CRISIS PREVENTION FOR GAS DISTRIBUTION

Avoid costly impacts with always-on system wide monitoring

Eight people dead, thirty-five homes leveled, a wall of fire more than 1,000 feet high, plunging stock prices and a law suit. That was the result of a gas explosion in San Bruno, California. Defective welds in the pipeline that could not withstand the increased pressure in the pipes to meet growing energy demand was cited as the reason for the explosion.

Understandably, gas companies all over the country were concerned about their own vulnerabilities. With over one million residential, commercial and industrial customers throughout a large east coast metropolitan area, this local gas company was one of them.

When a failure occurs in a natural gas pipeline system, the impact can be severe for people, the environment and even the economy. In the event of a control system failure, this company immediately deploys personnel to watch, maintain and monitor their distribution pipeline and gate stations. But with multiple gate stations and 600 hundred pressure monitoring points, they have to send considerable resources to manually perform the task. The longer the outage, the more costly the outage becomes as each personnel shift change is replaced by the next until the problem is resolved.

To solve this costly manual labor drain, the gas company's IT department deployed Dell servers in multiple locations to run their SCADA and Historian applications. But downtime problems persisted, so they switched to HP servers which also proved to be unreliable. When the servers failed for the sixth time, the Supervisor of Automation and Control had had enough. He demanded a continuous availability solution he could rely on to keep his operations up and running.

He achieved what the company needed when they deployed their SCADA and Historian applications on always-on ftServer® platforms from Stratus® Technologies and shortly thereafter added analytics to store and analyze the information generated from these applications. This worked so well that the company virtualized their entire infrastructure using ftServer and VMware® enabling them to add all their gate stations and CAD operations on to one platform saving time and money. They even set up a disaster recovery site for extra protection.

Today, with analytics that are always-on and systems that won't fail, the company can prevent incidents before they occur with complete visibility into their entire system eliminating the catastrophic humanistic, environmental and economic impacts that gas leaks and system failures can bring.

Since deploying ftServer the company has had no outages or data loss resulting in significant savings.

"Anyone that's serious about keeping their systems up and running has to look at Stratus."

Supervisor of Automation Control

Stratus®

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