PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Brocade Streamlines Disaster Recovery for the City of Beverly Hills

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technology Challenge

- Implement a disaster recovery plan that would ensure the availability and reliability of disparate IT environments
- Restore information vital to emergency response personnel in minutes rather than the previous 3-week restore time
- Provide first-responders with the information they need to quickly respond in an emergency situation

Solution

- Brocade® Professional Services Disaster Recovery Planning

Benefits

- Increased reliability and availability of the city's emergency response systems, including police, medical, and fire dispatch
- Improved restore time for critical systems in case of a disaster
- Less downtime for all IT systems in the event of maintenance, configuration, or new deployment

The City of Beverly Hills has a population of 35,000 permanent residents and as many as 200,000 commuters, shoppers, and tourists visiting the city on any given day. Known throughout the world as one of the most glamorous places to live, eat, play, and shop, the city has a civic duty to provide emergency response and public works services to all of these people. These services include police, fire protection, public utilities, city government, and recreation. Some services—such as police, fire protection, and emergency response—are vital to the public's safety and well being, especially in a disaster. Because these departments are continuously becoming dependent on the IT infrastructure to provide these basic services, the city management tasked the IT department with implementing a reliable disaster recovery plan in case of a disaster or any other form of unplanned downtime.

"The city management has really driven this need to develop a better disaster recovery system through the IT department," said Keone Kali, Director of Information Technology for Beverly Hills. "Our IT infrastructure supports everything from Microsoft Office files and payroll systems to 911 emergency response calls and wireless devices in police and fire vehicles. As we are becoming more reliant on technology to proficiently do our jobs, the City Council needed to be assured that a contingency plan is in place."

Despite this need to answer to the city government, the IT department is faced with a difficult task because of the inherent complexity of the legacy IT infrastructure. While the hosts are centralized in one data center, 750 workstations are spread out in offices and stations across the city's 5.5 square miles. Needless to say, it is a heterogeneous environment that isn't easy to back up, much less recover. The city needed help designing and implementing a reliable disaster recovery plan that decentralized the city's critical data and allowed the staff to restore lost data more quickly in case of downtime.

SOLUTIONS AND BENEFITS

In order to implement a disaster recovery plan, the city's IT department engaged the Brocade Professional Services organization to help assess its needs and plan the most economical solution based on its legacy equipment. Together, Brocade consultants and city management identified critical systems (emergency response dispatch, wireless network access in police cars, demographics, and structural schematics) that would be needed in case of a disaster.

According to the Brocade consultants, the key to improving the city's restore time was to deploy a second data center that could function on its own should the main site be damaged or rendered unusable. Data could be automatically mirrored to the secondary site and host the emergency response systems in a disaster.

However, instead of purchasing twice the hardware and configuration needed to support operations, Brocade consultants recommended the city instead decentralize its data center by splitting the infrastructure between the sites and shift resources between the two if needed. Not only did this save much money, but having its data decentralized reduced the chance that all systems would go down at once.

The city's IT team plans to continue working with Brocade to decentralize its infrastructure, improve its WAN capability, strengthen its ability to provide reliable IT service at all times, and improve restore times in case of a disaster.

HYPOTHETICAL DISASTER SCENARIO

A 7.0 earthquake hits off the coast of Southern California, causing structural damage throughout Beverly Hills. Several downtown buildings suffer severe damage; the main data center is destroyed. Moments later, resources are automatically shifted to a mirrored data center housed in a remote site miles from downtown. All systems reboot and emergency services spring into action.

911 operators field calls from around the city and pass information along electronically to the police and fire dispatchers, who prioritize the calls and direct personnel already in the field. As firefighters battle flames in an office building downtown, dispatchers pull information from a centralized database telling officers how many people work in the building and on what floors.

This hypothetical natural disaster is one in which employees of the City of Beverly Hills have trained for their entire careers. If IT systems go down and the city is without a disaster recovery plan in place, it is easy to see how the situation can get out of control pretty quickly. Access to information is key to first response and the city has an obligation to protect that information.

The IT department has been able to leverage years of experience that Brocade Professional Services consultants have. By working with Brocade to prioritize civic needs, design the disaster recovery system, and implement the plan, the City of Beverly Hills has ensured that its emergency response team is armed with the tools and information to protect the public in case of an emergency.

For more information, visit www.brocade.com.

> "In an event where minutes can make the difference in a life or death situation, we're looking to Brocade to help us get our current time frame way down."
>
> — *Keone Kali,*
> *Director of IT, City of Beverly Hills*

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