

## Firm expands real-time data recovery service

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CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For some businesses it may be a safeguard against terrorism, or against a potential hurricane or other natural disaster. For others, it may be all about Sarbanes-Oxley compliance. For most of SafeData LLC's clients, however, president Peter Briggs says, the main reason to engage his company's services is that in today's tough economic environment, businesses can't afford any downtime.



BRIGGS

Started as a division of Briggs' previous company, ADS Inc., and independent since 2005, Warwick-based SafeData has carved out a niche by offering customized, subscription-based data recovery services at various price points.

The company's fast-expanding offerings include hosted replication – which can restore access to data within 15 minutes; electronic vaulting with the ability to replicate a client's systems on an off-site server and recover within 10 hours; and telecom recovery, restoring phone service within five minutes.

**PBN:** How did you get into this business?

**BRIGGS:** I had another company where we were providing high-availability services because we were selling that software, and a lot of clients wanted to have it managed and hosted for them, so we did that. And then it got interesting, so I sold off the other firm and started this.

**PBN:** It seems like the entire market is going in that direction: software as a service, remote hosting and outsourced services.

**BRIGGS:** It seems that way. And it appeals to mid-size companies in particular. Large enterprises will often invest in setting up these solutions themselves. But clearly the business has changed.

**PBN:** Is all your business done on a monthly-subscription basis?

**BRIGGS:** Yes, everything is. Sometimes there are professional services to set up a client, but it's usually a small part of the investment they have to make. It's usually a three-year agreement, and we do testing with clients to test their recoverability. When I carved out the business, we had about 10 clients. Now we have about 100. And we've really diversified our service offering. We use a variety of technologies to meet our clients' different needs. When we started we just had high availability for one particular operating environment when we started. Now we offer technology services for just about every operating environment.

**PBN:** How does high availability work?

**BRIGGS:** It's like a real-time, all-the-time replication solution, so every time you create a transaction in your office, it

would replicate real time on a backup server. It's basically two servers mirroring each other. So if it's managed properly, it's a switchable, highly available system, so if your system went down or was lost in a disaster, you could go over to a backup system in minutes. Or if you needed to do an application or hardware upgrade on your system, you could switch to the backup system, and when the planned downtime is over, all the transactions that are on the backup system would re-synch with the main system.

**PBN:** This is your highest-end service?

**BRIGGS:** Yes, it's complex, and it costs more money, but anybody who has a 24/7 requirement, like a bank or a hospital ... they tend to try to get the most highly available solution in place. The other stuff uses electronic vaulting software. Once you have a save of the data, we're doing incremental backups, so we take the data at the block level, which means it's very efficient. We take it over the Internet, and it's encrypted so it's very secure, and it's backed up to storage. ... We have a virtualized environment at that same facility, so if you lost your system, we can take the data and rebuild your systems to our virtual environment within hours. ... So if you had a severe IT problem or a disaster like a fire ... and you had to work from home but connect to your corporate system, we could rebuild your system and you could connect over the Internet.

**PBN:** How does your telecom service work – VoIP?

**BRIGGS:** Yes. If you lost your phone service due to a disaster ... a lot of companies don't address their phone systems – they just say, "If there's a problem, call my cell phone." But if

you have a call center with 100 people, that's going to have a major impact on your business. This system designs a disaster recovery plan for your phones, and if you have a problem, you point your carrier, like, let's say, Verizon, to this system, and within minutes, if I called your extension at your office, it would ring your cell phone or your home phone.

**PBN:** You have a pretty solid client base: Wachovia Mortgage, Symmons, Calvin Klein, along with major local companies. How do you stand out in this market and get business nationally?

**BRIGGS:** It's basically driven by channels. We have a lot of partners that sell in the IBM space, for example, and they're looking for solutions to help their customers. We have a business-partner program where they can become SafeData-authorized partners. We get a lot of inbound leads from companies that want to turn us on to their client base. It's an efficient way to sell ... we have a small sales force, and the rest is through channels. ... [And] what's really driving [the business] is that companies can't afford to take two, three, four, five days to rebuild their systems. They just can't afford it. In a tight economy, more and more companies have to do this, because it's life or death now. ■

**Companies can't afford to take two, three, four, five days to rebuild their systems.**

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- Don't keep wild animals as pets.
- Do not handle wildlife-dead or alive.
- Avoid animals displaying unnatural behavior.
- Discourage contact between pets and wildlife.
- Feed your pets indoors.
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- Prevent wild animals from getting into your house.
- Report all stray animals to animal control.
- Give your child guidelines to follow.

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