



Emerald Queen Hotel & Casinos Bets on Neverfail for Email Uptime

Neverfail Eliminates Downtime for 24x7 Entertainment Destination

Drawing thousands of visitors each week, the Emerald Queen Hotel & Casinos has become known as the “Entertainment Capital of the Northwest.” It offers visitors 56 Las Vegas-style games, Keno, more than 2,000 video slots, a hotel and countless additional entertainment options – from concerts to one of the property’s restaurants that feature all types of cuisine.

Emerald Queen’s 2,000 employees rely on email communications for day-to-day operations, for important tasks ranging from coordinating arrangements with customers, to getting a quick fix to a game that has gone down unexpectedly, to managing administrative functions, to any of the other countless tasks that go into entertaining customers every hour of the day. Email communication is the casino’s lifeline for keeping all operations running smoothly at all times, seven days a week and nearly 24 hours a day.

For Matt Kopf, Emerald Queen’s system administrator, Microsoft® Exchange is one of the top priority applications that must be up and running at all times. He and a staff of 20 work around the clock to deliver the best

technology experience to Emerald Queen’s employees.

“Email is our connection to every piece of our business. We support every single department – marketing, finance, human resources, IT and the gaming floor. Everything that goes in and out of Emerald Queen goes through our Exchange server. So if Exchange goes down, it’s not just bad, it’s dire. We do not have a tolerance for even a few minutes of email downtime.”

Keeping the Communications Flowing

A few years ago before Kopf was on board, email went down for a full week, nearly halting operations. “Things got done by phone, fax and in-person communications – in other words, they got done very slowly. The outage was an enormous hamper to getting things done in a timely manner,” said Kopf.

Kopf lives with the fear that “anything manmade will fail eventually.” To avoid this kind of situation on his watch, Kopf began an evaluation process to determine the best disaster recovery and continuous availability solution to keep Emer-

Neverfail at Work in Entertainment

► THE COMPANY

Emerald Queen Hotel & Casinos

► THE CHALLENGE

Ensuring zero downtime for email, one of the casino’s top priority applications necessary for its 24x7 operations

► THE SOLUTION

Neverfail for Microsoft® Exchange

► THE RESULTS

Neverfail has prevented email downtime for Emerald Queen since installation, providing seamless failover on two important occasions as well as a cost savings of at least \$30,000 in hardware costs due to Neverfail’s support of virtualized environments and disparate hardware.



ald Queen's email up and running at all times. Key to his decision was the need to find a solution that worked across the disparate hardware in his environment. Emerald Queen had a physical server with attached storage hosting Exchange. They needed to fail over from this physical server to a virtual one that used VMware software running on a generic box.

After evaluating a number of solutions, Kopf chose Neverfail. Neverfail was the only offering that could support dissimilar hardware and fail over to a virtual server. Most of the other offerings on the market required the primary server to fail over to similar or identical hardware. Kopf explained, "These other products would force us to buy another \$30,000 server just to replicate one thing and that just was not necessary. But when I demonstrated Neverfail to my manager, it was all on virtual machines, so I turned one off and it just failed over to the other virtual machine by itself – it worked perfectly."

Neverfail also scored highly on Emerald Queen's needs for high availability, data protection and proactive monitoring. Kopf also valued Neverfail's SCOPE

offering (Server Check, Optimization and Performance Evaluation) that proactively addresses server reliability by gathering vital information about performance, workload, bandwidth usage and other critical factors.

Earning its Chips

Kopf and his team installed Neverfail in 2007 and have been up and running smoothly ever since. "Neverfail walked us through testing and set-up – the installation was seamless. It just took a few hours and the Exchange server stayed up and running the entire time. Our end users never noticed," said Kopf.

Emerald Queen has relied on Neverfail a number of times since installation. "The first time, our primary server went down at 2 a.m., but we didn't even know for two days because Neverfail did exactly what it's supposed to do. It failed over and no one even noticed a blip in email service. Once we determined what went wrong on our primary server, we re-synched, pushed a button and everything went back to normal and began running on the primary server. Neverfail worked just like we expected it to," explained Kopf.

"I don't like getting phone calls at 3 a.m. if I don't have to, and Neverfail has alleviated that problem. It just works beautifully and keeps our email running to support Emerald Queen's 24-hour operation."

**Matt Kopf,
systems administrator
Emerald Queen Hotel & Casinos**

Every day Kopf gets the Neverfail event log via email, and he typically only needs to glance at it to know if there's an issue. Now that he doesn't have to worry about Exchange failures, he's been able to initiate some other important technology upgrades, including putting in a SAN, moving to VMware Enterprise and upgrading to Exchange 2007. He's planning to work hand-in-hand with the Neverfail team to ensure this latter project goes smoothly with no email downtime.

About Neverfail

Neverfail is a leading global software company providing continuous availability and disaster recovery for critical Windows-based applications in physical, virtual or mixed environments. Continuous availability blends high availability, disaster recovery and data protection software with best practice monitoring and automation. Neverfail's predictive approach protects businesses during both IT outages and planned maintenance. Regardless of the type of problem, from a single component failure to a full site disaster, critical business applications remain constantly available to information workers. With Neverfail, users remain continuously connected to applications such as Microsoft® Exchange, SQL Server, File Server, IIS, SharePoint, VMware VirtualCenter, BlackBerry® Enterprise Server and IBM® Lotus® Domino®. More information can be found at www.neverfailgroup.com.

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