



# Barings utilises virtualisation to ensure business continuity

## THE SOLUTION

Software Virtualization Solution

## ABOUT BARING ASSETS

Baring Asset Management is a global investment management firm with offices, clients and business lines spanning the world's major markets. They provide asset management services in developed and emerging equity and bond markets on behalf of institutional, retail and private clients worldwide.

## THE ORGANISATION

- > Baring Asset Management (Barings) deployed Altiris® Software Virtualization Solution (SVS) to virtualise and package 29 business-critical applications as part of its business continuity plan
- > Barings can now ensure the business will continue investing for its clients by instantly switching on virtual applications in the event of a disaster
- > The company is no longer reliant on a team of people to restore IT desktop application functionality, reducing manpower required to switch to the failover configuration
- > The SVS solution was implemented and the applications virtualised within three months meeting the deadline to manage a successful business continuity test to help meet regulatory requirements

Barings is a global investment management firm with offices based in the UK, Hong Kong, Japan, the USA, France, Germany, Taiwan and Guernsey. It is part of the MassMutual Financial Group, the fleet name for Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) and its affiliates. MassMutual has more than 13 million clients and over \$395 billion in assets under management at year-end 2005. In its UK office alone the IT team provides daily support for over 400 employees.

In July 2006, Barings embarked on a major overhaul of its Business Continuity IT Desktop strategy which supported its production data centre and disaster recovery site. The project had two objectives; firstly, to review business continuity planning to ensure that it could continue to effectively manage the availability of business critical applications in the event of a disaster. The second, to deliver a seamless solution that could change the configuration of all desktops from production to disaster recovery settings. The solution had to be in place within three months to enable the company to perform a planned business continuity test.

## PREPARING FOR DISASTER

Barings' IT team wanted to ensure that in the event of a disaster it would have one desktop strategy to support its production and disaster recovery infrastructure configurations. Neil Elliott, project manager of ISS at Barings, outlines the IT team's requirements:

"Ideally we were looking for a solution which would enable our staff to remain at their desks in the event of a disaster or business continuity test, and the desktop configuration could be changed effortlessly and seamlessly to use disaster recovery infrastructure."

In addition, the IT team faced the daunting prospect of building spare PCs for employees to use in the event of a disaster, keeping them up to date, and also having to store them.

## SWITCHING OPERATIONS

Barings' IT support team needed to be able to switch a desktop's configuration seamlessly between its production server infrastructure in a dedicated data centre and disaster recovery site infrastructure. Any changes would need to take place instantaneously with minimum effort.

## VIRTUAL PROJECT

After carrying out extensive research the team concluded that virtualising applications would be the best way of addressing these objectives. The company considered virtualisation as an inexpensive approach which would not only save on resources but deliver fast results.

Once the team had downloaded free software from the Altiris website it conducted thorough testing of the product comparing it to similar virtualisation software on the market.

Elliott explains: "We have a strong relationship with Teksys, a partner of Altiris who recommended SVS to us. The product met all of our requirements, and exceeded the quality of other solutions on the market. By using SVS to place our applications into manageable virtual software packages we were hoping to be able to instantaneously activate, deactivate, switch and reset our applications without conflicts."

## ABOUT ALTIRIS

The Altiris Business Unit of Symantec is a leading provider of service-oriented management software that enables IT organisations to easily manage, secure and service heterogeneous IT assets. Flexible solutions from Altiris help IT align services to drive business objectives, deliver audit-ready security, automate tasks, and reduce the cost and complexity of management. For more information, visit [www.altiris.com](http://www.altiris.com).

With a successful Proof of Concept completed and a business continuity test in October 2006, it was important that the implementation and preparation was completed swiftly within three months, with no margin for delays.

## THE SWITCH

The IT team at Barings needed to configure 440 PCs to a disaster recovery setting and purchased 500 SVS licences to achieve this. To begin with the team rolled out Altiris' SVS onto the desktops which were to be used in the October business continuity test. After the successful test all the remaining desktops in London then had the Altiris agent deployed.

The team established that the company uses 90 applications on a daily basis that are mission-critical, and from those, 30 needed to be virtualised, including applications used in the whole process of managing an investment.

"We rely on a number of integrated applications to manage the process of making an investment. The Altiris solution can help to ensure continuity of service for our customers" adds Elliott.

With every application differing in configuration and complexity, the IT team needed ongoing support from the technical team at Altiris. It also took full advantage of Altiris' online Juice website

(<http://juice.altiris.com/>), a customer resource where users can learn and share knowledge on the Altiris product portfolio.

Elliott comments on Altiris' support during the project: "The Altiris team was very supportive during the whole project from start to finish. In the event of any problems they made sure resource was available to us very quickly, sometimes in the night."

"Before we implemented Altiris we would have deployed a team of people to manage the desktop changes needed for a business continuity test or disaster. Now we only need one person to manage this process."

## RESULTS

The work has been viewed as a success across the board and MassMutual was satisfied with the final report submitted by the project team. The company can now have desktop business continuity with minimum effort and without experiencing any conflicts. The project also highlighted potential opportunities for the company to manage its IT desktop moving forward.

Elliott concludes: "SVS is a very inexpensive product for the complexities which it addresses and solves. We will now operate with an effective desktop strategy for business continuity and will continue to use SVS in the future."