

Product Brief

Geminare Provides Accessible BC/DR

Date: December 2010 **Author:** Lauren Whitehouse, Senior Analyst

Abstract: Traditional approaches to business continuity and disaster recovery (BC/DR) present challenges in planning, implementation, testing and affordability—which have often made BC/DR solutions only available to large enterprises. Virtualization and the “cloud,” however, have created tremendous new opportunities for organizations of all sizes to deploy economical, on-demand BC/DR offerings. [Geminare](#) is capitalizing on this emerging technology trend through its market-leading Recovery as a Service product suite, which includes [Cloud Recovery](#).

Overview

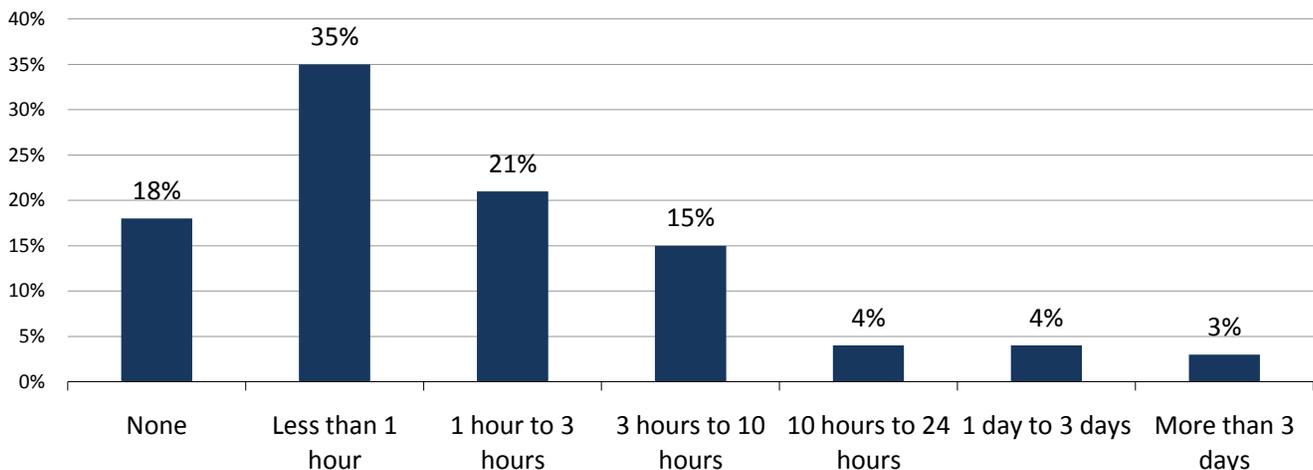
Companies of all sizes are becoming increasingly dependent on digital information. Databases are the backbone of sales order processing, financial administration applications, customer support systems, and human resource management, and e-mail is essential for organizations of all sizes, providing the means for communication, collaboration, and, in many cases, commerce. Globalization and the 24/7 nature of many businesses, as well as this generation’s social conditioning for immediate gratification, make continuous availability and access to information an expectation.

Business interruption or downtime is not just a product of disasters. While natural disasters such as fire, flood, weather-related outages, and calamities can be extremely disruptive to business operations, it’s typically the more mundane issues of hardware failure, operator error, virus attack, and application failure that create service interruptions.

Without access to critical business systems, businesses are more apt to suffer consequences. ESG research revealed that nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents to a recent survey indicated that their organization would experience significant adverse business impact with as little as three hours or less of downtime for tier-1 applications (see Figure 1).¹ This is driving greater requirements for business continuity and disaster recovery (BC/DR) solutions.

Figure 1. Downtime Tolerance for Tier-1 Applications and Data

For tier-1 data, please indicate the amount of downtime your organization can tolerate before you experience significant revenue loss or other adverse business impact.
(Percent of respondents, N=510)



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, 2010.

¹ Source: ESG Research Report, [2010 Data Protection Trends](#), April 2010.

Even with more aggressive recovery time and point objectives, organizations are reluctant to adopt high availability and failover solutions due to perceived complexity and high capital and operating costs. For example, traditional approaches, such as a dedicated mirrored infrastructure, can be costly and complex to set up and maintain. In addition, this scenario may require a second (failover) site, which many companies—especially those in the small and medium-sized business (SMB) market—do not maintain.

The introduction of cloud computing and virtualization are changing this dynamic by positively impacting the feasibility and economics of implementing BC/DR. Cloud storage and cloud computing offer a platform for BC/DR services, and a subscription-style model makes an “outsourced” services approach more attractive than a do-it-yourself (DIY) investment in corporate-owned and -operated assets. This model also creates opportunities for ISPs, hosting providers, and VARs since they can layer additional service offerings on commodity cloud infrastructure. And it’s an attractive endeavor since a service-based business model introduces a recurring revenue opportunity.

