



Enabling resilient digital banking services for a diversified economy

Arab National Bank | Banking and financial services



Business opportunity

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted the “2030 Vision” initiative to diversify the economy and seize untapped growth opportunities.

A key pillar of this vision is digital enablement and empowerment. People in the kingdom have unparalleled access to the Internet and expect fast, easy digital experiences. For banks, supporting those experiences requires banking services to be continuously available and resilient. The sensitivity to outages is high and impacts the clients and banks’ reputations.

To sustain its leadership role in the financial sector in Saudi Arabia, Arab National Bank (anb) wanted to preemptively increase the resiliency of its IT infrastructure and applications that run its services.

Technical challenge

The first step for anb was to automate manual IT disaster recovery. Though the bank had a good reputation for uninterrupted services, anb depended on the manual efforts of a large staff to troubleshoot and solve business-impacting IT issues quickly enough to meet their Recovery Time Objective (RTO). Quarterly and annual drills required the help of 40-100 IT staff members.

With COVID-19 and the increasing transformation towards digital banking, relying on manual efforts became too risky. Many would have to engage remotely, with unpredictable availability and reach.

anb also needed more agility to respond to regulatory requirements. The Saudi Central Bank focuses on service availability and quick response to critical incidents and its auditors demand real-time IT disaster recovery visibility and detailed, time-consuming reports. Orchestrating and automating workflows would enable anb to scale their response to compliance demands in both normal and special circumstances.

Our solution

Together, anb and Kyndryl designed and implemented an IT Disaster Recovery Orchestration and Automation solution that can easily evolve with the business and efficiently meet demanding regulatory requirements, by upholding these capabilities:

- High visibility of DR performance through real-time dashboards and reporting.
- End-to-end orchestration and automation of disaster recovery for the full technology stack.
- Aggressive performance within a 30-minute recovery time objective and 5 minute recovery point objective.
- Automated disaster recovery drills.
- Simplified and customizable IT disaster recovery reporting.

“With Kyndryl, we first automated switchover and recovery of less critical applications. It went slowly because we had to verify every manual step before attempting automation. Now, compared to when we began, we can automate switchovers and recoveries 80% faster on our mission-critical applications.”

- Raed Aldawood, Head of Technology and Infrastructure services, anb

What progress looks like

- Minimal service downtime of all critical applications due to fully orchestrated and automated disaster recovery, as proven in multiple full switchovers between datacenters.
- 90% reduction in manual efforts:
 - to conduct switchover tests.
 - to flexibly deliver reports to auditors as requested.

About Arab National Bank

Listed on the Saudi Stock Exchange, anb is one of the largest banks in Saudi Arabia. anb offers the full range of retail and corporate banking services.



Meet the team

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