



DR4i - affordable Data Replication

Features

- Easy installation and configuration
- Uses Remote Journal technology
- Optimal Apply Process
- Optional PHP Interface for monitoring

System Requirements

- IBM i OS Version 5 release 4 & up
- Suitable network connection between the source and target systems
- Journaling for both object and database replication, if you do not have journaling enabled, you will need sufficient resources to support the journaling processes



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DR4i™ is a Disaster Recovery solution for the IBM i. Using the latest IBM i technology such as Remote Journaling, DR4i can be configured to apply the data from the remote journals using either the IBM APYJRNCHG technology or our own internally developed apply process.

The IBM APYJRNCHG process which uses a technique pioneered by Shield's Chris Hird, only applies the data when a receiver changes. This allows the user full control over when, and how, the data is applied to the target system. The Shield internal apply process applies the data on receipt at the target system which also provides a number of significant benefits such as reduced role swap times. Because DR4i uses the same apply technology as our HA4i product you can be assured the process is able to meet even the most demanding requirements.

Cost

DR4i has been developed with "ease-of-use" at its core, this reduces the cost of ownership and provides an easily manageable environment for the small IBM i shop. Installation and fix management is carried out using the same commands used to manage the OS. Licensing is IBM CPU tier based and because the product is only installed on the target system reduces the cost of ownership significantly.

Database File replication

The original apply process employed by DR4i uses the IBM APYJRNCHG functionality. This brought a number of benefits to the users, such as only applying the data when a receiver is changed and the OS was responsible for applying the data, but it also has a number of drawbacks due to the fact that once started control is passed to the APYJRNCHG command.





Database File replication

...continued. This encouraged Shield to develop its own apply process which uses the remote journal technology as the intersystem transport, but applies the entries to a remote database using our own programs. This has brought a number of new benefits none more important than offering choice to the customer.

IFS Replication

The IFS is replicated using the user journal process (Journal entries are applied on the target using the IBM or SAS apply process).

Monitoring

DR4i comes with an Email capability which can be configured to send notifications out to pre-determined users via your own internal SMTP server. The PHP interface also has colour coded notifications that provide the user with instant visual notification that problems exist.

Web-based Interface

DR4i can be controlled entirely using the standard UIM interface, but

the advantages of the web-based interface, developed using PHP and the Easycom™ toolkit, provide the user with a lot more information due to the additional space available to a web browser. The interface is secured using the IBM i sign on and cannot be used without the user entering their credentials.

Implementation

DR4i is packaged as an IBM LPP, this means the install and management uses the same IBM commands you use for installing and maintaining the IBM OS. To install you simply download the base product as a save file from the website, and use the RSTLICPGM command to install and configure the product. The updates we provide are packaged as IBM PTFs, they will be posted to our website to allow download for those users who are under a current maintenance agreement for the product. Installation takes minutes and uses the IBM LOD/APYPTF commands.

Configuration

The installation process gathers the required common configuration data and simple to understand menus offer the ability to configure the application specific data prior to starting the replication process.

Once you have configured remote journaling on each system and started the process, you can start the programs, and DR4i will maintain a duplicate copy of the data on the remote system.

Management

DR4i attempts to recover from most replication errors without notification to the user, however if an error is found which it cannot rectify it will pass that notification to the user in a number of ways. For those users who do not obtain the PHP interface there are a number of screens which are provided to indicate how the replication process is performing. Any errors which are found that cannot be rectified will have notifications sent to these management screens plus a message queue. The PHP interface simplifies this even further by providing color coded indicators for the errors. Commands and menu options provide the user with full control over the replication processes and recovery of failed requests which make the product very simple to manage on an ongoing basis.



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Recovery

While you may never need to use the facilities provided by a Disaster Recovery solution, if you do, it is important that it is simple and effortless. DR4i is only responsible for apply of the journal entries to the target objects, but the user will be responsible for maintaining all other objects and processes required to restart the applications on the target system. This may require additional replication tools and processes to be employed. If you need assistance in developing these processes please contact us for further discussion.

Enhancements

Shield is continually looking for better ways to carry out the replication tasks, our customers provide feedback what need which often results in new features and enhancements. IBM is also continually improving the OS with new access to certain features used to replicate objects and data between systems. As these enhancements become available Shield reviews the technology to enhance our products where appropriate.

Services Available

Installation and configuration

DR4i is able to be installed by most IBM i Administrators, however if you need assistance we provide highly trained consultants who will be able to install and configure DR4i.

Bespoke development

If you need additional programming support to develop additional tools not provided by DR4i or need assistance developing the exit programs used by DR4i in role swaps Shield has the expertise to help.

Project management

Providing a fully recoverable Disaster Recovery environment can be challenging, we can offer expert project management to ensure your project is delivered on time and within budget.

Remote management

We know how to manage a replication environment and have a deep understanding of the technology used within our replication products. Let us use our knowledge and skill to manage your environment and allow your staff to undertake other important tasks.

Hosting

If you need to have your Disaster Recovery hosted outside of your company we can offer the services internally or via one of our partners.



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