

the Availability Digest

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@availabilitydig – Our March Twitter Feed of Outages

March 2014

A challenge every issue for the Availability Digest is to determine which of the many availability topics out there win coveted status as Digest articles. We always regret not focusing our attention on the topics we bypass. With our new Twitter presence, we don't have to feel guilty. This article highlights some of the @availabilitydig tweets that made headlines in recent days.



Choosing disaster recovery options that fit your virtual needs.

As virtual infrastructures become more complex and more companies turn to multiple hypervisors, understanding what you need to protect your data center can be difficult. Luckily, today's companies have more choices than ever when it comes to disaster recovery products.

<http://t.co/negCX3I9M0>

Ten common reasons why virtual machine backups fail.

In spite of an administrator's best efforts, virtual machine backups sometimes fail. When this happens, you must quickly determine the cause of the failure. Here are some of the most common conditions that cause a failed backup.

<http://t.co/UKWNswqWd9>

5 Best Practices for Choosing a Disaster Recovery Replication Solution.

Regardless of what replication technology you choose, here are some basic best practices to keep in mind when it comes to selecting replication technology for disaster recovery.

<http://t.co/godkIN72P3>

Mining Experiment: Running 600 Servers for a Year Yields 0.4 Bitcoin

Can data centers tap unused server capacity to mine for Bitcoins? The online backup service iDrive performs most of its customer backup jobs overnight, leaving its 3,000 quad-core servers idle for much of the day. So the company ran a test with 600 servers to see whether Bitcoin mining could become a secondary revenue stream.

<http://t.co/sLQAP5jr4H>

Westpac meltdown blamed on 10c fuse.

WESTPAC Banking Group has always insisted an air conditioning failure led to the catastrophic events of 2011 that brought down its banking systems, but it can now be revealed the main culprit was a 10c fuse.

<http://t.co/b0IHAXJQQh>

Blackout stirs fears power system could not cope with cyclone emergency.

Tens of thousands of Australian homes and businesses between Darwin and Katherine lost power for up to 12 hours after a circuit breaker failed at the Hudson Creek substation in Darwin. The outage reflects an urgent need to reform the electricity network,

<http://t.co/coqme2fmRw>

U.K. holds cyberwar game in Churchill's WW2 bunker.

Under London's streets in Winston Churchill's World War II bunker, dozens of amateur cybersecurity experts fought a new kind of war. Bent over their computers in a steel-reinforced room, they raced to understand why Britain's banking network suddenly seemed to have gone offline.

<http://t.co/TakSlq5hza>

1961 - North Carolina Nuked (almost) – An Availability Digest article.

On January 24, 1961, two nuclear bombs broke loose from a crippled B-52 bomber and fell on the U.S. state of North Carolina. Three out of four safety mechanisms on one bomb failed. Only one low-voltage switch prevented the bomb from detonating. The lesson learned? Redundancy counts.

<http://t.co/p0V0VLEn48>

Missed Alarms and 40 Million Stolen Credit Card Numbers: How Target Blew It.

The biggest retail hack in U.S. history wasn't particularly inventive, nor did it appear destined for success. It succeeded, however, because Target ignored its own alarms and turned its customers into victims of an epic hack.

<http://t.co/elUzRUPwS2>

Dropbox hit by outage; file sync busted.

Dropbox suffered an outage on March 14th. It left the website throwing back server errors and the desktop and mobile file sync feature busted.

<http://www.zdnet.com/dropbox-hit-by-outage-sync-busted-7000027339/>

Twitter crashed -- again -- on Tuesday.

Twitter crashed for a second time in nine days due to complications arising from a planned upgrade. The outage occurred at exactly the time that Twitter co-founder Biz Stone, participating on a conference panel, encouraged the audience to tweet him questions at #askbiz.

<http://t.co/wKzWfwL6oG>

5 predictions for the Web that were WAY off

The prediction: Spam will be gone within two years. - *Bill Gates, 2004*. The prediction: No one will buy anything over the Web. - *Newsweek, 1995*. Read about these and three other predictions that were totally, almost hilariously, wrong.

