

CASE STUDY



Kern County Sheriff's Department selects Double-Take® for high availability

Police departments all over the U.S. are turning to information technology to make them more efficient and productive. But just as these departments step up their use of IT to wrestle another task to the mat, more paperwork and regulations crop up. As with all public departments and agencies, police department IT personnel are in a constant battle to make bureaucratic functions more efficient.

One of the most time-consuming and space-choking aspects of police paper work is the filing and retrieval of arrest records. Not only do the records consume an enormous amount of space,

but also retrieving individual records can be incredibly complicated.

Luckily, software and IT procedures in the form of a software application called Qwestsys have helped ease that burden for the Kern County Sheriff's Department in California.

"Every arrest record is scanned into the Qwestsys database," said Kevin Fisher, Systems Coordinator for the Kern County Sheriff's

Department. "We have a workstation dedicated to monitoring that database-- to make sure it's running."

As records are processed, arresting officers and department personnel scan the records into the database along with keyword descriptions. Once filed, they are easy to retrieve and print from virtually any terminal that has access to the system.

Needless to say, the safety and protection of these records is vital. Each of the servers running the arrest record databases are running Double-Take

for Windows NT with a dedicated 100MB Ethernet connection to the replicated target server, which is ironically located in the main jail building.

In fact, in an odd parallel, the Double-Take replicated arrest records are in the main jail.

"We've had three failures of the primary system," said Mr. Fisher. "And each time the Double-Take software failed over seamlessly."

Once a system fails over, the database vendor must come out, fix what is usually a hardware problem, and then use a re-copy to get the servers back to their normal state. "Before Double-Take, if there was a failure, it would take the vendor a day or two to get the system back where it should be. Now it's an hour or two," said Mr. Fisher. "In fact, the Double-Take system is so good at what it does, we have had failovers where users didn't even know there had been a failure. We've installed a workstation as a monitor-- if there's a green light, the system is normal-- red means there's been a failover. Double-Take has been that transparent to use."

The department is considering using Double-Take in its new Communications Center that will run a Computer Aided Dispatch System. "The computer-aided system is great, but the system's failover isn't as good as Double-Take. We'll probably use the two together," added Mr. Fisher.

Paperwork, processes system protection. Mundane-sounding yet important work, especially when it comes to law enforcement.

NSI® Products: Double-Take for Windows NT

Operating System: Windows NT 4.0

Custom Application: Qwestsys database

Number of source servers protected by Double-Take: 2

Disk subsystem: 18GB of protected storage, 9MB per server

Network infrastructure: Dual 100MB Ethernet over fibre optic cable

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-- Kevin Fisher