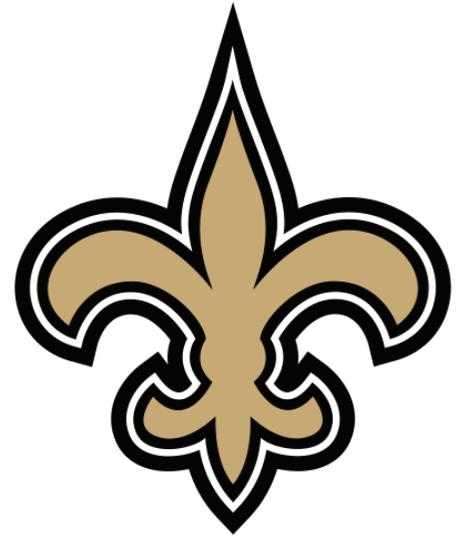


# CASE STUDY:

VENYU TACKLES DISASTER RECOVERY FOR THE NEW ORLEANS SAINTS AND PELICANS FRANCHISES.



## THE CHALLENGE:

In the early days of the NFL's New Orleans Saints, traditional data centers as we know them today, did not exist. The team placed their IT equipment - consisting of Microsoft Windows, antivirus software and several servers - anywhere they could. And in this case, it was within their conference room. As time went by and the team's data needs and applications grew, more sophisticated data facilities began to emerge that could process a wide variety of sports and business-related information. These included:

- Payroll
- Email
- Tickets
- Player statistics
- Press information
- Instant replay video

As advancements in the network took place, new home field services soon emerged that facilitated public and private wireless Internet connectivity as well as supporting communication from the coaches to journalists or others on the field during game day. Communications seemed flawless until the Saints' networks were tested when a super storm approached the Gulf Coast region.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. The home field Superdome was used as a temporary emergency shelter for displaced residents, and the Saints were forced to play their first scheduled home game against the New York Giants at Giants Stadium in East Rutherford, New Jersey. But, this is only the public-facing story.

Behind the scenes, a team of dedicated IT personnel were determined to keep the franchise running by salvaging and moving the Saints entire network to a safe zone. Led by Jeff Huffman, Director of Information Technology for New Orleans Saints, the IT team arrived at the office the day after the hurricane hit and dismantled the entire network by flashlight-carrying all servers and PCs down dark stairwells for transport to San Antonio, Texas.

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## Case Study: VENYU and NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

"The whole thing reminded me of a MASH episode," Huffman recalled. "There was no electricity and we had to find and dismantle 125 desktops including monitors, keyboards and mice. With the help of the U.S. Marines, we were able to locate our desktop PCs and find sixteen servers. We then had to lay them on their sides and slide them down dark stairwells--one by one."

Mother Nature's blitz led to establishing a defensive game plan that would insulate the franchise's IT functionality from disasters, and allow the business to maintain operations without disruption. The team drew up a solid disaster recovery plan.

### THE SOLUTION:

"If something were to happen again, we would need another central location to run our business--we just became too big," Huffman stated.

Even prior to Hurricane Katrina, Huffman realized the importance of data backup. He began an evaluation of local hosting companies, but remained skeptical because of the confidential and proprietary nature of player data, "It just could not be stored within a cloud environment," emphasized Huffman.

A solution to the problem was realized through Venyu. Venyu offered a colocation option that resolved data storage issues with league rules and management, as well as provided a safe and secure

environment for the team's data.

Venyu's flexible colocation solution gave the Saints the space, connectivity and security they needed for data services. The company's commercial-grade data centers are designed with industry-leading, physical and network security protection, disaster recovery options and a wide range of environmental controls and system redundancies.

In addition to hosting the network, the teams are also taking advantage of Venyu's comprehensive business continuity center. This "people recovery" center provides 93 fully appointed workspaces that include high-speed Internet, network connectivity, VoIP phone services and on-site technical support and security, ensuring that critical business functions, such as payroll, can continue even during the worst disasters.

### THE BENEFITS:

For the New Orleans Saints and Pelicans, the IT infrastructure is now looked upon as a true business enabler, where social media and specialized game day information at the stadium helps to expand each team's brand and brings fans a unique experience.



"Smartphones and tablets are changing the way that we do business and IT must evolve to meet these demands. Guaranteeing IT services are up and running via business continuity and world-class hosting services will help turn the casual game visitor into a passionate, long-term fan," Huffman concluded.

### Venyu's network for the New Orleans Saints and as of 2013, the New Orleans Pelicans:

- Secure hosting services
- Metro-based Ethernet connectivity
- Backup Internet with firewall protection
- Virtualization capabilities to reduce hardware
- Cold standby to replicate the most recent backup, with a hot server systems ready to come online within hours if needed]



Venyu is a premier provider of data center, managed hosting, cloud, virtualization and data protection solutions. By leveraging Venyu's portfolio of innovative, ROI-focused solutions, including VenyuCloud and RestartIT, within secure, highly available data centers, organizations can reduce IT costs while increasing security and scalability.

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