

> Al Rajhi Endowment safeguards productivity and supports the growth of charitable projects with Arcserve UDP



CLIENT PROFILE

Industry: Investment Management/Charitable Trust
Organization: Al Rajhi Endowment
Employees: 250



BUSINESS

Al Rajhi Endowment manages real estates and farms endowed by Sheikh Mohammad Bin Abdulaziz Al Rajhi to generate funds for charitable projects and programs related to education, health and social services.

CHALLENGE

To support ambitious growth targets, Al Rajhi Endowment needed to ensure that critical data and operations were protected. Existing backup and disaster recovery solutions were limited, manual and increasing in cost.

SOLUTION

Arcserve UDP protects 10,000 user transactions daily and nine terabytes of critical data across enterprise resource planning (ERP) and other core systems. The solution enables IT systems and operations to be restored in minutes in the event of an incident.

BENEFIT

As well as enabling IT cost savings and freeing up resources, the solution safeguards productivity and business continuity, which will help Al Rajhi Endowment continue to grow revenues for its charitable causes.



BUSINESS

Generating income for charitable ventures

Al Rajhi Endowment was established in 1417 AH / 2009 AD when Sheikh Mohammed Ben Abdulaziz Alrajhi endowed a portion of his estate for charitable purposes. Its vision is to provide a distinct model for charitable endowments and contribute to the sustainable development of society through investment and charity work.

The organization employs 250 people whose aim is to ensure the maintenance, management and development of the endowed real estate and farms in order to generate and grow their revenues to fund charitable works.

Since its foundation, the organization has already generated hundreds of millions of dollars for projects and programs related to education, health and social services.

Al Rajhi Endowment aims to grow current revenues from \$50 USD million to \$100 USD million per annum by 2020.

CHALLENGE

Safeguarding operations and productivity

Al Rajhi Endowment's farms are the largest charitable farms in the world and represent a large source of the organization's revenues. The organization relies heavily on its Oracle JD Edwards ERP (enterprise resource planning) system and other key applications for a wide range of core operations, including farming activities as well as sales, inventory, financial and HR management.

Using the Oracle JD Edwards system, farm managers enter critical information, such as land data, replanting plans, harvest and market forecasts and updates. The information is used for planning, including the supply of resources and materials for the farms, and for sales of produce, primarily to overseas buyers.



As the business and data volumes grew, so did risk and also cost in terms of time, resources and backup hardware.





Any loss of data or system availability would therefore have a serious impact not only on employee productivity, but especially on farming operations and sales, which could in turn affect harvests and revenues.

“As a young organization, we did not yet have a full disaster recovery solution in place and we relied on manual and onerous tape-based processes for data back-up,” explains Mr Karim Tawfick, CIO at Al Rajhi Endowment.

Al Rajhi Endowment’s Oracle JD Edwards system handles ten thousand user transactions daily and is built on physical and virtual machines running a range of technologies, including IBM Webspere, SQL database, Java, Windows, VMware, HyperV and Linux, creating an increasingly complex environment to project. “As the business and data volumes grew, so did risk and also costs in terms of time, resources and backup hardware,” adds Mr Tawfick.

With a large endowment of real estate and farms to protect and grow and ambitious revenue targets to achieve, the organization recognised that an efficient and reliable backup and disaster recovery solution was essential.

To reduce risk and ensure that a tested and proven solution was deployed, Al Rajhi Endowment employed the services of an external consultant to research and recommend the best solution on the market.

SOLUTION

Seamless backup and disaster recovery

After an evaluation exercise, Al Rajhi Endowment decided to implement Arcserve UDP. Mr. Mohammad Mahmoud, IT consultant for Al Rajhi Endowment, comments: “We selected Arcserve as it could operate seamlessly across a multi-platform architecture and, critically, does so without affecting system performance.”

Arcserve UDP is used in the production environment to back up data that is stored on a dedicated virtual server attached to the SAN, and then deduplicated onto storage tapes. As well as ERP data, the solution also protects email, helpdesk operations, anti-virus programs and a barcode server that is critical for farm management.

“With Arcserve UDP, incremental backups take only a few minutes, a full backup only takes two hours instead of six to eight, and full image backup means we can now restore a server within minutes compared with four to five hours previously,” confirms Mr. Mahmoud. “Deduplication also keeps costs down as it compresses our nine terabytes of data down to less than two terabytes, reducing expenditure on storage and backup hardware.”

In addition, Arcserve UDP will automatically check, retry and continue to back up data until the operation has been successfully completed, whereas with the previous solution the IT department needed to manually check and restart back-up jobs whenever they failed.

Al Rajhi Endowment also set up a disaster recovery (DR) site using Arcserve RHA to make and manage an up-to-the minute copy of its production site and systems.

Mr Tawfick explains: “Our farms operate 24x7, as do some other operations, so it was critical to ensure that our IT systems were continually available in order to avoid any loss of productivity or revenues.”



Arcserve UDP takes regular snapshots of the production environment throughout the day, ensuring that a replica is continually available via the remote DR site – all without affecting performance of the live systems.

Mr. Mahmoud adds: “IT staff can also confidently do testing and updates for core applications knowing that the DR site is ready in the event of any problems. This means we can be more responsive and agile.”

BENEFIT

Enabling continuity and business growth

With Arcserve UDP, Al Rajhi Endowment can safeguard business continuity for the farms and other assets that it is responsible for managing and developing with less time and less effort. “Testing, upgrades, backup and restore processes can be very time-consuming for any IT department, requiring lots of checks and procedures, but with Arcserve UDP it simply takes a few clicks from a single console, which can be done at any time without requiring outages and saving valuable time and IT resources,” comments Mr. Mahmoud.

Using Arcserve UDP, Al Rajhi Endowment has been able to:

- Realise IT cost savings
- Free up time and resources
- Increase agility
- Support business growth.

“As well as delivering peace of mind, Arcserve solutions will enable us to devote more resources to providing new services that will help the organisation achieve its growth targets and increase revenues for our charitable projects,” concludes Mr Tawfick.

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