

# GATOR fills gap, saves project from swamp

By George Adamo, Waterbury Hospital

We were swamped! The mammoth Health Information Project was nearing its go-live date! Large new chunks of infrastructure had been added, a new Citrix farm, five new AIX partitions, two HACMP clusters, a new Oracle Real Application Cluster (RAC). Everyone was involved in two or three projects at once with resources double and triple booked! Of course, the first sacrifice to urgency was proper training and knowledge transfer which would have been followed by Disaster Recovery Planning. We would have had to sacrifice this if it were not for that pesky legal requirement that we demonstrate an audited capability to recover our Oracle database in the event of a disaster.

Gaps? You bet! The ability to recover was theoretical at best. We had been dragging our tails on planning what hardware our recovery site should contain and we did not have a complete procedure for recovery of our critical database resources at any level. We called on our data protection partners, More Group Inc, doing our best to keep the note of hysteria from our voices. More Group suggested their GATOR service – a Gap Analysis and Testing of Recovery.

More Group was able to review the backup process set up by our software vendor, make important suggestions for improvement, reposition some of our existing resources to enable the creation of another test partition, document the procedure for a full bare metal restore in both a clustered and non-clustered environment, and actually perform the data recovery in a non-clustered environment twice! They left us with a complete recipe and a test environment upon which we could practice the process.

The project would have been more productive if we were not so overbooked that the TSM resource, the AIX administrator, and the Oracle DBA could have gotten together at the same time for complete training. We will be using our test environment to practice recovery in a non-threatening environment. This will build our confidence and help us fill the gaps in our knowledge and ability to recover our critical data resources.

