DCAC

Denny Cherry & Associates Consulting

Your Data, Our Expertise

Performance Tuning in a Catastrophe

When a catastrophic event grinds production to a near halt and downtime isn't an option, the experts at DCAC can help.

The Client:

Founded in 1997, Pull-A-Part operates a network of 28 DIY used auto parts superstores in 12 states. The company has been acclaimed for outstanding corporate citizenship by federal, state and local organizations.

Michael Kogon is Chief Technology Officer and Chief Marketing Officer of the company, as well as a stakeholder in the family business.

> "DCAC was able to proceed methodically, with an unemotional hand."
>
> *Michael Kogon*
> *Chief Technology Officer*

Performance before DCA disaster recovery.

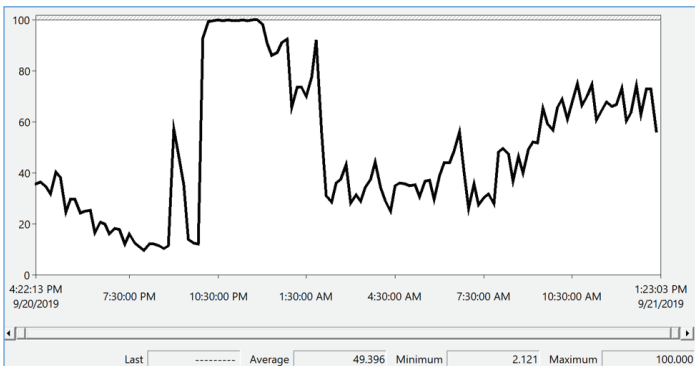Performance after DCA disaster recovery.

The Challenge:

Five days after a catastrophic event infected all servers, Michael Kogon and his team at Pull-A-Part were exhausted. Having repeatedly reviewed their processes, the company's systems were still only running at 10%. CPU spikes and page drops were a constant. A 20-minute daily process was now taking 40. Most notably, the company was unable to purchase products to sell due to the debilitated environment.
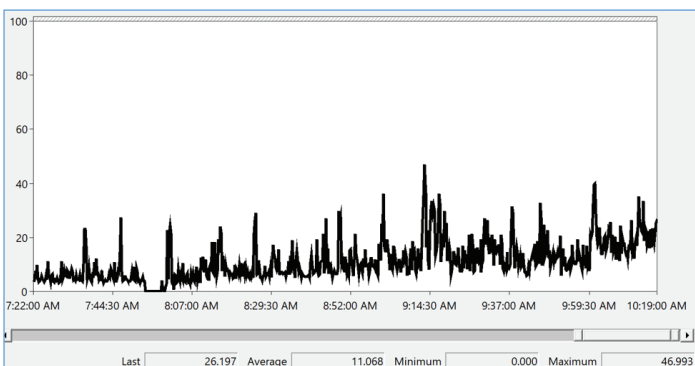
"Normally disaster recovery isn't an enterprise issue: it's a singular line of business issue or a subset of a cluster somewhere. But when it all happens at once, you have a lot of moving parts. And everyone wanted to say their part was perfect. But until everyone was cleared, no one was getting off the phone."

Kogon's Head DBA admitted she needed help and asked Kogon if he would consider contacting DCAC.

Kogon recalls, "I had a quick conversation with Joey D'Antoni at DCAC. Four hours later, their team plugged into our war room. That was no small feat: it was helpful DCAC are meaningful industry participants. The ability to allow outsiders into a trusted environment has a three-day ITIL type of change management protocol. If your data and servers are managed in somebody else's Network Operations Center (NOC), you are going to have to get the Security Operations Command and the NOC clearances which is a lot of work."

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The Solution:

Once the ground rules were laid for contending with the fragile environment, Denny and team were to handle two basic processes: drastically improve performance of applications, as well as set up high availability. DCAC ran some tests and immediately saw the spikes.

Kogon explains, "DCAC was able to proceed methodically, with an unemotional hand, start to take high value targets of processes and procedures. Denny would identify and hand to our team 'This needs to be re-indexed,' and focused on the highest value indexing bundles first, moving through various settings on the server and adjusted the settings for best practices as he went."

DCAC then turned to the VM's. Kogon explains, "Denny has deep expertise in the VM space which was helpful. The same was true with performance and improvement through indexing and restored procedure identification. Once they identified the issue and what to execute, we did the rewrite procedures ourselves. But one of the bonuses of having an outsider is they don't know how bad things are, or how important one thing is versus another and that means they can get pretty clinical about what will produce the best result in the sequence."

The Results:

At the end of DCAC's 96-hour intervention, functionality of production was not merely restored: systems were running at a level of functionality they'd never previously achieved. The daily process that had spiked to taking 40 minutes to run wasn't just restored to its satisfactory 20-minute run-time. It was now executing in under a minute.

Additionally, DCAC's final bill ended up at only 70% of budget. Kogon concludes with, "I imagine that DCAC will be a regular part of my life for a long time. They were not crazy insistent that their way was the only way and if you didn't follow their instructions you were stuck on an island. It was frankly a great consulting relationship and the have earned our trust and comfort zone.

Summary:

- Completed with zero downtime
- 96-hour intervention
- 600% decrease in customer resource consumption
- Daily company process reduced from 20 minutes to one minute
- Bill at 70% of estimate

DCAC: Winner of "IT Team of the Year" at the 2019 American Business Awards

Ready for your Performance Tuning solution? Visit Denny Cherry & Associates Consulting on the web at www.dcac.com. Your data, our expertise.