

VERITAS Cluster Server™ Fire Drill

DATACENTER AVAILABILITY THROUGH AUTOMATED TESTING

Continuous access to data and applications has become an operational necessity for today's enterprise environments. Downtime, whether it is planned or unplanned, is no longer an option as this downtime may result in lost revenue, reduced productivity and diminished user satisfaction.

Many enterprises choose to implement a datacenter availability solution, either with data replication alone or in combination with application clustering, to protect IT and business operations in the event of a site outage. However, the effectiveness of these solutions is often in doubt because application and storage configurations change frequently and most enterprises do not have the time or budget to perform adequate testing of their business continuity plans including the recovery infrastructure.

The result is that not all required data is properly replicated, causing applications at the remote site to fail when needed and putting the overall business at risk. In short, enterprises today need the ability to test and verify their recovery in an automated, cost-effective, and integrated manner.

VERITAS CLUSTER SERVER FIRE DRILL

Recognizing this need, VERITAS has extended VERITAS Cluster Server to allow enterprises to validate their replicated data, as well as the applications that will use that data, regardless of the underlying replication technology. The Fire Drill feature of VERITAS Cluster Server provides complete automated testing of replicated data using the same application clustering configuration responsible for bringing up the recovery infrastructure systems following a disaster. The Fire Drill process is easy to learn and initiate, has zero impact on production environments, and can be integrated into the recovery and restoration components of any Business Continuity or Disaster Recovery plan. In addition, Fire Drill's use of potentially idle remote site hardware assets reduces total cost of ownership.

FIRE DRILL IN OPERATION

VERITAS Cluster Server Fire Drill is available around the clock. Fire Drill supports two methods of data replication: host-based replication with VERITAS Volume Replicator and array-based replication with EMC SRDF and Hitachi TrueCopy. In the Volume Replicator approach, a Space Optimized Snapshot (SOS) is taken at the recovery site. The space optimized snapshot obtains the point-in-time copy of data that has changed so the data is immediately available at the recovery site and requires very little additional disk space. In the array-based replication approach the space optimized function cannot be used; rather, Fire Drill uses native array based replication functions to create/delete a data snapshot.

These snapshots require a full copy of the replicated data and thus require significantly more storage when compared to Cluster Server Fire Drill with Volume Replicator.

After the point in time copy has been created, Fire Drill facilitates automated testing of the quality and usability of the recovery site data with the actual applications needed post-disaster. After testing has finished, the snapshot is destroyed so that the disk space can be available for future tests. Users can customize their Fire Drill using an automated setup wizard which creates a special purpose function that automates point-in-time copy creation plus startup/shutdown of the desired application(s).

BENEFITS OF FIRE DRILL

- Validates both the replicated data and the applications
- Validates new data/hardware/application configuration changes, protects against administrative errors
- Measures actual Recovery Point (RPO) and Recovery Time (RTO) objectives to benchmark against service level agreements
- Maximizes server and storage ROI
- Facilitates off-host/batch processing, e.g. VERITAS i3 application performance tuning
- Assists with legal compliance regarding recovery
- May be performed frequently, and at any time
- Zero production impact
- Leverages existing host-based and array replication

VERITAS Cluster Server Fire Drill provides cost-effective, automated testing of datacenter availability and recovery infrastructure, with zero production impact, in advance of a disaster. As an ideal component of business continuity plan testing and maintenance, Fire Drill helps enterprises rest assured that their investment in datacenter availability will pay off when the time comes.

SUPPORTED PLATFORMS AND VCS VERSIONS:

Support:	
VERITAS Cluster Server Version	4.0
Platforms	Solaris, AIX, HP-UX, Linux
Host Replication	VERITAS Volume Replicator
Array Replication	EMC SRDF (synchronous mode only) Hitachi TrueCopy

RELATED PRODUCTS:

VERITAS offers alternate solutions for a variety of replication technologies using VERITAS and other vendors. For more information please visit: <http://www.veritas.com/ha>
 VERITAS Cluster Server datasheet: <http://www.veritas.com/vcs>