

Could your business survive if it lost its data?

By Robin Parkinson, managing director, Escape Business Technologies



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Escape Business Technologies has become one of the first companies to deliver a 'cloud' Disaster Recover and Business Continuity System - by utilising VMware vSphere - to the oil and gas industry.

Sounds impressive ... but just what is cloud computing, and what benefits can customers expect from adopting this new technology through vSphere?

Cloud computing is a general term for anything that involves delivering hosted services over the internet and Escape has developed a solution utilising VMware's vSphere. This solution ensures that in the event of a disaster, your data is replicated real-time, available immediately and backed up offsite to ensure total recovery of information.

Disaster recovery shouldn't just be about an office getting burnt down or losing IT equipment in a flood - it's also about risk management. Availability of services and information and how long it takes to recover should be an essential part of a company's strategy. With new technology such as vSphere, it is now possible to provide real-time replication, offsite back-up and high availability so your business doesn't have to wait hours or even days to get your systems back up and running. In the oil and gas industry, more and more businesses are grasping the importance of business continuity, whilst also being able to save money in the long-term too.

By using a product such as vSphere (VMware's 4th release of their enterprise product), complimentary replication software and Escape's data centre, it is now possible to provide a lower cost disaster recovery solution, whilst providing high availability and offsite backup. This allows many businesses to add value when having to 'tick' the disaster recovery compliance box. Traditional disaster recovery solutions are often costly and complex, and hopefully rarely get used but vSphere lets you recover to any machine, not just specific duplicate hardware, reducing costs and lowering the complexity of maintaining a backup site.

vSphere also has a unique power management function which constantly monitors the demands on the physical servers. This means that during times when demand for resources is lower - in the evening or at the weekend - the system powers-down some of the servers. Then, when demand increases again - the next morning when people return to the office - these servers will automatically come back to life. This will provide a significant reduction in power usage, leading to increased cost savings. By adopting vSphere, companies can achieve a 50% reduction in capital expenses and a reduction of more than 60% in operational expenses.

Another benefit to vSphere is its ability to make adjustments to the server without the risk of data loss or downtime. Memory can be added to virtual machines when needed and the system's unique vShield Zones simplify security by enforcing corporate security policies at the application level in a shared environment.

Escape Business Technologies is a VMware Enterprise Partner and VMware Authorised Consultant. ■

For more information please visit
www.escape-tech.co.uk

Encode delivers Microsoft Dynamics



(L-R) Mike McLeish of Encode, John Bryce of Sartor Offshore Rescue Ltd

Encode Software, an Escape Group company has announced the launch of Encode Dynamic Platform, an innovative software system developed to fit the exact requirements of companies operating in the oil and gas industry.

Encode Dynamic Platform is a version of Microsoft's comprehensive business management solution Microsoft Dynamic's NAV which has been customised by Encode to meet the needs of businesses operating in the oil and gas industry.

Mike McLeish of Encode said: "Having successfully integrated Microsoft Dynamics NAV within several of our clients businesses it became clear that there was room for the system to be streamlined to better match the needs of a specific industry."

Earlier this year Encode deployed Microsoft Dynamics NAV for Sartor Offshore Rescue Ltd. The company specialise in building and operating multi-functional offshore support vessels employing around 250 mariners and 14 people on-shore at the office in Aberdeen.

The firm was looking to review the way administration and operating activities were carried

out in order to improve the consistency of operational processes, both now and in the future.

John Bryce, managing director at Sartor Offshore Rescue Ltd, said: "Above all we wanted a simple solution that was flexible enough to meet our increasing needs, without being too complicated or difficult to implement. It also had to meet all our accounting requirements, as well as provide an effective development environment in which to operate complex logistics applications."

As a result of deploying the software, Sartor managers have an up-to-date view of operations across the organisation. Information can be consolidated into the centralised Microsoft Dynamics NAV system making it easier to access and compare data. Users can generate Key Performance Indicator reports track and trace goods effectively throughout the logistics flow, measure operational efficiency and produce meaningful comparisons.

Bryce continued: "The system gives us considerable advantage in managing our development plans, and because it is very closely based on the functionality of other windows tools, such as outlook and word, our employees were

able to adapt to adapt to the system very quickly.

"Everyone at Sartor has enthusiastically embraced Microsoft Dynamics NAV. We were given a short demonstration by Encode consultant Mike McLeish, and haven't looked back since. The ease of setup and tight integration with the Microsoft products we already use allowed us to get up and running quickly, and we're already seeing increased productivity, reduced costs and smarter decision-making."

As a result of successful projects for companies such as Sartor, Encode developed two specific versions of the software; one for the oil and gas industry and the other tailored to the construction industry called Dynamics Foundations. These two products offer the same benefits associated with Microsoft's award winning Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) but have been streamlined to suit individual clients needs. ■

For more information on Microsoft Dynamics please contact Encode Software on
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