

UNITED COOPERATIVE ASSURANCE CO.

UCA chooses NEC for its High Availability and Disaster Recovery Solution

United Cooperative Assurance Company (UCA) is a Saudi Arabia-based public shareholding company engaged in the provision of all classes of insurance and reinsurance business services within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Since its establishment in 1974, UCA has always played a major role in the insurance industry and underwrites all insurance lines including property, casualty, liability, marine cargo, marine hull, aviation, life, medical and credit.



EXPECTED BENEFITS

- A cost effective High Availability and Disaster Recovery solution
- User friendly, easy to deploy, easy to manage solution
- Absolute reliability & good support needed

UCA WAS LOOKING FOR DATAPROTECTION, BACK-UP AND ARCHIVING SOLUTIONS

The aim

UCA's data and nature of business are extremely sensitive. That is why UCA chose to deploy a High Availability and Disaster Recovery Solution. When looking into the different existing solutions, they realized they would only go for a solution which could guarantee ZERO Downtime because of the critical nature of the business.

UCA did not only want the security of absolute Data Protection but also a professional Backup Solution and a proper Archiving Solution. What they also required was a High Availability Solution that would be easy to manage and involve a second Disaster Recovery site. On top of that, UCA also needed a Disaster Recovery which would be compliant with the Saudi High Availability Requirements.

The existing infrastructure

UCA's mission critical application (Oracle based) serves almost 200 sales outlets nationwide through Citrix and requires a perfect High Availability Solution. UCA had a dozen Rack Servers in place for file sharing, e-mail and database. There was neither Disaster Recovery nor High Availability Solution in place.

Back in 2000, UCA had MS Windows NT & Oracle 8i installed on an existing server to host their main database, it was later in 2006 that UCA moved to a new Server with MS Win 2003 64 bit & Oracle 10g.



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THE SOLUTION

After a careful and thorough investigation of the different Disaster Recovery solutions including Clustering solutions, Backup and Storage Solutions, NEC ExpressCluster has been chosen as Disaster Recovery solution.

In UCA's Head Office NEC ExpressCluster has been installed over a NEC Fault Tolerant Server, serving the main Oracle based application. This NEC Fault Tolerant has been connected to a NEC SAN storage unit (D3-10) as well as a NEC Tape Library (T16A2).

One additional NEC Fault Tolerant Server with slightly lower specification is also working as a File Server in the UCA's Head Office.

- As UCA had been looking for a solution which would be easy to deploy and to administer, the proposed NEC Solution by its partner NajTech was a complete relief. Indeed, the other options turned out to be much more challenging, either in terms of administration, where heterogeneous solutions were proposed, or in terms of pricing, where they came out to be extremely expensive.

- The deployment of the solution took one quarter only. Four NEC Certified Engineers From NajTech and two NEC Engineers from the regional office were involved. On UCA's side, one IT Director and 2 senior engineers took care of this project.

A Remote Disaster Recovery site

- A branch office at almost 30 km from the head Office was chosen as Disaster Recovery site. This site now has a dedicated Wireless Solution and contains a NEC Fault Tolerant Server with NEC ExpressCluster integrated. This Fault Tolerant is connected to a NEC SAN storage D1-10.
- There were also 15 NEC Servers installed as a replacement, additional infrastructure, serving for File Sharing, AD, SQL DB, E-mail, AV, Backup and other Solutions.

Why was the NEC solution chosen?

- During the qualification process, UCA found out that NEC's entire Solution is robust, cost effective & simple. In contrast with standard clustering approaches, UCA was positively impressed by how different the hardware architecture of NEC's Fault Tolerant Server is.

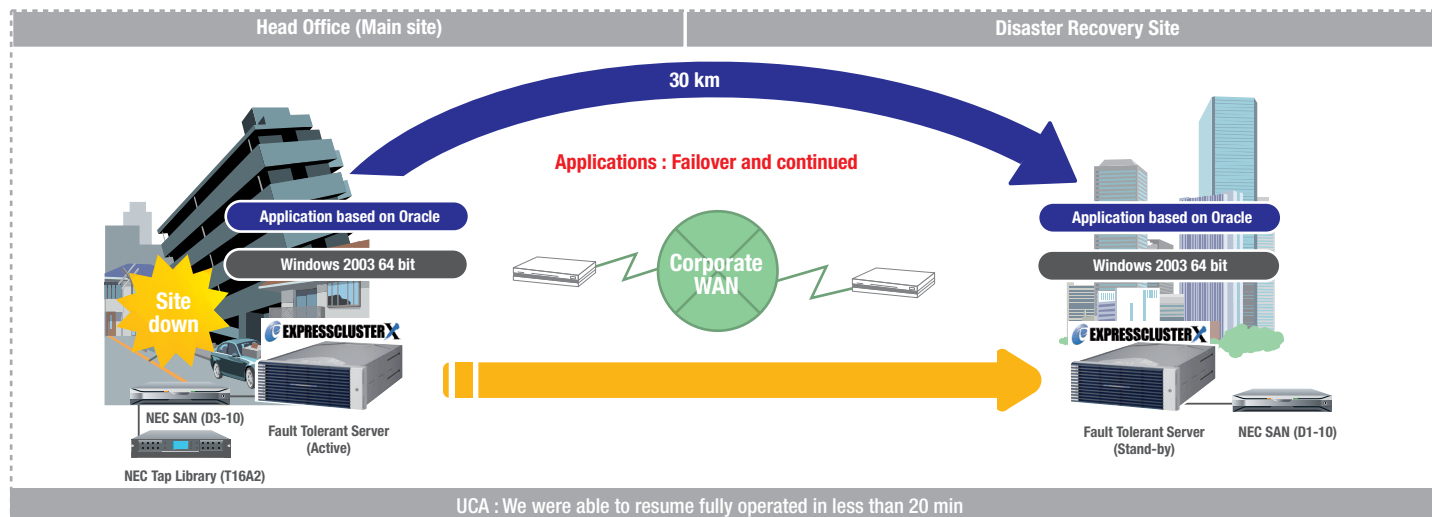
What were the quantified benefits?

- Productivity of Company Staff increased by 15%
- Downtime of the main application reduced by 90%
- Users satisfaction rate increased by 20%

"It was really a wise decision to select NEC and NajTech as technology partners. Our choice proved to be right on the sad occurrence of the Jeddah floods of 2011."

Said Mr. Labib Assaf, UCA IT Technical Manager.

"We were switched over to ONLINE MODE within few minutes through our other Disaster Recovery Site Link and we are proud to have NEC ExpressCluster installed within our IT Infrastructure as a Disaster Recovery Contingency Plan!"



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