



Customer Profile

- Web site development, design, and hosting
- Headquarters: Costa Mesa, CA
- 150+ employees
- www.dctc.com

Environment

- Microsoft® Windows® NT
- Marathon Endurance®
- 2-Dell™ PowerEdge™ 2450 servers
- 2-Dell PowerEdge 6350 servers
- Microsoft SQL Server 7.0

Business Application

- Web Site Hosting

Digital Convergence Reinforces E-Commerce Sites with Marathon Solution

Digital Convergence prides itself on three factors: a staff of seasoned business pros who know how to implement technologies online for maximum effectiveness; its ability to provide end-to-end solutions that incorporate e-commerce strategy, design, production, and hosting; and a 100 percent service-level standard.

“We never want to be the cause of a client’s Web site going down,” explained Philip Sykes, manager of server operations for Digital Convergence. “Our ability to rapidly and consistently serve up content without interruptions is incredibly important to our clients. We chose Marathon’s Assured Availability™ solution because it’s the one system that enables us to do that.”

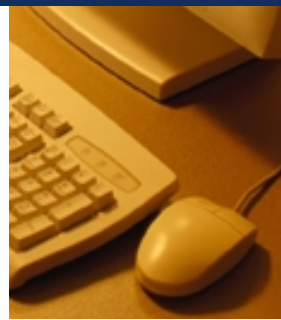
Among Digital Convergence’s customers are mortgage financing giant GMAC Mortgage and its online subsidiary ditech.com, Wells Fargo, Gateway, and Sony Online Entertainment. According to Kenneth Dill, senior vice president of business development for Digital Convergence, Marathon provides the “stateless

failover capability that our clients don’t even know they need, but nonetheless assume we will provide.”

“Always On” Database Solution

The Marathon solution protects Digital Convergence’s Microsoft SQL 7.0 database servers in two ways: it secures detailed end-user application data in the event of a hardware or OS failure, and it provides server availability for Vignette-hosted sites.

The ditech.com site, which boasts more than 160,000 unique visitors a month, accepts mortgage applications around-the-clock. As applicants step through the 30-minute application process, dynamically created HTML pages appear. Each page of information is saved and stored to the SQL database as users progress from one page to the next. If applicants lose their connection or disconnect for any reason, they can return to the site and resume where they left off. The Marathon solution guarantees that even during serious





Benefits

- Stateless failover capability
- No disruption or loss of information
- Web servers up and available all the time

server hardware or OS failures, end users can continue filling out the detailed application without disruption or loss of information.

Alternative technologies, such as clustering, provide nowhere near the same level of service for Digital Convergence, because clustering can leave end users in limbo for up to a minute while servers re-boot. As a result, customers could lose extensive amounts of data, will likely abandon the site, and might not return. "Clients like ditech.com rely on our systems to keep their businesses up and available all the time, period," explained Sykes. "If for any reason our system should fail, our clients' businesses could be irreparably damaged and consequently, so would ours."

Digital Convergence is also transitioning several clients to Vignette-hosted sites. Vignette provides content and delivery management systems. The Marathon solution ensures that Web site content is always available. On a Vignette-hosted site, all files, including text, audio, and video files, are stored in the SQL server database. If the application were tied to a non-Marathon solution, such as clustering, new content could not be published during server failures, rendering the affected sites completely or partially unavailable until the failover process is completed.

Meeting the Needs of E-Commerce

As its clients' Web sites became increasingly complex and more reliant on e-commerce for profitability, Digital Convergence required a robust solution to beef up its back end. "It was clear to us that we needed to provide a world-class hosting environment, which includes keeping the Web sites up even when we're experiencing server problems," said Dill.

The company deployed the Marathon product in mid-2000 after learning about the solution at a seminar. What was in place prior to Marathon? "A lot of anxiety," joked Dill. Since deployment, however, both Digital Convergence and its customers breathe easier.

Internally, the product provides operational benefits. "The Marathon Endurance product is easy to use," said Sykes. "When we need to upgrade, we'll be able to do a single upgrade, because the Marathon solution will replicate itself. And, we can upgrade without disrupting availability."

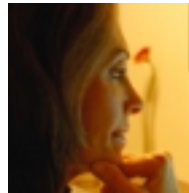
"Overall, Marathon has taken what was a worrisome issue and put it on the back burner, allowing our operations staff to focus on other areas."

Marathon's ComputeThru™ technology is a selling point for Digital Convergence clients as well. "It's important for techni-

cally knowledgeable people because they understand the implications of the technology," said Dill. "For clients on the business side, the Marathon solution contributes to an overall sense of risk reduction that adds up to increased confidence."

"The best part about the Marathon Endurance solution is that we don't have to think about it. It does what we expect it to do, and at a reasonable price."

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For more information

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