Tier1Research

Qwest partners with Geminare for cloud-based disaster recovery service

Enterprise and Mass-Market Hosting

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August 26, 2010

Qwest is taking a step into the cloud computing arena with a cloud-based disaster recovery service called Real-Time Application Recovery. The service, enabled by technology from partner **Geminare**, will offer automatic failover and disaster recovery testing capabilities to target customers in the SMB market.

Technology

The Real-Time Application Recovery (RTAR) service is built on a software platform from Geminare. This has enabled Qwest to build an enterprise-class server replication offering in a disaster recovery-as a-service delivery model. Where SMBs have grown accustomed to archiving non-mission-critical data using cloud storage services, they now have access to a service that uses 'block level replication' to provide instantaneous failover when the primary server is down and failback when the server is restored. This helps small and mid-sized companies to achieve continuous server availability. Supported platforms and applications include **Microsoft** File Services, Exchange, SQL, and IIS; **Research in Motion's** BlackBerry Enterprise Servers, and **Oracle** 9i/10g.

Future cloud offerings

The RTAR service is running on a virtualized infrastructure in a single datacenter at present, with plans to add support in more Qwest datacenters based on markets that have the most demand. Qwest says that it has built a highly scalable infrastructure that will easily scale up and down to meet demand for its DR service. Just as important, we expect this infrastructure will form the basis of further IaaS services from Qwest.

Just as an example, Geminare has customers using its platform to do cloud migration and to create 'sandboxes' in a new cloud environment, do some testing and development and fail back to production servers if need be. Once Qwest decides to offer a cloud computing offering, it has a way to help customers migrate on over from competing services.

Customers

Qwest did not announce any customer wins. With its pricing strategy, we expect Qwest and its reseller network to quickly add customers. There is a $785 set up fee for each server, and a $665/month fee for each server that's being protected (there's a discount for extended contracts and use of multiple services, etc.).

T1R take

When Qwest opened up its 17th datacenter in Sterling, Virginia, we speculated that the firm could use this additional space (as well as existing space) to bring new cloud services to market. Rather than jump into a fairly crowded market for cloud storage, Qwest has partnered to come up with a disaster recovery service that adds key functionality to the cloud that we think SMBs will jump at the chance to start using.