ESG expects disaster recovery to remain a high priority. In a recent survey of IT professionals with purchasing authority, ESG learned that BC/DR ranked eighth in the “Top Ten” spending priorities over the next 12 to 18 months (see Figure 2).² In a separate study, ESG research found that improving disaster recovery capabilities is *the* top spending priority within data protection spending priorities.³

Figure 2. Top 10 IT Spending Priorities Over the Next 12 to 18 Months



Source: Enterprise Strategy Group, 2010.

² Source: ESG Research Report, *2011 IT Spending Intentions*, December 2010.

³ Source: ESG Research Report, *2010 Data Protection Trends*, April 2010.

Geminare is a provider of services that ensure business uptime—for planned and unplanned interruptions—by making BC/DR highly accessible to organizations where viable solutions were previously unavailable. Geminare’s cloud-based recovery services ensure continuous access to applications by enabling rapid real-time replication and failover to a secondary location—in this case, to a cloud compute service provider. Failback to the production environment is accomplished easily and just as quickly (a capability unique to Geminare). The company partners with SIs, VARs, and MSPs to deliver business continuity solutions to SMBs.

Analysis

The Geminare Recovery as a Service portfolio includes:

Cloud Recovery. This service provides seamless failover and redirection to a replicated server environment in the cloud to ensure no downtime, data loss, or risk. Failover and/or failback can be scheduled or automated, enabling continuous application availability for planned and unplanned downtime events. Applications operate seamlessly—at the failover site—eliminating downtime. Data loss is also minimized with failback and synchronization, a process whereby new data collected since the failover is synchronized with the production site system before users and traffic are redirected—the final step occurring in a matter of seconds to minutes.

Cloud Storage Assurance. This cloud storage, indexing, and archive service automatically stores file and e-mail data in a public, private, or hybrid cloud infrastructure. Version history is maintained and users have the choice to encrypt and/or compress data. From a Geminare portal, data retrieval is rapidly facilitated by intelligent search functions, and advanced audit tools aid with the discovery and recovery processes.

Geminare Recovery as a Service makes BC/DR highly accessible because it changes the economics of deploying BC/DR solutions. In comparing its services with DIY approaches, Geminare stands out by:

- **Eliminating up-front capital investments.** No on-premises recovery/failover hardware is required. The on-demand model allows IT organizations to expand and/or collapse requirements as needs change. Service costs for each replicated server can be funded from a monthly operational budget.
- **Removing the need for dedicated staff to procure, install/configure, and maintain a BC/DR infrastructure.** Outsourcing eliminates the need to dedicate in-house staff resources to the bulk of the BC/DR function. An administrator need only establish policies, monitor resources, and run reports from the Geminare portal.
- **Doing away with the need for an end customer-supported second (failover) site.** Instead of creating and maintaining a self-maintained failover site and the dedicated infrastructure it holds, outsourcing to a secure public or private cloud of your choice with a pay-as-you-go cost model can reduce costs and risk.

The benefits of the model extend beyond end-users to delivery partners as well. Geminare delivers its services via a network of channel partners with geographic and industry-specific expertise for the SMB market. Business continuity solutions can enhance partners’ service portfolios—in many cases leveraging the infrastructure already in place to support clients’ cloud hosting capabilities. This allows partners to differentiate current offerings, create opportunities for product and service bundles, and, importantly, increase per-server revenue. Furthermore, Geminare’s tiered partner-centric model facilitates end-user service monitoring and management, dramatically reducing partner touch points (and associated costs). This differentiates Geminare’s services by affording partners gross margins significantly higher than associated recurring revenue offerings.

The Bigger Truth

Cloud-based infrastructure allows IT organizations to dynamically scale DR and pay for only what they consume. Thus, organizations of all sizes will take interest, but especially smaller organizations that might not have a second site or would struggle to outlay capital to build out a second site. Enabling customers to mirror critical systems in a virtual production-ready environment can have significant impact on a company's ability to weather an outage at their primary facility.

Geminare recognized and addressed this opportunity several years ago by developing a compelling Recovery as a Service solution, when virtualization and cloud were just taking hold. While more often the focus for IT is failover (to enable continuous operations), Geminare calls attention to the real issue: failback. Many BC/DR companies can fail over using imaging technology, but in many cases, a recovery to the production environment means a bare metal restore with hours to days of downtime. Geminare's failback capabilities can deliver incremental cost and time savings over seemingly competitive services.

For current and prospective partners of Geminare, consideration should be given to the potential opportunity in BC/DR. As ESG's research shows, BC/DR is a function that companies are willing to invest in over the next 12 to 18 months. It is more likely an incremental revenue opportunity since the initiative is likely a new one for IT organizations—especially in the midmarket segment.

IT investment justification typically focuses on mitigating risk, saving time, and saving money. A Geminare BC/DR solution can deliver value related to all three, especially over DIY BC/DR implementations—a compelling reason for IT organizations and prospective service provider partners to take a closer look at Geminare's solutions.