

Gruppo 24 ORE – Case Study

The Company

Gruppo 24 ORE is a multimedia publishing group operating in the economic, financial and professional news sector.

The most known newspaper of the Group is Il Sole 24 Ore, the daily publication with the largest presence in Europe, a leader in the economic, financial and regulatory information resulting in the high-profile of the brand that characterizes the entire Group activities.

The group reaches its readers with the Press Agency Radiocor (leader in financial information), the portal www.ilsole24ore.com, the radio station Radio 24 and free press 24Minuti. It holds a highly competitive position in the specialised publishing sector with its books, magazines, databases, online services, training courses and software management.

Diskeeper has been installed on the servers relevant to the professionals area where systems integrated products and specialised publishing services are developed and distributed. They find their end-users in the world of professionals, in businesses and government: an audience of about 430,000 subscribers.

The professional area offers a rich portfolio of publishing products, services, software solutions, multimedia tools based on structures that are entirely devoted to each single segment of users within a single and integrated system.

The professional area counts more than 140 magazines, a catalogue of books with 1100 titles, 20 databases, 385 training initiatives in a year, more than 9,000 subscribers to software management.

The Challenge

In 2006, Gruppo 24 Ore embarked on a new infrastructure project designed to supply services to professionals, supported by servers containing millions of files. Such a system would have easily taken the NTFS file system to its limit - in terms of both storage and the lead-time level of the machines.

This project required a tool that could keep performance of this

complex file system steady and ensure that the MFT - containing about 15 million files – would not corrupt.

Antonio Di Lorenzo, System Engineer at Gruppo 24 Ore says: *“Given that every day hundreds of thousands of files are generated, deleted and removed in our systems, we needed to keep disk fragmentation under control and we saw that Diskeeper was the best solution on the market – and that it also included MFT defragmentation.”*

The purchase of Diskeeper constituted a preventive action, ensuring the perfect outcome in the implementation of the new IT infrastructure.

“We have always utilised the Windows in-built defrag tool on client workstations as an offline software”, Mr. Di Lorenzo explains. *“But when you have millions of files in a directory and the system freezes when you try to open a folder, then you start to think about the opportunity to use tools that can give you more control over the client machines. Diskeeper was the perfect answer to our needs.”*

The Solution

Gruppo 24 Ore was already using Diskeeper 2007 when they contacted their corporate account manager at Diskeeper Corporation Europe for an initial quote and more information about the new Diskeeper 2008. Subsequently, 16 licenses of Diskeeper Enterprise Server and 1 License of Diskeeper Administrator were purchased through Ingram Micro, Diskeeper’s distributor in Italy.

The purchase of Diskeeper represented one of their key measures to simultaneously consolidate the infrastructure while lowering maintenance costs.

This project also comprised the implementation of a virtual structure, as Mr. Di Lorenzo commented: *“The project involved the virtualisation of the old server farm of the professionals area as well as the creation of a new one on VMware servers in Virtual Infrastructure HA mode. The virtual servers had disks of considerable dimension in RAW LUN mapping module (direct access of the virtual machine to the FC channel on the storage). These disks are the ones optimized with Diskeeper 2008.”*

Mr. Di Lorenzo highlights InvisiTasking - the basis of

Diskeeper's elimination of fragmentation in real time, without affecting system resources or intruding on system demands - together with the control panel and the group policy support as among the best features in Diskeeper 2008.

Benefits

Diskeeper's customer service played a key role in the support process. *"Your personnel responded promptly to our requests providing us with advice and tests"*, reports Mr. Di Lorenzo.

Server virtualisation together with the use of Diskeeper 2008 brought about lower energy consumption and, consequently, a solid cost reduction. Mr. Di Lorenzo concludes: *"After one and a half years the application works perfectly. Performances are stable on all systems and we also had amazing speed gains."*