

# UNITRENDS

---

---

---

---

## **NSG Ensures Application Recovery SLAs with Unitrends ReliableDR**

Financial Services Industry Success Story:  
NSG Consulting Group



## Solution Highlights

### Industry

- Financial Services

### Challenges:

- Data security
- Ensure SLAs
- Integrate multiple servers and databases with backup

### Solution

- ReliableDR

## Customer Profile

This case study describes how a full-service business management and financial consulting group, representing some of the biggest names in entertainment across the country, implemented the Unitrends ReliableDR, and now ensures verifiable recovery testing according to SLAs.

## The Challenge

The financial organization utilizes NSG as their trusted technology partner. As the organization grew, they embarked on a project to ensure their data was secure, and they would be able to ensure uptime according to their service level agreements (SLAs) in the event of an outage, or disaster. The organization's custom designed accounting system, which spanned multiple servers and databases, presented unique challenges, as it had not always integrated well with previous backup/ DR system changes. This system is absolutely critical to their core workflow. They charged NSG with finding and implementing a solution to meet these requirements.

## Main Requirement

The organization's overall goal with this project was to test their DR strategy at minimum once per year. This was to be a full test, simulating as closely as possible conditions that would be present in an outage or disaster scenario.

## SAN-to-SAN Replication Not Enough

NSG initially evaluated a SAN-to-SAN array-based replication approach, but it soon became clear this solution set was not going to meet the primary requirement of facilitating a full DR test once per year. The first issue they encountered was lack of application awareness. They were able to execute the failover, however the lack of application awareness made VM booting erratic and unreliable. Since there was no VSS integration in the solution – and application recovery verification could only be carried out during the main DR test – this approach only accounted for the data during the test, not a full system, service or application. Therefore it would not allow them to verify the organization's SLAs in the event of an outage.

## Another Product Added to the Equation to No Avail

NSG went back to their vendor with these results and were told if they wanted application aware failover, they needed to implement an additional product. They then decided to move forward after the vendor's technical staff confirmed the proof a concept for the project could be achieved if they added this product. This time, while the failover process was able to be executed successfully, failback, another key element of the project, was not. This was due to the fact that this solution did not track changes during the failover period, and therefore, in order to failback, you had to reseed and send all the data back to the primary site. This is unrealistic for any IT environment, and essentially made this approach unusable to enable full DR testing. This solution was also highly complex, so much so it required an engineer to manage.

## The Solution

NSG contacted Unitrends with these results and enquired about how ReliableDR can provide application-aware failover and failback. They then decided to move forward after Unitrends' technical staff offered to assist in a proof of

*“Our client was especially impressed with the ability to conduct a true-to-life DR test. There are many aspects and procedures that go into reacting to an outage, and the ReliableDR lets you verify each one step by step. The reporting also stood out, as you can easily glance at the charts and see what your RTO and RPO are for a given server as well as the overall compliance for your environment. We plan to recommend this to all our clients.”*

–Philip Brewer,  
Technical Analyst,  
NSG

concept that would confirm that the end customer's objectives could be met and maintained with ReliableDR.

### Moving the Data

NSG was impressed with flexibility provided by ReliableDR in replicating data from one site to another. Customers who already have array based replication in place may continue to use that, as Unitrends integrates with the top storage providers. Or, customers can choose to use the built-in software replication provided by Unitrends, which is the approach this organization has chosen.

### Failover and Testing

Failover is an automated process, and since ReliableDR is application aware, this ensures you can verify at the application and system/service level, not just data level. And testing can be conducted automatically, on an ongoing basis, yearly, monthly, weekly or even daily.

### Failback

The key success factor for NSG was the ability of ReliableDR to conduct failback operations with only changed data. You do not have to reseed the environment, and transfer all the data back to the primary site. You simply failback only the changes that have occurred since the failover, making failback a reality with ReliableDR.

### The Results

To validate the solution, NSG and their customer conducted a full DR test simulating the conditions that would be present in an outage situation. The failover was initiated on a Friday evening. They failed over the primary domain controller first, followed by other critical applications. The ability to re-IP was a huge benefit, and DNS was redirected to the IPs of the new DR subnet. All in all the failover went very smoothly.

The next step was to ensure near-normal business operations could be supported by the failed over environment, so users were brought in on Saturday to test the network and see if they could complete their normal task load. By midday Saturday, users had confirmed they could conduct “business as usual”. Next, the environment was left running from the DR site through Monday to confirm it could handle a full day's workload. By midday Monday, the failover was declared a success. The last step was failback. Since the ability to track changes throughout the failover process comes standard with Unitrends software, NSG was easily able to failback the environment to the primary production site with little network impact. This last step signified a successful completion of the project goals, and ReliableDR is the solution of choice to conduct ongoing DR testing, and ensure verifiable recovery testing for this particular organization

**Are You Ready to Get Protected? Connect with us Today for a Customized Quote** 

#### About Unitrends

Unitrends delivers award-winning business recovery solutions for any IT environment. The company's portfolio of virtual, physical, and cloud solutions provides adaptive protection for organizations globally. To address the complexities facing today's modern data center, Unitrends delivers end-to-end protection and instant recovery of all virtual and physical assets as well as automated disaster recovery testing built for virtualization. With the industry's lowest total cost of ownership, Unitrends' offerings are backed by a customer support team that consistently achieves a 98 percent satisfaction rating. Unitrends' solutions are also sold through a community of thousands of leading technology partners, service providers, and resellers worldwide.