DISK IMAGING

Backing up business critical servers

How do you protect business critical servers that need to be brought on-line as soon as possible after a disaster? Capturing the data is not enough; this is where disk imaging comes in, also known as bare-metal.

This process takes a copy or "image" of the system disk on a running system. The backed up data includes the necessary operating system, applications and data components, to rebuild or restore the system in its entirety at the point of backup. The image can be immediately started or "played" in a virtual environment.

The Backup Systems Server can keep a version history of images, allowing a working system to be restored from a previous point in time. The storage of the images employs block level deduplication, this means only changes in a series of images are stored, rather than each image being stored again each time. The images can also be replicated efficiently using deltablocking.

We recommend Oracle VirtualBox, a free open source virtual environment, for playing images. Alternatively use commercial offerings such as Hyper-V, VMware Player, workstation or ESX server. The image can also be restored to physical hardware.

Technical Summary

- Supports Microsoft XP, Vista, Windows 7, 2003, 2008

- Live-Copying, creates image while system is running

- Images created in VHD (Microsoft) or VMDK (VMware) format

- Can be played on virtual environments such as VirtualBox, Hyper-V, VMware

- Allows restoration of individual files from within image

- Strips out page file, to allow efficient replication

- Only copies used sectors