



Vancouver Symphony Uses Neverfail® to Keep the Curtains Up

Neverfail Receives Standing Ovarions for Eliminating Box Office and Fundraising Downtime

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO), founded in 1919 as a non-profit society, is famous for providing high-quality performances of classical and popular music, and for its delivery of excellent educational and community programs. Every year the VSO's 67 core musicians and 25 regular extra musicians perform more than 150 concerts that are enjoyed by more than 200,000 patrons of the arts at 14 different venues around the Lower Mainland.

With an operating budget of \$13 million, 43 percent of the VSO's annual operating budget is generated by ticket sales and other earned revenue, while 26 percent is produced by fundraising from the private sector. In 2008, the VSO migrated from an online ticketing service to Tessitura Software, an integrated ticketing and fund development software solution designed specifically for arts and cultural organizations to support on-site and online ticket sales, and it is their lifeline to smooth box office operations. Like most non-profit cultural organizations, the VSO is dependent on fundraising activities for its operating budget, and they also use the Tessitura platform to help boost fundraising campaign revenues by effectively managing the entire fundraising life cycle.

"Failure of our ticketing application at the time of a concert would be cata-

strophic because our staff would not be able to determine which seats were still available and which were not; ticket sales for that evening would immediately cease. Downtime for our fundraising application translates into unquantifiable amounts of lost donations. Any downtime would impact our operating budget," said Debra Marcus, office manager/payroll administrator, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. "It was essential that we put a high availability solution in place that would provide our staff with continuous access to our business-critical ticketing and fundraising applications."

World Class Performances Demand Stellar Support

As a non-profit organization, most staff members wear multiple hats. As office manager/payroll administrator, Debra Marcus is not just responsible for day-to-day office activities but also the management of the entire IT infrastructure, which includes nine servers. "Our servers are all essential to our day-to-day business, but none more so than our Microsoft SQL server, which hosts all of our mission-critical applications. We specifically needed a solution that would provide high availability and business continuity for it."

Neverfail at Work in the Fine Arts

► THE ORGANIZATION

The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra (VSO)

► THE CHALLENGE

Provide the VSO staff with continuous access to mission critical applications that are crucial to generating tickets and supporting fundraising activities

► THE SOLUTION

Neverfail for SQL Server

► THE RESULTS

Using Neverfail, the VSO can go on with their performances knowing that they can provide continuous service to their patrons



In addition, Debra lives nearly an hour outside of Vancouver, so if a server failed after hours it would take at least an hour for her to return to the office and start to evaluate the situation. As the VSO continued to increase their reliability on technology to sell tickets and conduct fundraising campaigns, she knew that a high availability solution that worked automatically, without her physical presence, was vital to support continuous ticket sales and fundraising efforts. She also knew that she did not have the time or technical skill set to monitor a system that would require granular control or require a manual failover.

“We worked closely with our supplier to evaluate high availability solutions that would meet our needs. He provided us with two options. We selected Neverfail for SQL Server to support our ticketing and fundraising applications because it is well-known for its ease-of-use and proven ability to seamlessly fail over from the primary server to the secondary server,” said Marcus. “The installation was completed in less than one day, and since that time it has worked perfectly.”

Applause for Neverfail!

While there have not been any unplanned outages to date, Marcus did need to take the primary SQL server offline for a major upgrade. This did not disrupt ticketing operations as Neverfail enabled the entire staff to work off of the secondary server for nearly half a day. Once she completed her updates, the secondary server failed back to the primary server without any disruption in service. In addition, she does Microsoft upgrades on a monthly basis that require the server to fail over for a few moments and then fail back to the primary server. All failovers have gone seamlessly and unnoticed by any team member.

Marcus continued, “I would recommend Neverfail to anybody. When I started the project, I knew little about Microsoft SQL Servers, so there was a learning curve. Neverfail made the transition easier because if the primary server goes down, I am confident that it will just seamlessly fail over to the secondary server and none of my staff will lose access to our essential ticketing or fundraising applications. Since installing Neverfail, a lot of weight has been lifted from my shoulders.”

“I live in the valley 50 kilometers outside of Vancouver, and if our server went down before a performance it would take nearly an hour during normal traffic to get back into Vancouver and begin to resolve the situation. This is clearly an option that we can never entertain – as they say, ‘the show must go on’ and without a functioning ticketing system on the night of a performance, the show could not go on. With Neverfail, I can go home at the end of the day and rest assured knowing that our staff can meet the ticketing and fundraising needs of our patrons.”

**Debra Marcus
Office Manager/Payroll
Administrator
Vancouver Symphony Orchestra**

About Neverfail

Neverfail is a leading global software company providing affordable data protection, high availability, and disaster recovery solutions focused on keeping users productive. Neverfail’s software solutions enable users to remain continuously connected to the live software application irrespective of hardware, software, operating system, or network failures. Neverfail’s mission of eliminating application downtime for the end user delivers the assurance of business continuity, removes the commercial and IT management costs associated with system downtime and enables the more productive use of IT resources. More information can be found at www.neverfailgroup.com.

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