Success Story

Peace of mind for Bekaert

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Willy Nelissen, corporate IT infrastructure manager, Bekaert

With IT systems now playing a central role in most companies’ operations, business recovery strategies have become very important. Bekaert, a global manufacturing company with headquarters based in Belgium, has built its strategy around HP’s Business Recovery Services.

Bekaert is a worldwide leader in advanced metal transformation and coating technologies, focused on high added value market segments. Founded in 1880, it now has worldwide sales of some €2.8 billion. The different business units wanted to ensure business continuity at its main Belgian site, where SAP R/3 is the core application.

“Whilst Bekaert can tolerate some interruption to IT services, we still need to guarantee system recovery within a few days at most. Our aim was to find a cost-effective solution that would give us peace of mind,” explained Willy Nelissen, corporate IT infrastructure manager.

With Bekaert’s infrastructure being based mainly on HP-UX systems, the company turned to HP to supply this solution. HP proposed its Business Recovery Core Service, which allows recovery to operating system level within 24 hours and to application level within 72 hours using, in Bekaert’s case, a mobile recovery centre. The fact that the service also covered Bekaert’s non-HP systems was a major advantage.
Since the Bekaert infrastructure is outsourced to HP, successful implementation demanded good co-operation internally within HP. To provide recovery up to application level, HP also worked with Bekaert's application service provider, Deloitte & Touche.

Working solution
HP met the deadline of providing a working solution within six months. Like all HP Business Recovery Services, the service includes disaster rehearsal. HP was able to complete the rehearsal successfully within just 72 hours. Although Nelissen hopes that disaster will not strike, he is confident that if it does, Bekaert's systems will very quickly be up-and-running once more.

A typical mission-critical disaster-tolerant service would cost about ten times as much as the solution provided to Bekaert. For a traditional manufacturer such as Bekaert, seeking to minimise its IT budget in unfavourable market conditions, the cost advantage is very important.

The HP solution will soon be extended to another 12 Bekaert sites in Belgium. This may be followed by other locations elsewhere in Europe.

“No other company had the expertise to implement a comparable business continuity solution, working together with HP outsourcing services for such a large and complex multivendor environment. Having the ongoing IT services and the disaster recovery services delivered by HP gives us a seamless solution. HP is providing us with peace of mind as well as protecting shareholder value,” concluded Nelissen.