

# NISA Retail

## The Case Study

### Buying Power—Quorum backs up Nisa Retail's Key Data

Nisa Retail is a £1.5 billion turnover company representing 2,500 retail stores across the UK. The company began as a buying group, pooling the purchasing requirements of its members to increase negotiating power, drive down supplier cost prices and create benefits from economies of scale on their behalf. Nisa was the brainchild of two grocery entrepreneurs, who in 1977 launched the company as the Northern Independents Supermarket Association to protect the interests of independents against the insurgence of the national supermarket chains. Nisa is unique in every sense of the word, from its humble roots to its rare, member-owned structure.

### Business Challenges: Threat of lengthy system downtime; complicated and time-consuming testing

System downtime is a fact of life for businesses. If your organization hasn't yet ex Technology is key to Nisa's infrastructure to ensure its deliveries run smoothly and that all its member's stores are stocked. The impact of losing data or having any downtime on servers is extremely costly to Nisa and its members. Nisa required a backup solution that was not only responsive but also fully compliant with the regulatory requirements for the UK's retail sector.

After looking at the current business continuity plan, Nisa recognised that the disaster recovery plan for its internal servers was slow and inefficient. In the event of failure it would take days, even weeks to purchase and install new servers and in that time the cost of damage would be hard to calculate. Nisa needed something responsive to ensure its competitiveness in an aggressive marketplace.

The company needed a reliable disaster recovery solution to protect its 31 internal servers, which look after key parts of the business, including email, file and print, bespoke applications, domain controllers, SQL database, application document management, intranet, directory and federation services and electronic data interchange (EDI).

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## The Solution:

Nisa looked at the marketplace and the Quorum solution fitted its requirements for a simple to use, reliable and robust disaster recovery solution. Quorum also had the added advantage of being the only PCI compliant solution on the market, allowing Nisa to protect its internal data at all times and comply with industry regulations.

Nisa deployed two Quorum onQ appliances at the beginning of 2014—one for its headquarters and one at its recovery centre in Rotherham. For added resiliency, Nisa's data is also stored in the private cloud. In Rotherham, Nisa replicates its critical servers on site, which means they can be up and running in minutes rather than days if there is a system failure. If there is a major disaster, Nisa has the capacity to relocate staff to the Rotherham recovery centre to ensure business continuity.

Nisa's IT team did much of the installation themselves for the Quorum's onQ devices, with some additional support from Quorum's support team.

The onQ devices maintain up-to-date ready-to-run virtual machine clones of the group's critical systems, so that they can run on the appliance, transparently taking over for failed servers within minutes. The onQ devices back up the servers daily, and some of the more critical servers twice daily.

OnQ keeps up-to-date copies of the operating system, application and data files on both the local and remote appliances—but, unlike conventional backup and recovery solutions, it also has ready-to-run "Recovery Nodes" standing by. If any of the protected servers fail, the Recovery Nodes can be started with a single click and have Nisa up running again in minutes. The entire process is totally self-contained and doesn't require any additional hardware or software.

For data that needs to be stored for longer, Nisa has deployed Quorum onQ Archive Vault, which provides a long-term archive backup of its critical data.

**"Having the Quorum in place reduces the pressure on the internal IT team."**

DARREN SCARRATT  
Infrastructure Manager



## The Benefits:

With Quorum, Nisa's disaster recovery strategy is not only resilient and efficient, it's also simple to manage. Quorum's solution fits into Nisa's strategy whilst providing Nisa's IT team with total peace of mind that the system is in safe hands.

Quorum's solution has already paid off for Nisa. The group recently suffered a storage failure and some of its machines were corrupted. Quorum was used to restore systems to the production environment.

Darren Scarratt, Infrastructure Manager, Nisa Retail explained: "When we had a SAN failure the Quorum solution kicked into play straight away. This not only meant that we were able to keep working as usual, it also saved us a lot of time in rebuilding the systems. Having the Quorum in place reduces the pressure on the internal IT team. The group's internal servers are critical to how we operate so having them protected means that we will be able to continue business as usual: serving customers and our members, should any failure occur."

Quorum's solutions have also enabled Nisa to make major cost reductions on back up requirements to virtual machines, reducing storage and making savings on licenses. "Quorum is a backup, HA and DR all in one for us," Darren Scarratt concluded.

## Business Benefits of Quorum Solution

- One single-step solution for instant restoration of data, applications and systems
- On-demand and automatic testing
- Scalable and flexible

## Quorum customer since 2014

### Location:

UK's leading member-owned organization, providing benefits to independent retailers in food and drink markets.

### Services:

Food and Beverage

### Web:

<http://www.nisaretail.com/>

### IT Environment:

Nisa, headquartered in Scunthorpe, represents over 1,200 members throughout the UK and employs over 280 staff in its Member Support Centre. The group also has extensive warehousing in Harlow, Scunthorpe, Stoke and Livingston as well as satellite units throughout the country.