



ING Bank's Leading Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Strategy Founded on Automation

ING Bank Turkey is one of the country's leading financial institutions, offering a wide range of products and services to individual and corporate customers in the banking area. With the vision of becoming a technology company that has a banking license, ING Bank is incorporating innovation to its banking strategy. This regional subsidiary of the Netherlands-based ING Group, which operates in more than 40 countries, has significant potential for growth, given the rapidly growing economy and consumer appetite for financial services. It is important to ensure high availability and good response times from its core banking applications, credit card handling, consumer credit, and other IT systems if customers service demands and adherence to ever-tighter regulatory controls are to be met.

The bank is continually looking at ways to align IT and business priorities so that ever more stringent industry directives surrounding data availability and security can be met. Hakan Inceoğlu, Head of Technology Services, picks up the story. "We were facing pressure on two fronts," he says. "The first was to accelerate and streamline the IT processing around our start-of-day and end-of-day — the approach we used was manual and labor-intensive. The second was to automate disaster recovery processes, making it easier to ensure business continuity across the bank's growing and increasingly complex environments."

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- Automate DR for business critical banking systems
- Eliminate errors and delays from manual DR processes
- Reduce mean time to recovery

AUTOMIC SOLUTION

- Rapid creation of workflows
- Flexibility orchestrating complex dependencies
- Automatic error detection and remediation

CUSTOMER BENEFITS

- Improved disaster recovery time by a factor of four—lowering business risk
- Increases staff productivity and operational efficiencies
- Comply with banking sector BC/DR regulatory directives

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Head of Technology Services, ING Bank Turkey

Business Challenges

Similar to any financial institution, business continuity/disaster recovery (BC/DR), data protection and accessibility are critical tasks for ING Bank Turkey. Kicking off its DR strategy, the bank mapped each business activity to its corresponding IT system and graded the criticality of each system, on a one to four range, in terms of the level of confidentiality, availability and data integrity required. It became mandatory that each system scoring three or more had a BC/DR strategy.

"Formerly, our DR procedures were manual, requiring huge amounts of staff resource," said Emrah Baysal, Head of Systems Management. "Errors could occur following run books and scripts. For instance, a step in a DR process could start before its predecessor finished. The most difficult challenge was orchestrating all of our processes to ensure that our DR was doing the right thing in the right place at the right time."

Their aim was to implement DR more efficiently, cutting the mean

time to recovery (MTTR) across its growing and increasingly complex Linux, Windows and Solaris environments. “There were so many manual tasks involved, that recovery time seemed to take forever. We needed to automate the DR process,” said İnceoğlu.

Automatic Solution

ING Bank Turkey was already partnering with Automatic to automate IT workloads. Extending the business automation platform to address its BC/DR challenges meant the bank could leverage Automatic’s ease of use, rich functionality and ability to rapidly create workflows, as well as the internal skill set it had developed. New hires in IT Operations can become productive very quickly using Automatic. “Compared to other automation tools the learning curve is very low – you can easily be creating workflows in a few days,” explained Baysal.

With Automatic, the bank is able to continue using its own scripts and DR run books. Reusable objects allow advanced workflows to be built from smaller, more manageable, modular components. This simplifies administration and reduces maintenance overheads. Any changes to DR procedures can be applied immediately and, because they are embedded into the workflow definitions, are automatically documented. ING Bank Turkey has replaced 30 pages of manual run book instructions with one straightforward fully automated Automatic solution.

It was especially important to improve error handling. “Mistakes, such as configuration files containing capital letters instead of mixed-cases, could cause operational issues,” said Baysal. “These are now easy to detect at run time and fix to rerun immediately with Automatic. Other DR tools we looked at didn’t offer this flexibility.” ING Bank Turkey has complete visibility and control when monitoring its DR activities. Not only is it able to track the progress of site switching and failover processes; it also benefits from automated Recovery Time reports being generated that the IT Operations team provides to the business. Previously, gathering recovery time data and producing these reports was a manual, time consuming process.

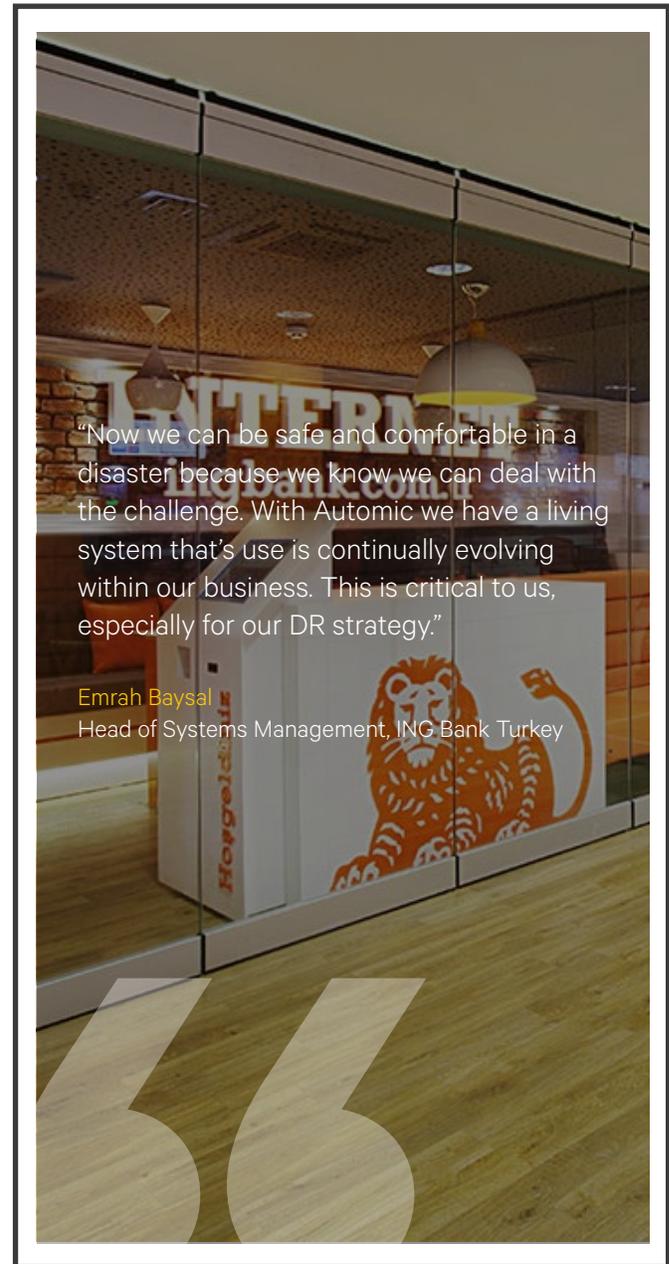
ING Bank Turkey Benefits

“Having prioritised which systems required DR, we wanted to take a phased approach to our implementation,” said Baysal. “Over the last five years we have expanded automated DR to address 93% of our DR requirements. Also, we have huge DR workflows that are composed of many sub-flows. With Automatic we gained the flexibility to switch subordinate applications without having to failover the whole system.”

The results of the DR testing process have been dramatic. ING Bank Turkey has shrunk the MTTR and delivered an almost error-free DR process. During a recent test, the bank switched the core

banking system to the DR site in 80 minutes, and next day returned it to the primary data center site in 40 minutes. Previously, using the manual method, that would have taken four times longer.

“Now we can be safe and comfortable in a disaster because we know we can deal with the challenge,” concluded Baysal. “With Automatic we have a living system that’s use is continually evolving within our business. This is critical to us, especially for our DR strategy.”



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