



People think that disaster recovery is covered if you're in a cloud computing environment, but actually it's probably not. When they go down it's usually a major problem because they're dealing with so many customers, and you might be on the bottom of the list."

Stephen Simpson,
IS Manager for Kotahi

Key Outcomes

- Onsite & offsite backups with 15-minute snapshots
- Reduced reliance on a single service provider
- Tested ability to recover from backup
- Access to standby equipment for recovery
- Standby offices for core staff
- Compliance with stakeholder business continuity expectations



Business Continuity Specialists

Mitigating the risks of a single-site cloud solution and ensuring continuity

Kotahi relies on internet access, cloud services, and reliable backups in the data-centric logistics industry.

Situation

Freight and logistics management company Kotahi was launched in 2011 as a joint venture between Fonterra Cooperative and Silver Fern Farms, and employs over 50 IT users in its Auckland-based office.

Kotahi matches the freight requirements of local export and import businesses with global transport providers, to optimise supply chains and provide a competitive advantage in global markets.

The Business Challenges

Kotahi plays a critical role in its customers' supply chains and, in doing so, is highly dependent on its automated order processing and optimisation systems. Kotahi operates those key IT systems in a cloud environment, hosted by a third-party data centre.

Though the hosted environment is an optimal solution for Kotahi's needs, it offers unique challenges to business continuity which Plan B worked with Kotahi to address.

- Backups were run nightly by Kotahi's third-party data centre, creating a window of up to 24-hours for data loss in an outage.
- Backup tapes were stored onsite at the data centre, risking a total loss of both production and backup data if the centre itself was damaged or lost.
- In a centre-wide outage, the needs of individual customers could prove secondary, as the provider's top priority would be restoring overall data centre operations.

In addition, Kotahi's staff are all based at a single site on Auckland's waterfront. If this building was inaccessible due to an unplanned event, Kotahi's only option would have been a 'work-from-home' scenario relying on the personal IT equipment and connectivity of individual staff.

The Business Implications

In the event of an unplanned outage, an extended recovery timeframe is unacceptable to Kotahi, its shareholders, and its customers. Kotahi's customers hold a significant share of the chilled foods market worldwide, and such a disruption to services could cause significant losses in both revenue and reputation for Kotahi and its customers – which rely on Kotahi's service to provide a critical competitive advantage in terms of 'time to market'.

Kotahi's business – management and optimisation of freight – is activity dependent on up-to-date data and numerous EDI pipelines. This makes Kotahi highly reliant on its IT systems in order to operate, with a low tolerance for data loss or slow recovery.

The Solution & Business Benefits

Plan B provides Kotahi with a business continuity solution that allows the company to better meet its recovery objectives, including:

- **Online Snapshot** to minimise data loss by capturing 15-minute replicas of Kotahi's onsite and cloud-based server environments on a Plan B MediaAgent at the company's Auckland office. These replicas are then transferred offsite via a dedicated data communications link to Plan B's secure private cloud.

Kotahi now has a Recovery Point Objective of 15 minutes, meaning the oldest data it has at risk, at any point in time, is 15 minutes old.

With an onsite Plan B MediaAgent, the company can restore individual files rapidly without assistance or can choose to restore data from Plan B's offsite storage. Kotahi is no longer reliant on its managed service provider for backups, and can independently restore data in the event of a data centre outage.

- **Server Recovery Exercises** to independently test Kotahi's ability to recover, and ensure its backups have no unexpected issues. This regular testing also means Kotahi has a good idea of the likely recovery timeframes for individual servers.

Kotahi can be confident of its ability to recover within its required timeframes for each critical server and the ability to access external support to recover its environment during a crisis (if needed).

- **Standby Equipment** to ensure Kotahi has access to critical infrastructure items to speed its recovery if the company's normal environment is unavailable.

If Kotahi's normal infrastructure is unavailable for any reason it can quickly access standby equipment through Plan B to start recovery. Kotahi no longer needs to spend time trying to find replacement equipment or potentially waiting weeks for expensive new equipment to arrive.

- **Standby Offices** to provide an alternate, fully-equipped office for essential staff members in a Plan B recovery facility. All computers, phones and a local network are on permanent standby.

With standby offices, Kotahi is protected against the loss of its only office and access to infrastructure. Should a disaster render the company's office inaccessible, Kotahi is able to relocate its core staff to a Plan B facility, where they would have full access to the company's managed data centre environment. Once relocated, Kotahi's core staff could coordinate the remainder of the workforce as appropriate.

- Plan B also assisted Kotahi to find a cost-efficient solution to transition other services in to the cloud. Where others had identified roadblocks, Plan B was able to find a solution that worked.



I was happy with the Plan B solution in that it was already a proven, productised package. It met our most important needs, and was able to be implemented very quickly.”

Stephen Simpson,
IS Manager for Kotahi



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