

Re: The "unable to restore" problems

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Exchange/microsoft.public.exchange2000.general/2006-02/msg00075.html>

- *From:* "Susan" <sconkey@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 13 Feb 2006 15:11:24 -0800
-

allow me to clarify...when I referred to a failure, I only meant that due to circumstances beyond my control, I was not able to recover every single piece of email...I was able to recover all but about 10 minutes worth of transaction log files, owing to the timing of the crash, and a major problem with SRDF replication...

—
Susan Conkey [MVP]

"Paul Womar" <{[\\$PW\\$](mailto:PW@womar.co.uk)@womar.co.uk}> wrote in message
[1hapy9s.13frc5nywwbalN%{ \\$PW\\$ }@womar.co.uk](mailto:1hapy9s.13frc5nywwbalN%{ PW }@womar.co.uk)">news:[1hapy9s.13frc5nywwbalN%{ \\$PW\\$ }@womar.co.uk](mailto:1hapy9s.13frc5nywwbalN%{ PW }@womar.co.uk)...

Susan <sconkey@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

I don't think it's "an unnecessarily complicated and troublesome process" at all...I do restores on a regular basis, to recover the occasional email, and have had 5 situations, in nearly 10 years managing Exchange, where it was necessary to restore entire databases...in every instance but one, I was able to recover every single piece of email, and had no problems whatsoever.

Well come on, for a start you've just said that of the 5 times you've needed to restore a database you've had one failiure, i.e. a 20% failiure rate. That's not the kind of thing I could convince my bosses

Re: The "unable to restore" problems

to accept nor should they. We use Exchange 2000, Exchange 2003 is obviously a bit better but lets take the example of a single user mailbox that needs recovering (ironically a complete server failure seems to be easier in relative terms). Basically if I use the recommended online backup system then in order to restore a users mailbox the procedure is (roughly, from memory):

- Buy a server
- Buy windows & exchange licences
- Install windows and Exchange
- Create new domain
- Configure Exchange almost identically to the production system
- Somehow connect it to the network archiving solution in the production domain and fool it into talking to this server, hopefully without knocking the production Exchange box off the network (Not entirely MSs fault that bit)
- Restore an entire mailstore
- Run Exmerge to extract the data
- Give user the PST or exmerge it into production

There are other solutions, all the ones I'm aware of have their drawbacks, I'm pretty sure something approaching the above is actually the recommended MS solution!

I appreciate that the structure of the database and SIS make restoring small chunks quite difficult but disks/tapes are cheap compared to the possible ramification of a long recovery period or permanent data loss. If I could drop SIS and have a mailbox recovered by having a tool that made one full pass through the tape for a mailstore then I'd tick that box without hesitation.

When you administer something as complex and critical as Exchange, my feeling is that the most important part of that job would be to

familiarize

yourself with the process of restoring in the advent of catastrophic failure...Machines do fail.

It's excellent advice however I do wonder how people in proper enterprises do it. If you are a small enough shop to just have a few tapes then fine, stick a drive on this spare Exchange box and go. I can't go into too much detail here but we have an enterprise solution that involves a dedicated server/tape library with capacity to back up the 800+ servers we have and it's a fully automated self maintaining 'closed' system. If you can find an easy risk free way to get this test Exchange box speaking to that production backup system, without impacting the production Exchange systems then I think I know a company who'll pay you a tidy sum! I'm sure it's not all MS's

Re: The "unable to restore" problems

fault but it's still a nightmare.

This statement: "Mark my words: You can never back and restore that damn thing directly, no, you must learn, run

hundreds

of commands, read tons of articles, balh balh" is completely false,

Well, the word never obviously makes it false. However there are a huge number of documents describing what to do in various situations to try and get your restores to work. Compare the amount of data MS give you about exchange restores compared to restoring a folder full of files. Yes I know that there are plenty of good reasons why the former will have to be more complicated but I don't think it needs to be as complicated as it is. For example if I want to restore one of our crusty old Notes servers, I can just pull the nsf files off via a normal backup app and dump them into the right directory, easy. Yeah it has other downsides but they've hade the important bit easy.

and I have every confidence that I could restore all my Exchange data, for all 15,000 of my users, if it were necessary....

Well I think only about 12,000 of our users are on Exchange at the mo and yes, I'm pretty confident that if I went in tomorrow and the SAN disks had been wiped then we could bring it all back as quickly as the LAN would let us. A total loss is quite simple – Rebuild & Restore. Annoyingly it's the failiures of part of the system that tend to be the trickiest to recover from.

--
-> The email address used in this message *IS* valid <-