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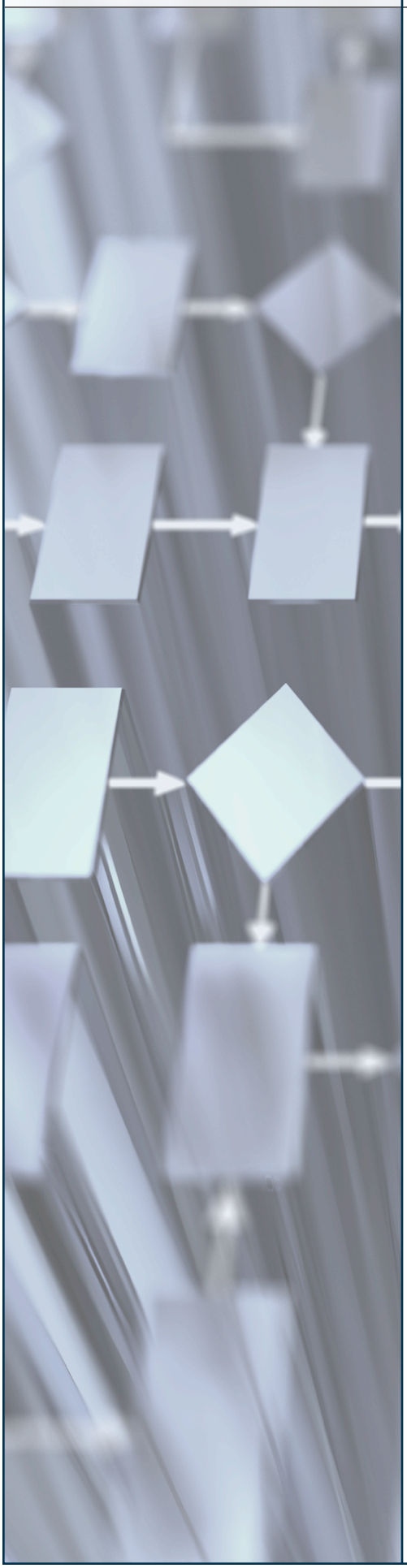

Ensuring Recoverability with Automated DR Testing and Monitoring

At a time when businesses are under more pressure than ever to ensure continuity and minimize data loss, IT organizations have no way to accurately measure how well their disaster recovery (DR) plans will work when they need them. While the complexity and scale of today's infrastructures can make any recovery difficult, the limitations of traditional disaster recovery only add to the challenge.

A DR test should emulate how well business operations can be transferred to a remote facility to get the organization back online within a specified Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and Recovery Point Objective (RPO). However, most companies don't have the time or resources to execute by-the-book DR tests and minimize the scope of the tests they do run by:

- Testing just a few key business services of the infrastructure
- Keeping servers online while performing the test
- Conducting orderly system shutdowns rather than simulating an abrupt cessation of operations
- Testing failover servers but not applications
- Testing applications but not simulating the actual load the application must bear following a recovery
- Neglecting to test dependencies, data inconsistencies and mapping errors

In the end, these test results are, at best, incomplete and can leave critical applications and data unprotected. Plus, the moment a change is made to the infrastructure, the test results are thrown into question because there is no way to easily assess what impact that change may have on any other aspect of the environment.

The Value of Automated DR Testing and Monitoring

RecoverGuard automated DR testing and monitoring software is a new approach to DR management that helps companies make up for the shortcomings of traditional DR testing. RecoverGuard automatically checks for hidden vulnerabilities and identifies problems that often go undetected so they can be addressed before they impact business operations.

The Value of Automated DR Testing and Monitoring

- Uncovers gaps and vulnerabilities traditional DR tests miss
- Provides more robust protection between full tests
- Ensures a higher level of DR readiness
- Enhances the overall effectiveness of periodic testing

Uncovering Hidden Gaps and Vulnerabilities to Minimize Risk

RecoverGuard is able to detect many of the configuration gaps or data protection vulnerabilities that pose serious risks to the business. These risks fall into two categories:

Data Protection Risks: Application data, metadata and data links can be jeopardized by gaps in replication, setup, sequence of procedures, accessibility, mapping, zoning and more. Maintaining the completeness of the data and its internal structure consistency is a critical, but difficult, task. The potential risks include data loss and RPO violations if data is irrecoverable or recoverable but to a point in time that violates a required RPO.

Availability Risks: Standby hosts, DR servers and cluster members may be unable to fulfill their role because of erroneous configuration, incorrect mapping of replicated storage to standby hosts, standby host configuration errors, and other issues. The potential risks include extended recovery time and potential RTO violations.

Powerful Gap Detection

Using its powerful detection and analysis tools, RecoverGuard scans storage, databases, servers and replication configurations for data protection and availability risks that traditional DR tests miss, or that are created by configuration changes which are made after a DR test is performed. The software identifies vulnerabilities such as unprotected databases or database partitions, noncompliant replication configurations, and data that cannot be recovered to a valid consistency point.

The RecoverGuard Data Collection Engine automatically collects this data and correlates the applications to the underlying infrastructure. The discovery and scanning process can be set to perform periodic rescans to detect potential configuration problems when they occur so that they can be addressed before they impact production availability. This allows RecoverGuard to detect and assess changes over time and allows for ongoing data protection monitoring.

Comprehensive Analysis

Once the data is collected, RecoverGuard performs a comprehensive dependency analysis and builds a detailed disaster recovery topology map, which illustrates the dependencies of the applications through the infrastructure, including those at multiple sites. This topology serves as the foundation for the analysis by RecoverGuard's Gap Detection Engine.

The Gap Detection Engine uses a gap signature knowledgebase of thousands of potential data protection gaps to automatically detect potential gaps and best-practice violations in your DR configuration. This is the equivalent of performing millions to tens of millions of manual comparisons.

When a gap match is identified, RecoverGuard issues a ticket with a detailed description of the risk, its impact and a suggested remediation approach. This allows administrators to be proactive in minimizing risk to the organization by resolving issues before they escalate into major problems that require a protracted effort to remove.

Greater Insights for DR Readiness

The need to ensure business continuity has never been more important, and enterprises are making significant investments to design and build solid disaster recovery systems. But the real challenge is not in building the environment – it is ensuring that it will be constantly ready to resume operation in the event of a disaster.

While traditional DR testing can provide the IT organization with valuable insights, it cannot ensure recoverability because it cannot detect many of the configuration gaps that can derail a DR effort. Only automated DR testing and monitoring solutions, like RecoverGuard, can enable true DR readiness.

About Continuity Software

Continuity Software™ is a leading provider of Disaster Recovery Management (DRM) solutions. Its RecoverGuard™ software mitigates disaster recovery (DR) risks by detecting data protection gaps between customers' primary production and disaster recovery sites and/or localized DR solution. With RecoverGuard software, customers can now confidently validate their DR strategy, and ultimately, ensure their data protection and business continuity goals.

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