

# Texas Organ Sharing Alliance gets more than just a Disaster Recovery solution partnering with 11:11 Systems



## Challenges:

- Growth outpacing current infrastructure
- Cost in time and money for offsite disaster recovery (DR)
- Need for secure and reliable access to data
- Strict industry regulations and standards
- Desire for trusted, like-minded partner

## Solution:

- 11:11 DRaaS for Zerto

## Benefits:

- Continuous data availability and business uptime
- World-class support team
- Scalable, cost-effective solution for future growth
- Multi-layered data protection
- Simplicity in day-to-day management

## Profile:

- Industry: Healthcare
- Size: SMB

## Client Profile

[Texas Organ Sharing Alliance \(TOSA\)](#) is one of 56 federally-designated organ procurement organizations (OPOs) in the United States. Since its founding in 1975, TOSA has remained committed to its mission of saving lives through the power of organ donation. Today, it serves more than seven million people across Central and South Texas, providing organ donation and recovery services to those wishing to donate and to those waiting for a life-saving organ transplant. For more information, visit [www.tosal.org](http://www.tosal.org).

## Serving a growing community drives IT modernization

TOSA is in the business of saving lives. As one of 56 federally-designated OPOs in the United States, TOSA has been on the frontlines of life-saving organ donation for almost 50 years. Now, more than ever, the need for transplants is great. In 2022, TOSA oversaw the donation of [829 organs from 280 donors](#) across Central and South Texas. Transplants impact patients and their families no matter their background, as every 8 minutes another person is added to the transplant waiting list. In fact, last year alone, there were an all-time record number of transplants in the U.S., with more than 46,000 total transplant procedures across the country.

As the associate director of IT at TOSA, Ken Walker knows how important the organization's mission is, and what it takes for his team to help make it happen. As one of the three OPOs in Texas, TOSA has grown to keep pace with the increasing needs of the community they serve. In his nine years with the organization, Walker has seen it grow from 50 to almost 200 employees. Keeping pace with growth doesn't mean slowing down, he says: "Our job is to keep our systems up and running at all times because we are 24x7." Their work is critical to patient care.

However, making sure TOSA's systems are always available keeps his team of three on their toes. Supporting any healthcare organization has its challenges, but anyone who is familiar with Texas knows the impact weather events have had on operations-critical systems, particularly in the last decade. In 2024, 2.7 million households and businesses lost power as hurricane Beryl moved across the region with high winds and flooding.

Thankfully, TOSA wasn't impacted this time around, but being prepared for the worst is the best defense. Disaster events, whether accidental or malicious, are, by nature, unpredictable. But for an organization like TOSA, where lives are, quite literally, at stake, not being ready is not an option. So, when the contract for TOSA's previous offsite disaster recovery solution came up for renewal, it gave Walker the opportunity to look at alternative solutions better suited to the organization's needs.

### Getting the right DR solution

When Walker first joined TOSA, much of the organization's infrastructure was still managed on-premises alongside an offsite disaster recovery solution. So, making the move to a virtual environment made sense, says Walker.

"For a small team like ours, everything was time consuming, especially managing the physical hardware," he said. "Our team would be running all over the place." This was not feasible long term, because the IT team needed to focus on TOSA's core mission and other critical needs. They needed a solution with predictable, reliable results that met their DR needs.

While making these types of changes don't happen overnight, it also coincided with TOSA modernizing many of its critical systems and moving workloads offsite. A lot of TOSA's data is now located with third-party vendors in the cloud. Along with these core changes taking place in TOSA's IT structure, the 10-year agreement with their offsite disaster recovery vendor was coming to an end, giving Walker the opportunity to look at cloud-based disaster recovery solutions.

Cloud-based disaster recovery solutions are often simpler and more flexible, helping to reduce downtime for critical systems. For Walker, these were all-important advantages, but he was clear on the one key factor driving the need for change: reduced cost.



**"It was a financial pinch, the renewal cost for our offsite location was too high" Walker said. "We formulated what we needed at TOSA, and it just made sense to look at cloud-based solutions."**

Walker learned of 11:11 Systems through a former colleague and began researching more about its disaster recovery services. With 11:11 Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS) for Zerto, Walker found a solution that is able to natively perform replication of critical systems to the cloud with a simple and intuitive interface.

From his perspective it was straightforward: "We did the research and we liked what we saw. We got a quote and the demo worked great. 11:11 Systems was able to provide everything on our list, from the price point, to ease of use, to the ability to reliably failover in the cloud."

**Support is an important lifeline.**

Finding a solution that met all TOSA's needs allowed Walker and to move forward with implementing 11:11 DRaaS for Zerto — a decision that has ultimately made life much easier for his team. "Since we partnered with 11:11 Systems, the day-to-day management of our DR systems is much simpler," said Walker. "If we ever do run into an issue or have questions, we no longer have to run to a data center to figure out what might have happened or talk to a million people. Now, I just can talk to 11:11 if I need anything."

Having that level of support has been a key difference maker since choosing 11:11 as their vendor. Walker is clear on what it means to him: "Customer support is a big factor. In IT there are so many variables between getting good support or not, and with 11:11 we have been getting the support we need from the beginning."

The support 11:11 provides goes beyond technical support. Early on, TOSA needed to make sure their non-profit status was reflected in their billing and Walker came away impressed with how 11:11 handled the situation.

"Communication is key," he said. "11:11 kept me updated while they resolved the issue, and that brought reassurance. I didn't just have to wait for the next month's statement to see if it had been fixed."

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Ken Walker, Associate Director of IT at the Texas Organ Sharing Alliance

Having technical expertise is often the first box checked when choosing a vendor in the IT world, but finding the right people behind that expertise is key. "I've got a support team in 11:11 that I can lean on when we need guidance or help in a situation," Walker said.

Preparing for a disaster starts with putting the right people, processes, and technology in place, so you can recover quickly and successfully. The changes TOSA has made to their DR solution have them better prepared in case of the unexpected. Again, Walker uses the word "reassurance" when calling out what that this change has meant: "Having that support always there through 11:11 — knowing that I've got their team of experts right behind me — that's a reassurance."

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