Erica Lane Enterprises
The Case Study

Quorum Ensures Uninterrupted Uptime for Erica Lane Enterprises, Inc.

Business Challenges:

Tornadoes impede business continuity; inability to easily test system For more than 15 years, service company Erica Lane Enterprises, Inc. (eLe) has provided government agencies with top-notch support services in IT, energy and engineering, facility operations and maintenance, logistics, and test and evaluation. The company is considered a national leader in the energy resource conservation industry and teams with such powerhouse partners as Lockheed Martin and Jacobs Engineering to provide many other critical support services to NASA and various branches of the U.S. military.

But eLe's reputation, expertise and strength in partners was not enough to stave off system downtime caused by the April 2011 tornado outbreak, one of the worst in U.S. history. "At the time, our DR plan was really just backing up our critical data with eVault," said Erick Edstrom, information systems manager at eLe. "Our data was safe, but we had no way to keep our systems up and running if disaster hit." Sure enough, eLe's corporate office was down for the count for four full business days as a result of widespread power grid damage by the 2011 tornadoes affecting the entire region. It would have been out much longer, if not for a generator the eLe team purchased and some creative workarounds by its IT department. "During those four days of downtime, productivity was obviously impacted, and we had no way to maintain our Web portals," recalled Edstrom. "In my estimation, it cost us roughly $5,000 a day in lost productivity."

With an infinite number of tornado seasons looming, Edstrom knew eLe needed a disaster recovery solution that did more than just backup—something that would keep the company's data, applications and systems going no matter what.

> "With Quorum, eLe would be able to test regularly to ensure our systems would be available even in the event of downtime."

Quorum®

The Solution:

Over the course of the next year, Edstrom conducted some in-depth evaluations of a variety of disaster recovery solutions. Because eLe had been satisfied with eVault's backup services, Edstrom first considered other eVault solutions. He also looked at ExaGrid Systems, Dell AppAssure, HP, Autonomy and some local vendors. But he found that none provided the ability instantly bring up eLe's systems in the event of system downtime. When a coworker stumbled upon Quorum through Internet queries, Edstrom knew it was a solution he had to explore further. Aside from its low cost, Edstrom was struck by Quorum's ready-to-run virtual recovery nodes, and how it could simplify eLe's disaster recovery/business continuity objectives and protect its storage and systems.

Edstrom was also impressed with Quorum's automatic and on-demand testing capabilities. "System testing is extremely important, but seldom adopted as a regular practice because the process is often time-consuming and complex," said Edstrom. "With Quorum, eLe would be able to test regularly to ensure our systems would be available even in the event of downtime."

Upon Edstrom's recommendation, eLe purchased Quorum solution—both the appliance and Hybrid Cloud/DRaaS versions—before the 2013 tornado season. It is now protecting 12 of eLe's servers (those with the company's critical data and applications).

"Probably the most significant use of Quorum to date has been when a SCSI controller went out. We relied on Quorum for a few days while we waited for the new part to arrive."

ERICK EDSTROM
Information Systems Manager

eLe ERICA LANE ENTERPRISES, INC.

Quorum®

The Impact:

Despite eLe's good fortune in having sidestepped any major natural disasters this year, Quorum has still had a few opportunities to prove it can stand up to system downtime. "We've been spared from system downtime as a result of a natural disaster, thank goodness, but we have had to recover some 'lost' files," said Edstrom. "Probably the most significant use of Quorum to date has been when a SCSI controller went out. We relied on Quorum for a few days while we waited for the new part to arrive."

This, in addition to the POC stage when eLe conducted simulated real-world tests to ensure Quorum would fit its needs, only served to reinforce that Edstrom made the right choice in Quorum. "Whether caused by natural disaster or a faulty SCSI controller, we know from experience that system downtime can have quite an impact," said Edstrom. "With Quorum, we no longer have the worry of lost productivity or an inability to serve our government contractors because of system downtime."

Business Benefits of Quorum Solution

- One-click, instant recovery of data, applications and systems
- On-demand and automatic testing
- Cost-effective solution

"With Quorum, we no longer have the worry of lost productivity or an inability to serve our government contractors because of system downtime."

Quorum®