cutting-edge capabilities of EMC RecoverPoint and VMware Site Recovery Manager (SRM) applications. Together, these software solutions simplify data protection and facilitate the streamlined failover and failback of the VMware ESX® Server-supported Microsoft Exchange 2007 environment.

Designed to simplify and automate the disaster recovery process, VMware SRM turns manual recovery run books, carefully prepared and tested by EMC Consulting, into an automated recovery process that can be quickly and easily initiated and run by anyone, without the need for extensive technical training. It also supports central management of recovery plans from a VMware vCenter Server interface.

## THE RESULTS: A SUCCESSFUL, HIGHLY REPEATABLE PROCESS

The EMC team showed the company how to log into the disaster recovery hot site and initiate the failover scenario with just a few simple mouse clicks. The disaster recovery project gave the company an even greater appreciation for EMC and VMware technology. Within 45 minutes, they were able to bring their network and messaging environments back up.

Training to carry out the manual disaster recovery processes, as well as the cultivation of in-house expertise to expand the disaster recovery solution to support other applications, was also facilitated by the EMC Consulting team. Although additional forms of training are

planned for the future, extensive knowledge transfer during setup and implementation phases of the project was conveyed through on-the-job training, with members of the company's IT team working and learning alongside EMC personnel.

Disaster recovery point and time objectives for the company's business-critical, virtualized Microsoft Exchange environment have tested out better than business unit specifications with an RPO of just a few minutes and an RTO achievable within 45 minutes.

The success and scalability of the EMC- and VMware-based disaster recovery solution has laid the groundwork for rolling out coverage to other critical applications in the near future. The company is currently conducting application and system impact analysis to strategically guide longer-term infrastructure plans for the hot site.

## CONTACT US

For more information, visit  
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