<http://t.co/j5ExAU1tDO>

CMS extends Terremark's cloud hosting duties on <http://HealthCare.gov>.

HealthCare.gov will stay with cloud host Verizon Terremark for a little while longer. The site was set to move to Hewlett-Packard on March 31. However, the extension is needed because the replication of Terremark data didn't begin until late December.

<http://t.co/PUtju6wes>

Meetup's Multi-Day Outage Was Due To A Newer, More Powerful Type Of DDoS Attack

Attackers are beginning to exploit flaws in other, older Internet protocols that were not originally secured particularly well. In Meetup's case, the attackers use the NTP – or Network Time Protocol – which is a protocol that is used to sync time clocks between multiple servers.

<http://t.co/r4SzAf9zPk>

Should Hope Trump Failover? Many companies replace failover testing with faith that the backups will never fail.

Many companies do not do complete failover testing. They may test only certain aspects of failover. They do not really know whether their backup system will come up or not. If their production system fails, they depend upon faith and hope rather than thorough testing.

<http://bit.ly/1bH9rxk>

Majority of organizations to change backup strategies, study finds.

One in five organizations now experience backup failures on at least a monthly basis, and for one in ten organizations the frequency is at least weekly. As a result, a majority of organizations (53 percent) plan to make changes to their backup strategy this year.

<http://t.co/qo4dSGs24X>

DDoS cyber attacks get bigger, smarter, more damaging.

Crashing websites and overwhelming data centres, a new generation of cyber attacks is costing millions and straining the structure of the Internet.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/03/05/tech-cyber-ddos-idUSL6N0LV2WR20140305>

When it comes to disaster recovery, it's nothing but failure.

A new study from the Disaster Recovery Preparedness (DRP) Council has nothing but doom and gloom when it comes to the state of disaster recovery.

<http://t.co/GW0ruDfqfQ>

Our thx to TANDsoft, an HP NonStop interception specialist and recent Digest sponsor.

TANDsoft is a global provider of innovative HP NonStop software solutions for use in time virtualization, application modernization, security, and business continuity. TANDsoft's intercept technology is used by many NonStop customers to enhance legacy application functionality with no program modifications.

www.tandsoft.com

Two-thirds of PSAPs experienced outages last year, according to Stratus Technologies survey.

Public-safety answering points (PSAPs) strive to operate at all times, regardless of the challenging circumstances that surround them. But 70% of them experienced some sort of an outage during 2013, and 28% suffered downtime lasting more than an hour,

<http://t.co/ZeTbbuldT6>

12 Ways to Disaster-Proof Your Critical Business Data

How can you keep critical data safe when disaster strikes? There is no one magic answer, but there are steps your business can and should take to protect important files and applications in the event of a disaster.

<http://t.co/ch0eUHMJ50>

Warning: Failure to comply with data center maintenance is reckless.

Complying with modern data center best practices for design and operations is challenging enough, but facilities must be properly maintained to keep up a reliable level of service.

<http://searchdatacenter.techtarget.com/tip/Warning-Failure-to-comply-with-data-center-maintenance-is-reckless>

Large Crack Found in Dam Supporting Quincy Data Center Cluster

A large crack has been detected in a dam on the Columbia River that is the largest source of hydro-electric power for a major cluster of data centers in Quincy, Washington, USA. Impacted data centers include those operated by Microsoft, Yahoo, and Dell.

<https://t.co/01NPqibAE9>

Digest Editor Dr. Bill Highleyman asks, "What Do We Mean by Legacy?"

We often talk about legacy systems. "Banks Worldwide Suffer from IT Legacy," an article in the February, 2014, issue of the *Availability Digest*, explores the problems that many banks around the world are having with legacy. But legacy "systems" is not the term we should be using. It is the applications that are legacy.

http://www.availabilitydigest.com/misc/0902%20-%20legacy_applications.pdf

Check out Availability Digest's "Banks Worldwide Suffer from IT Legacy."

Banks will continue to struggle with system outages as they work to replace their aging, decades-old legacy banking systems.

http://www.availabilitydigest.com/public_articles/0902/bank_outages.pdf