Kaseya helps WakaDigital ensure business continuity for its healthcare clients after destructive tornado

Visibility and remote access into client environments kept systems running optimally when data availability and reliability was needed the most.

It was June 1, 2011, starting at 4pm ET, a series of tornados tore through the central and western part of the state, uprooting trees, knocking down buildings and basically destroying everything in its path. For Jacob Braun, President and Chief Operating Officer of WakaDigital, the tornado would threaten to disrupt the way his company, an IT service & security provider for healthcare organizations across the state, provided support to its clients.

"New England can get a lot of snow, even the odd hurricane every once in a while, but a tornado? It was the farthest thing from my mind," Braun said. "As a provider of IT services to healthcare organizations, we need to maintain availability of critical data no matter what Mother Nature throws our way."

The tornados that hit Western and Central Massachusetts created a unique scenario with sustained winds of up to 160 miles per hour causing damage to transportation, power and IT infrastructures alike. Afterwards, WakaDigital needed to ensure that its clients' systems were online and in production. This is critical to the IT service provider's clients' missions—especially in a disaster scenario when access to pertinent patient data could be the difference between life and death.

"Downtime could quite literally be the kiss of death for our clients," Braun said. "They rely on us to provide reliable, uninterrupted access to critical data. We need to be serious about their business continuity because the stakes are so high."

Complete visibility into and control over clients' distributed systems

WakaDigital guarantees uptime through its adoption of the Kaseya IT Automation Framework, a remote and automatic IT systems management solution that provides complete access into and control over distributed systems. Kaseya lets administrators know what is out on the network, how systems are being used and who are using them. Then, Kaseya provides the management functionality to make changes to distributed machines, so that the systems are up and running optimally and are consistent with the organization's IT policies.

With Kaseya, regular maintenance such as patch management, software deployment, virus and malware protection and hard drive defrag can be automated across groups of machines and scheduled to run during off-hours. Technicians can also remotely control systems for remediation in the background without users even aware maintenance is taking place, ensuring that users' work was not interrupted.

The typical New England snow day rarely causes damage to the actual systems. Instead, most snowstorms issues can easily be fixed through mobile computing and remote access technologies.

Agent-based architecture ensures continuous management of systems

Kaseya's agent-based architecture gives WakaDigital staff the visibility they needed to check in on clients' systems and allowed them to remediate any issues caused by tornado damage, power outages or other network issues. This visibility allowed them to see where data was stored, where users were trying to log into the network and how to get clients' IT environments back to normal—or how to

wakadigital

Kaseya Customer
WakaDigital Media Corporation
Amherst, Mass.
www.wakadigital.com

Industry
IT Services & Security for
Regulated Industries

Business Challenge
- Maintain business continuity for its mental and behavioral healthcare clients
- Ensure health professionals have 24x7, consistent and reliable access to patient data
- Be prepared for any disaster scenario, whether it's a localized fire or widespread weather event

Market Solution
- Business Continuity

Key Benefits
- Delivered consistent IT services to clients during 2011 Massachusetts tornado
- Remediated downed systems quickly after tornado
- Give clients peace of mind that they will have high-level, uninterrupted IT services and support no matter the time, day or weather pattern

Kaseya

implement alternative methods to access critical data. As a result, administrators were able to continue to provide high-level IT services and support in the immediate aftermath of the tornado.

"Kaseya allowed us to assure clients that as soon as they were able to restore power and connect to the Internet, WakaDigital could immediately support them," Braun said. "That was a powerful message to send to our clients. Virus and malware protection, patch management, end user support—we were able to provide all these services as if a natural disaster hadn't just devastated the region."

WakaDigital's clients had peace of mind that their systems were continually under management to help them in their business continuity efforts, enabling users to work remotely at home, or anywhere they could find a reliable Internet connection. In the aftermath of the tornado, critical work continued uninterrupted because of an agile IT strategy enabled by WakaDigital.

"Just as WakaDigital has business continuity plans for our internal operations, we work closely with our clients to establish clear plans for their organizations as well," Braun said. "We ensure that when our clients activate their continuity of operations plans, our services continue to dovetail with their business."

According to Braun, administrators would not have been assured of complete visibility into their clients' networks if WakaDigital had been using an agentless architecture for remote IT systems management. With agentless solutions, once the network goes down as a result of a failed router or switch, access into and control over distributed machines becomes impossible because those solutions rely on a central management server to remotely probe networks for systems and execute commands. Braun says it would have taken days to rebuild those networks to a level necessary to deliver the high-level services and support WakaDigital's clients have come to rely upon. By leveraging the agent-based architecture of Kaseya, it was possible to reach and protect all users' machines wherever they were--even remote workers.

"I love the power and flexibility to perform any task on any computer from anywhere," Braun said. "I just log into Kaseya [Virtual Server Administrator], and I can execute commands over the Internet through the lightweight agent we've pre-installed on each system."

Ensure business continuity when it's needed the most

Kaseya allowed WakaDigital to continue providing high-level IT services and support to its clients during a natural disaster that wiped out a large chunk of the region's infrastructure. As a result, WakaDigital's healthcare clients had access to critical data, enabling them to diagnose and treat patients quickly and more accurately, likely saving lives in the process. Whether it's snow, tornado or other weather event, Kaseya gives WakaDigital the IT systems management framework to ensure it is prepared for the unexpected.

According to Braun, WakaDigital has a core competency supporting behavioral and mental health organizations, and given the nature of some patients' conditions and disorders, some patients can't always convey their health issues when they need help. Only 24x7 availability of patient data guarantees quick, accurate and reliable care.

"Disaster recovery is critical for our business model. We're confident knowing we have Kaseya on our side to help meet these goals," Braun said. "We are able to continually provide high-level IT services and support to our healthcare field clients, allowing them to continue operations no matter what is thrown at them, which often can be a matter of life and death."

About Kaseya

Kaseya is the leading global provider of IT Systems Management software. Kaseya solutions empower virtually everyone — from individual consumers to large corporations and IT service providers — to proactively monitor, manage and control IT assets remotely, easily and efficiently from one integrated Web-based platform.

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Jacob Braun
President and Chief Operating Officer, WakaDigital Media Corporation

Quick recovery key to business continuity

Sometimes there's nothing you can do to avoid downtime. Weather and other acts of God take out infrastructure, sometimes leaving you with no redundancy. However, organizations can mitigate the impact of downtime by speeding up recovery time.

During this Massachusetts tornado, lightning struck WakaDigital's office, creating an electrical surge that took out the firewall and some switches and routers. Immediately, administrators were alerted to the outage on their mobile devices and they were able to remotely re-image internal systems and fail-over onto servers in one of WakaDigital's datacenters. A few clicks and the system was back up and running—the whole recovery process taking less than an hour.

While WakaDigital experienced some unavoidable downtime of its management platforms, its quick response and activation of its business continuity plans ensured a quick recovery before its clients were aware of a blip. The result was that WakaDigital could continue to provide high-level IT services to its clients as if nothing had happened at all.

"The true testament to the success of a business continuity plan is when clients aren't even aware that it's been activated," Braun said.

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