**Rocket**

CASE STUDY
# Wolverine Packing Company
## Maintains Smooth Operations During Planned and Unplanned Server Outages

## Industry
Food Distribution

## Challenge
Deliver business continuity in a 24/7 environment while still performing scheduled maintenance

## Results
- Mitigated the risk of a primary server outage which could potentially result in hundreds of thousands of dollars of lost revenue
- Replicated and auto-synchronized mission-critical data to secondary backup system to be used in the event of a planned or unplanned outage
- Deployed a backup system in less than two hours following a hardware malfunction, ensuring the business continuity that is especially critical in the food industry

## Products
- Rocket® iCluster

## Application
- High Availability and Disaster Recovery

## Company

Wolverine Packing Company is one of the largest U.S. distributors of meat products to the wholesale, retail, and food services industries. Based in Detroit, Michigan, the company distributed a full line of meat products for more than sixty years, and is now in its fourth generation of family ownership. With a 110,000 square-foot state-of-the-art facility and approximately 500 employees, Wolverine provides services that include prepackaging, processing, private labeling, portion control, steak cutting, and national distribution.

## Challenge

In the food industry, any type of business interruption represents a potential catastrophe. Large plants process, store, and move tens of thousands of pounds of meat products on any given day. These facilities must be able to fulfill, ship, and deliver customer orders virtually nonstop or risk massive amounts of spoiled product. The emergence of enterprise IT systems has allowed companies like Wolverine Packing to handle larger volumes of business without sacrificing quality or safety.

However, companies such as Wolverine still need a way to perform scheduled maintenance without interrupting daily operations. They also need to have a plan and process in place so that they can respond quickly and effectively in the event of a disaster. "Perishable product has got to get out the door," explained John Kuriwchak, Wolverine IT manager. "For our system to even be down for a day, it would put us behind quite a bit. We'd have to manually ship product, and any corrupted data would take a long time to recoup." Although the main server at Wolverine was robust, Kuriwchak recognized that Wolverine needed a high-availability and disaster recovery system to enable future growth.

## Solution

The Wolverine IT team's evaluation of various solutions resulted in the deployment of Rocket® iCluster technology, a solution purpose-built for business applications running on IBM i systems. Wolverine implemented iCluster to replicate Wolverine's IBM Power 8 primary server to take advantage of its high availability capabilities so that scheduled maintenance outages would not impact daily operations. iCluster provides continuous, uninterrupted access to business-critical data and applications whether for scheduled system outages such as server upgrades, backups, and batch processes, or unplanned outages caused by natural disasters. Explained Kuriwchak, "For a company like Wolverine whose products are highly perishable, that kind of assurance is invaluable."

## Results

Soon after implementing iCluster, Kuriwchak discovered that he had not only purchased a superior product, but had also entered into a true partnership. As he brought the new system online, the Rocket iCluster support team was with him every step of the way.

When Wolverine later decided to migrate to a faster primary server, Kuriwchak had less than two days to replicate all of the company's enterprise data onto a backup system that would allow them to continue operations during the switchover. The iCluster support team worked closely with Kuriwchak to meet his aggressive deadlines. "We had to save all of our data on a Sunday and, within a few minutes, we were syncing," he said. In fact, Kuriwchak was so impressed with his partners at Rocket Software that he convinced his management team to send him to an iCluster training course in Massachusetts.

After the course, he was able to easily perform a replication from one backup to another "right off the checklist." But the biggest test came after hours one night a few months later. A piece of hardware on the production server at Wolverine malfunctioned. When Kuriwchak learned that it would take almost a day for a replacement part to arrive, he went to work. "With iCluster, I got the entire backup system up and running in less than two hours with all of our sync objects up to date," he said. "We ran the business on the backup system until the following week, when we were able to switch back over. I thanked my boss up and down for sending me to the training. It helped us avert a disaster."

According to Cheryl Geesey, IT director at Wolverine, a highly engaged support team is especially critical for a backup or disaster recovery system. "Even though iCluster is in the background, it is critical to our enterprise—and the support team at Rocket has been invaluable to our learning how to use the product." She emphasized the value of having an established relationship with the vendor. "With something like disaster recovery, you hope you never have to use it. But if a disaster happens, you need to know what you're going to get in terms of support."

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>
> **Cheryl Geesey**
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> Wolverine Packing Company

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