

"With Neverfail, I'm able to sleep every night."

— George Mendel
Senior Systems/Network and Telecommunications Engineer
NAIS

Neverfail

Provides Comprehensive, Affordable WAN-Based Disaster Recovery Solutions for NAIS

The Business Need

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) is a voluntary membership organization for more than 1,100 member schools and associations in the United States and abroad. Representing over half a million students, instructors and administrators, NAIS is responsible for a significant amount of data that has to be refreshed and archived on a regular basis. As the national voice of independent pre-collegiate education and the center for collective action on behalf of its membership, NAIS considers the protection of this data absolutely critical to their mission.

Like any organization in today's post 9-11 world, NAIS understands the importance of disaster recovery in case of terrorist attacks or other unplanned disruptions. The threat of terrorism is especially significant for NAIS since the organization is located in Washington D.C., only a block away from the White House.

In addition, NAIS has a growing affiliate base overseas, including schools and associations in Europe and Asia. This global network of users requires a 24x7 availability of email, website access and data residing behind the website. In the case of any disruption, day or night, failover and failback has to be automatic, successful and completely transparent to users.

NAIS backs up data with a tape system in Washington, but they knew that to achieve the high level of business continuity the organization needed, they had to have backup servers located in another area of the country. Accordingly, they began planning a system of five backup servers near Dallas, Texas, connected to Washington by a Wide Area Network (WAN). The secondary servers in Dallas would replicate the primary servers in Washington, so that email, data, files, statistics and the website could be protected in the event of a disaster.

However, NAIS still needed a reliable, comprehensive, and cost-effective software solution to connect their primary and secondary servers, ensuring continuous operation and data protection.

The Evaluation Process

The team looked at several products, including XOsoft applications and Double-Take from NSI Software. Almost immediately, they realized that installation would be a challenge. According to George Mendel, senior systems/network and telecommunications engineer at NAIS, these products required major server configurations and other complex procedures.





Then, Mendel and his team looked at disaster recovery/high availability solutions from Neverfail and were impressed with the products' straight-forward installation. In addition, the Neverfail products' simple administration, seamless failover and switchback and proven track record in a WAN environment convinced the team that Neverfail was by far the best solution for their needs.

The Solution

NAIS selected Neverfail for Exchange, Neverfail for IIS and Neverfail for SQL Server. NAIS installed and tested the secondary failover servers in their local Washington, DC office. Once assured that all server functionality - failover, switchback and monitoring - was working properly, the secondary servers were shipped to Dallas where they were installed and connected to the Washington, DC location over a WAN. The servers immediately began monitoring the primary servers in the DC office for any potential problems.

The Results

NAIS now enjoys a dependable, easy-to-use and efficient disaster recovery solution that provides both high availability and data protection.

Neverfail for Exchange supports their Microsoft Exchange 2003 platform, ensuring availability for email and other auxiliary applications regardless of the cause of failure. Neverfail for IIS provides an affordable clustering alternative, with complete protection and proactive monitoring of their IIS environment. Neverfail for SQL protects the association's Microsoft SQL server environment and ensures continuous availability of critical database applications.

Mendel is pleased with both the performance and the comprehensive range of Neverfail products. As he puts it, "Neverfail gives you practically an all-in-one-box solution."

For more information, please contact:

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Keeping Users Connected.

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THE COMPANY

NAIS

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) is a voluntary membership organization for more than 1,100 member schools and associations in the United States and abroad, and is the national institutional advocate for independent precollegiate education. NAIS represents 472,967 students, 48,385 teachers and instruction support personnel, and 9,931 administrators in the U.S.

The association speaks for member schools to national and regional media, 10 federal agencies, and 13 congressional committees. On behalf of independent schools, NAIS tracks and analyzes legislation and regulations in a number of areas including tax, environmental health hazards, and education.

NAIS provides essential information to member schools through NAIS Statistics, an extensive statistical survey published each year; Independent School magazine, produced four times a year; a website, www.nais.org; and a wide array of books, reports, and newsletters on subjects of importance to the education community.