



“ServiceNow and FairchildApp will give us complete visibility and control of our IT disaster recovery processes.”

—Maria Rothstein, DR Analyst & ITSM Office Manager



Headquarters

Minneapolis, MN

Industry

Healthcare & Hospitals

Highlights

- Automated their disaster recovery processes
- Provided an accurate, up-to-date single source of truth
- Used a ready-to-deploy app from the ServiceNow Store, saving nine months compared to developing from scratch

Fairview Health Services Strengthens and Streamlines IT Disaster Recovery

Healthcare Provider Uses ServiceNow Platform to Automate Disaster Recovery Planning

Fairview Health Services is an award-winning nonprofit healthcare system, providing coordinated healthcare to patients in Minnesota, the upper Midwest, and beyond. For more than 100 years, they have had an exemplary record of meeting community needs. In partnership with the University of Minnesota, the healthcare provider is also committed to world-class medical research and education, and has an enviable reputation for breakthrough medical advances.

As a leading healthcare organization, Fairview Health Services depends heavily on its IT infrastructure. They have more than 1,500 live applications, many of which are mission-critical. These applications have to be highly available, including in the event of a disaster. Their most important applications have stringent Recovery Time Objectives (RTO), designed to support the timely recovery of key business processes.

Manual Processes Couldn't Keep Up

Like many organizations, Fairview Health Services managed their IT disaster recovery (DR) processes manually. While they were committed to having robust DR protocols, they struggled to keep Word-based disaster recovery plans up to date and accurate – and to verify that RTOs could be met. According to Maria Rothstein, DR Analyst & ITSM Office Manager, “We were faced with an enormous amount of work. Automation was the only way forward.”

Fairview Health Services already used ServiceNow for IT Service Management and to manage their IT infrastructure. This made ServiceNow a natural choice for managing DR. The ServiceNow CMDB had a comprehensive inventory of Fairview's IT network, along with other key data such as vendor and facility information. Rothstein says that, “We were constantly taking information out of ServiceNow and pasting it into our disaster recovery plans. That made no sense. By managing DR within ServiceNow, we could save huge amounts of time—and know that we had an accurate, up-to-date single source of truth.”

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Buy Vs. Build

Fairview Health Services evaluated building their own DR application on the ServiceNow Platform. However, freeing internal resources to do this was an issue. Instead, they decided to use FairchildApp, a certified, ready-to-deploy application available on the ServiceNow Store. Developed by Fairchild Consulting, a leading business resiliency consulting firm, FairchildApp unifies disaster recovery, business continuity, and IT service management into a complete business resiliency solution.

Rothstein says that, “FairchildApp gave us an enormous head start—at least nine months compared to developing something ourselves. From the outset, we were impressed with its capabilities, and by Fairchild Consulting’s deep disaster recovery knowledge. Since then, adoption across the business has been phenomenal. And, Fairchild Consulting worked closely with us to ensure the application was configured to meet our exact needs.”

Total Visibility

Going forward, Fairview Health Services will be able to build complete DR plans in a fraction of the time—and the plans will be automatically updated when changes are made to the ServiceNow CMDB. Using FairchildApp, they can also exercise these plans and record the results directly in ServiceNow. According to Rothstein, “FairchildApp will allow us to have complete visibility of the RTO of each of our key applications, and we will be able to easily see the gap between our planned RTOs and what we can actually achieve.

Cloud Matters

Fairview Health Services also emphasizes the importance of having a cloud-based platform for managing disaster recovery. Rothstein says that, “If a disaster happens, we need to know that our disaster recovery platform will survive. If the platform is running in our data center, it’s vulnerable. With ServiceNow’s highly available and redundant cloud architecture, we don’t have to worry about that.”

Beyond IT

Looking forward, Fairview Health Services is already evaluating FairchildApp’s broader business continuity capabilities. By extending FairchildApp beyond IT, they see the potential to automate and strengthen their entire business continuity framework. This will also couple IT disaster recovery and business continuity even more closely—for example, by connecting each application’s RTO directly to the RTOs of the business processes it supports.

The Golden Pass

Rothstein is also enthusiastic about using other applications from the ServiceNow Store. She says that, “Our experience with FairchildApp has been tremendous. And because the application was certified by ServiceNow, it got the golden pass—we knew it had successfully completed a defined set of architecture, integration, security, and performance tests, and had the capabilities we needed for success.”

The Business Continuity Institute (BCI) recently awarded Fairchild Consulting its 2016 Innovation award for FairchildApp. To find out more about FairchildApp, visit the ServiceNow Store