



## IT SOLUTIONS GROUP, INC.

### Averitt Express Case Study

#### Company

Averitt Express  
1415 Neal St  
Cookeville, TN 38501  
(800) 283-7488  
www.averittexpress.com

#### Challenge

Averitt's existing HA system was experiencing excessive latency in replicating to its backup system causing application issues and great concern about their Recovery Point Objective (RPO) also putting their business at risk.

#### HA Infrastructure

- IBM i 8205-E6D  
Production server, P20
- IBM i 8204-E8A  
Backup server, P20
- IBM i OS, V7R2
- Maxava Enterprise+  
Logical replication solution

#### Maxava's Enterprise+ "Saves the Ship" for Averitt Express

What do you do if you're an international shipping company whose Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system won't properly replicate to another server in support of a high availability (HA) system? You look for a better solution.

This was the scenario faced in October 2015 by Averitt Express, a provider of freight transportation and supply chain management services based in Cookeville, Tennessee. Averitt offers customized shipping solutions, serves customers in more than 100 countries, and services more than 300 international destinations. Averitt also provides its customers a full suite of web-based shipping tools, EDI services, and transportation and operations management systems. Among other online services Averitt offers its customers are such conveniences as a Bill of Lading creation utility, a transit-time calculator, less-than-truckload service maps based on ZIP code, and downloadable certificates, permits, customs forms, and other documents on demand.

The problem Averitt faced was that its existing HA system was experiencing excessive latency in replicating from the production to the backup server. This caused problems with accuracy in replicating the EDI information entered by its customers, lead to lockups of some production environments whenever it became necessary to change between its IBM i 8205 production system and its 8204 backup server. The workarounds they were forced to use were time-consuming and unacceptable, particularly considering that the company's system was handling up to 2,500 users on any given day.

#### Finding a Better Way

Michele Wilborn, director of information services at Averitt, was tasked with looking for a better solution when the company's old HA software's maintenance agreement came up for renewal.

"We were looking for HA software that could reliably replicate all the necessary objects on our system," Wilborn recalls. Wilborn contacted IT Solutions Group, Inc. (ITSG), a consulting group located in Clermont, Florida, which specializes in HA and disaster recovery services.

ITSG provided a free assessment of Averitt's situation by reviewing Averitt's existing HA solution, performance data and system environment. ITSG recommended either an upgraded HA hardware system, which wasn't economically feasible for Averitt at the time, or a software upgrade to Maxava's Enterprise+, an HA/DR logical replication solution tailored to IBM i servers.

Maxava Enterprise+ provides real-time data replication, unlimited concurrent apply processes that eliminate change backlogs and enables recovery in minutes instead of hours, remote control of role-swapping processes between servers via the maxView Manager function (that runs via browsers of mobile devices), and replication of all data and objects across IBM's QDLS document library services file system, MQ Series, and the Integrated File System (IFS). Other product features include enhanced auditing, autonomies, spooled-file replication, a command scripting function, and customer choice of licensing via cloud, Software-as-a-Service, software subscription, or traditional licensing.



ITSG quickly provided a proof-of-concept (POC) test installation that demonstrated how Maxava Enterprise+ could meet Averitt's requirements.

"We were particularly impressed by the Simulated Role Swap (SRS) capability of Enterprise+," Wilborn notes. "The POC demonstration and Role Swap capabilities sealed the deal." Role Swap is a feature of Enterprise+ that lets users test their HA/DR system without requiring any downtime. SRS lets users temporarily turn their backup system into a simulated primary system for testing while the actual primary system continues to operate live and unaffected. "Another great selling point is the simplicity of the GUI," Wilborn points out, although Enterprise+ runs equally well from a green-screen interface or via a remote web-ready devices such as a PC or smartphone. "All the tech teams need to see is if there is a green or red dot at the bottom of the screen to know how the system is doing. It doesn't get any easier than that." Enterprise+ actually offers two different GUIs, an HTML version and a client-based version. Averitt mostly uses the client-based version.

## A Swift Implementation

Once Averitt made the decision to go with Maxava Enterprise+, implementation began in February 2016. ITSG handled the installation and subsequent training of seven key Averitt personnel on the new HA system over 21 Go-To-Meeting sessions that Averitt users were able to access without leaving their offices.

"I didn't have a lot of HA background in the beginning, but working with Matt Staddler of ITSG it was very simple," reports David Glenn, an Averitt software support associate who received the training. "Matt has no fear when it comes to working with the Maxava product, which translated to an easy training experience."

## Reaping the Benefits

Averitt is pleased with the efficiency of the new HA system and the relative ease with which they can now accomplish data replication and other HA functions. "Maxava's Enterprise+ exceeded our expectations," Wilborn reveals. "With the new system it takes us half the man hours in comparison to our previous product – if not even less. Every product should be like that. Although our company hasn't done an official cost-analysis of the benefits, there has been a definite savings on the production system as CPU resource use has dropped for role swaps."

Wilborn's only regret is that Averitt's eagerness for a solution caused them some small difficulties at the beginning because they tried to implement the system too fast. "Matt wasn't aware of the amount of data to be replicated and I opened the system up too fast and we experienced some issues from that. Enterprise+ was doing its job the whole time but I learned through training there was a much easier and efficient way to accomplish what I needed than the way I was trying to do things at first."

"If you have problems with your HA/DR system, a free assessment from ITSG and Maxava's Enterprise+ may well be worth your while," Wilborn concludes.

## About IT Solutions Group, Inc. (ITSG)

IT Solutions Group, Inc. (ITSG) is an IBM Business Partner and Maxava reseller. ITSG is a recognized leader in North America and the Caribbean for installation of High Availability (HA) solutions on IBM i (Power Systems, AS/400, iSeries), with successful installs in the small-medium business market to Fortune 100 companies in 38 of the 48 contiguous states. Having data centers in Orlando and Chicago, they offer Backup/recovery, High Availability (HA), Disaster Recovery (DR), and Cloud-based business recovery solutions and services. [www.itsolutions-group.com](http://www.itsolutions-group.com)