the Availability Digest

HP Blows Up Data Center
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As a demonstration of the rapid failover capabilities of HP systems, HP set up a data center with a mix of its systems and backed up the data center with a remote data center. It then blew up the primary data center (yes, actually blew it up with explosives) to demonstrate fast recovery in a simulated natural gas line explosion.

The demonstration was conducted at the National Technical Support (NTS) Ballistics Test Center in Camden, Arkansas. The data centers consisted of a NonStop system, an HP-UX system, an OpenVMS system, a Linux system, and a Windows system, all consolidated with a StorageWorks XP storage array. The primary data center was set up in an open field. The backup data center was set up in a block house nearby. The data centers were connected via fiber channel.

Monitoring equipment measured the time from the blast to the time that each system came up. Their measured recovery times were:

OpenVMS	14 seconds
NonStop	34 seconds
HP-UX	73 seconds
Windows	105 seconds
Linux	113 seconds

Within two minutes, the backup data center had taken over the entire processing load.

HP warns that this demonstration should not be tried at home. It also points out that no humans or animals were harmed in the presentation.

A video of this demonstration can be viewed at www.hp.com/go/disasterproof.

This presentation also demonstrates the robustness of the HP storage arrays. A high-velocity bullet was fired thorough an XP12000 storage array, and it continued working.

This reminds me of a true story that occurred during one of the San Francisco earthquakes. Following the earthquake, a Tandem customer phoned the Tandem Support Center and asked directions on how to get its Tandem back up. As the service technician began to go over the reboot procedure, the customer explained that rebooting wasn't necessary. The system was running fine. It's just that it got knocked over onto its side, and they needed help in getting it back up.