

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY:
HTK

HTK safeguards service levels for its customers and enhances competitive advantage with CA XOsoft High Availability.



Customer Profile

Industry: IT
Organisation: HTK
Revenue: £4 million

Business Impact Summary

Business:

HTK provides on-demand voice and media services for customer interaction management. Founded in 1996, HTK has more than 50 customers, including mobile operators, UK police forces and utilities companies.

Challenge:

To meet its service level agreements (SLAs) and maintain customer satisfaction, HTK's systems need to remain highly available. HTK was already using data replication to safeguard business continuity, but its existing solution was complex and difficult to manage.

Solution:

HTK migrated to CA XOsoft™ High Availability. The solution enables continuous data replication of the company's email environment, subscriber databases and transaction archives, all of which contain business-critical data. In the event of a failure at HTK's primary site, the company can failover to its replicated environment within a matter of minutes.

Result:

CA XOsoft High Availability helps safeguard business continuity and reduce business risk for HTK and its customers. As a result, the company is able to meet its SLAs and avoid penalty payments, thereby protecting its reputation and profitability.



CA Customer Alliance Program



Business

Automated telephony solutions

HTK provides on-demand voice and media services for customer interaction management. HTK's services include consultancy, concept-to-market trials and custom solution delivery.

The company's self-service and automated telephony solutions help organisations communicate better and more efficiently with their customers. Its HTK Horizon™ solution is a hosted secure platform that enables any organisation to create, integrate and manage interactive voice, Web and mobile services.

Founded in 1996, HTK has more than 50 customers, including mobile operators, UK police forces and utilities companies.

Challenge

Maintaining business continuity

HTK's client base relies on the company's services to maintain customer satisfaction levels. As a result, business continuity is very important to HTK. As Justin Bowser, Director, Public Sector at HTK, explains, "Downtime would not only impact HTK's reputation, but also that of our customers. For our public sector customers — who often use mass notification services to engage with local residents — disruption could even have repercussions for public safety."

As a result, HTK is subject to stringent SLAs, which stipulate heavy penalties for every minute of downtime. The ability to meet these SLAs is particularly pertinent, as HTK recently became an approved government supplier under the Catalist procurement framework. Demonstrating compliance with SLAs is an essential requirement for HTK to maintain its status as an approved vendor.

To meet its business continuity goals, HTK was using the inbuilt log shipping capabilities of its software systems for data replication. For example, HTK's email data was replicated directly through Microsoft Exchange Server from its primary datacentre to a standby facility.

Although this method had been successfully used in anger on a number of occasions, HTK has a mixed environment including both Microsoft and Linux technologies and was therefore reliant on a number of different systems to ensure its business-critical data was replicated.

This approach was particularly complex within HTK's Web and email infrastructure. In the event of an incident, a database administrator would have to manually enter command line instructions, which in a highly pressured situation, could result in human error. "We only have five staff in our IT team, so maximising efficiency is very important for us," comments Bowser. "We wanted to simplify our disaster recovery processes in order to reduce business risk."

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Justin Bowser

Director, Public Sector, HTK

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Solution

Seamless data replication

HTK explored a number of data replication options before selecting CA XOssoft High Availability and purchasing the licences from Redstor. The solution was implemented in January 2007 and replicates data within three Microsoft environments at HTK. These include the company's:

- Microsoft Exchange email infrastructure
- Operational SQL Server 2005 database containing customer and subscriber data
- Archive database of all customer transaction data, used for billing and reporting purposes.

In total, these systems incorporate two terabytes of business-critical data, of which approximately 100 megabytes a day is replicated across HTK's MPLS (Multiprotocol Label Switching) wide area network (WAN).

Using CA XOssoft High Availability, HTK can failover to its standby environment, at a few clicks of a button, in a matter of minutes. “The failover process is very simple using the CA solution and easier to administer in a high pressure situation. It is also 15 minutes faster than our previous method,” comments Bowser.

This time-saving is vital, as HTK's internal governance framework stipulates that systems need to be up and running within an hour of a failure at the company's primary data centre.

Rapid recovery for all scenarios

CA XOssoft High Availability's integrated Continuous Data Protection (CDP) functionality means that HTK is able to roll back to recover data corrupted by a virus, application failure or human error. “Using the CA solution we can safeguard the integrity of our data and easily recover information from the standby site if a member of staff accidentally deletes a file,” adds Bowser.

HTK tests its data replication and recovery process through CA XOssoft High Availability every quarter as part of its rolling disaster recovery strategy programme.

Result

Reduced risk and enhanced competitive advantage

As well as enabling HTK to recover quickly and efficiently from an incident, the CA solution is easy to manage on a day-to-day basis. Bowser comments, “We are less dependent on specific skills to operate CA XOssoft High Availability, which means we can utilise resources more effectively.”

- By safeguarding business continuity with the CA solution, HTK is able to:
- Meet customer SLAs and avoid penalty payments
- Safeguard its own and customers' reputations
- Enhance competitive advantage.

“CA XOsoft High Availability helps us reduce business risk and protect profitability. Maintaining business continuity in line with best practice methodologies is crucial to HTK for pitching and delivering services to large organisations,” concludes Bowser.

By helping to improve data integrity and availability, CA XOsoft High Availability is an important building block in HTK’s ISO27001 Information Security Management System.



About Redstor

Founded in 1998, Redstor provides a range of Managed Services and traditional IT Solutions focused around storage, data management and protection. Redstor has over 10 years of expertise in supporting, monitoring and managing customers’ data, either at their site or on Redstor’s own on-line backup platform. Whether delivering IT as a service or as a solution, Redstor provides businesses with the confidence that critical data will always be accessible and secure.

To learn more and see how CA software solutions enable other organizations to unify and simplify IT management for better business results, visit ca.com/success.