

CASH Financial Services Group

CFSG's chief trading systems were adequately protected against disaster, but the company needed to minimize the effect on customer service if its back-office systems suffered downtime. By implementing PlateSpin Forge® from Micro Focus®, CFSG can now restore its back-office systems within just 15 to 30 minutes. PlateSpin Forge has also streamlined backup management, enhancing operating efficiency, which in turn substantially raises service levels.



Overview

CASH Financial Services Group (CFSG) is a leading financial services conglomerate in China. The company offers clients a range of online and offline services, including securities brokerage, commodities trading, foreign exchange and asset management. CFSG is headquartered in Hong Kong, with 10 other offices across mainland China, employing around 500 people.

Challenge

While much of CFSG's business depends on its online trading platforms, the company also relies on a number of back-office systems to manage internal processes and interact with clients.

“What attracted us to PlateSpin Forge was the ease of implementation and operation. The web-based interface makes it easy to manage, and it is much less work than our previous backup solution.”

WINKY YAN

Head of Information Technology Department
CASH Financial Services Group

In the event of a serious problem at the company's main data center, the IT team would have to recover at least 30 servers from the previous night's tape backups. They could lose up to a whole day's data. Getting all the servers up and running again would probably take between 10 and 24 hours, significantly limiting CFSG's productivity and affecting service to CFSG's clients.

“If ever our Microsoft Exchange e-mail servers, our file servers or our accounting system suffered significant downtime, it would seriously affect our productivity and work processes,” said Stephen Ho, Manager, Systems & Technology at CFSG. “More importantly, it might affect our level of service to clients. So protecting these systems and restoring them within the shortest timescales became important to us.”

Solution

CFSG's IT team looked at solutions from several different vendors and became interested in PlateSpin Forge.

“What attracted us to PlateSpin Forge was the ease of implementation and operation,” said Stephen Ho, manager of Systems and Technology at CFSG. “The web-based interface



At a Glance

■ Industry

Financial Services

■ Location

China

■ Challenge

To prevent significant productivity loss in the event of a service outage, the organization needed an effective disaster recovery solution.

■ Solution

Use PlateSpin Forge as a disaster recovery platform to failover during a service outage.

■ Results

- + Provided the ability to recover systems within 15 to 30 minutes
- + Introduced a simple user interface that's easy to use

“PlateSpin Forge not only protects our systems and data from disaster, but also makes our whole IT landscape easier to manage.”

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makes it easy to manage, and it is much less work than our previous backup solution: There's no need to change tapes every day.”

CFSG was able to implement the new solution in just one month.

The PlateSpin Forge appliance is located in a different physical data center, and is configured to take snapshots remotely of each system at different intervals—some every hour, some once every 24 hours, depending on the importance of the data. If one of the production servers experiences a fault, the IT team can fail over to PlateSpin Forge within 15 minutes, and then restore back to the main system as soon as it repairs the fault.

“Thankfully, we have never yet needed to use the solution in a real disaster scenario,” said Mr. Ho. “But we have tested it extensively and we are impressed by the ability to recover systems quickly and reliably without having to worry about the technical aspects. Recovering a system from tapes is a complex process that requires a lot of technical expertise; but with PlateSpin Forge, it is just a matter of a few mouse-clicks.”

Results

Because of PlateSpin Forge, CFSG can now recover systems within 15 to 30 minutes in the event of a major failure, instead of suffering 10 to 24 hours of downtime.

“As a client-focused company, CFSG has been adopting the most advanced technologies to look after interests of our clients,” said Mr. Ho. “PlateSpin Forge enables us to safeguard our back-office systems against downtime, protecting our business against the adverse impact on productivity, customer service and prestige that such downtime might cause. For this reason, PlateSpin Forge has become a very important part of our sustainability strategy in the long run.”

The solution's simple user interface makes it quick to learn and easy to use, so CFSG's IT team has significantly reduced the amount of time it spends on managing backups, thus enhancing operating efficiency.

“It's difficult to precisely calculate the cost of downtime on these systems, but PlateSpin Forge has indeed saved our manpower, streamlined our work processes and enhanced our operating efficiency,” said Mr. Yan.

“In the ever-changing financial community, data protection and system integrity are pressing and critical, and CFSG sees these as top priorities,” said Mr. Yan. “PlateSpin Forge not only protects our systems and data from disaster, but also makes our whole IT landscape easier to manage.”