IBM Z
Introduction
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GDPS

Frequently Asked Questions

Worldwide

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GDPS

I already have a Parallel Sysplex® spread across multiple sites and already use synchronous disk copy. Why do I need anything else?

1. Synchronous disk remote copy by itself cannot provide data consistency. There are many examples of how individual secondary disk can drop out of duplex mode. Without consistency, the data is useless. GDPS® is designed to guarantee data consistency for the IBM Z® data, together with distributed data.

2. Recovering from a real disaster involves a lot of steps including managing activation profiles, CBU enablement, CF structure management, remote copy configuration, Couple Data Sets, etc. GDPS is designed to automate the entire process, requiring only a single invocation by an operator. This effectively removes key personnel as a "Single Point of Failure" in your disaster recovery plans.

What does GDPS stand for?

GDPS stands for "Geographically Dispersed Parallel Sysplex™," but GDPS has grown by adding additional function such as unlimited distance for disaster recover. GDPS can manage the high availability sysplex within a metro area and the recovery ability of that same sysplex at a location at unlimited distance. Because of these expanded capabilities, it is just called by the name "GDPS" today.

Why "Parallel Sysplex" when talking about long distance, asynchronous disaster recovery?

For "metropolitan" distances, a z/OS® Parallel Sysplex with data sharing provides significant availability benefits. GDPS can manage any sysplex environment and does not require a Parallel Sysplex.

Are Coupling Facilities mandatory?

Although a "base" sysplex (without a CF) is required for GDPS Metro and GDPS Metro HyperSwap® Manager. Data sharing, enabled with a Parallel Sysplex, provides significant availability benefits.

Do I have to buy Tivoli® System Automation? Are there any other options?

Yes, you need Tivoli SA for z/OS since it is the only automation product that exploits the capability of the Parallel Sysplex environment. All other automation products are only sysplex tolerant, being only single image automation products. This means that you can implement the basic functions that GDPS must have in place and then turn the automation control over to the preexisting automation product that a client has in place. GDPS Metro HyperSwap Manager comes with an option to run with a special reduced function (and price) version of SA and for NetView®.

I use another vendor's automation product - does this mean I must convert all my automation to use SA?

No. GDPS provides the capability to coexist with other automation products. This means that you can implement the basic functions that GDPS must have in place and then turn the automation control over to your preexisting automation product. This also gives you a choice to automate any new process with SA for z/OS or your current automation product. It also allows you to migrate your current automated processes to SA for z/OS. This migration can be done over time and does not have to be done all at once.

Can GDPS work with non-IBM disk?

Yes. Although GDPS is based upon IBM remote copy solutions such as Metro Mirror, Global Mirror, and z/OS Global Mirror, these are non-proprietary products. Talk to your vendor to find out which level of the functions they support.

How far apart can I spread my CF's? How far can I stretch my Parallel Sysplex

Though not strictly a GDPS question, a good source for such information is in ITSO Redbooks® such as IBM Z End-to-End Extended Distance Guide (PDF, 5.10 MB)

I need zero RTO/RPO at 100 kilometers, what can you do for me?

A GDPS Metro configuration with a z/OS Parallel Sysplex can be extended to well beyond 100 km. This allows for a Recovery Point Objective (RPO) of zero seconds. RTO at this distance however will be increased as Parallel Sysplex data sharing does not typically perform well at this distance. GDPS Continuous Availability can give very low RTO (seconds) at unlimited distance with minimal data loss as an alternative.

Why can't I just buy the software without the services?

Services are only required on the first license for your location. After you have implemented GDPS in one environment you can buy additional license for that location without buying services.

There are many examples of non-GDPS customers running with remote copy who have encountered problems, but didn't know how to handle the situation. A 22 hour outage could have been reduced to one hour or less if they had GDPS.

I have an ELA with IBM Systems Group, can I roll GDPS into this agreement?

No. GDPS is a IBM services solution. It is not a IBM Program Product. The ELA is from the IBM Systems Group within IBM. The GDPS solution has a Control Code component that is an Intellectual Property Services Component ("IPSC"). IBM has all rights, title, and interest (including ownership of copyright) in IPSCs and IPSCs are licensed, not sold.

How much does it cost?

The cost of the license depends on which flavor of GDPS you choose, depending on the size of the environment. IBM will send GDPS technical advisors onsite to assess your requirements and educate your staff, at a high level, to discover what is required or contact us.

How long does it take to install?

There are several factors such as the size of the environment and other projects the client must implement in the same time frame. Will all the disk and or tape be upgraded? Will the processors be upgraded? Is the fiber in place between the sites? Do we need to implement remote copy? Where are you today and where do you want to be tomorrow?

I must buy Tivoli System Automation. Are there any other options?

GDPS works to fully automate your day to day infrastructure management and the disaster recovery processes. Talk to us about special bid options if you do not use System Automation for z/OS as your automation product today.

Now that we have Basic HyperSwap, why do I need GDPS?

GDPS Metro HyperSwap Manager has some significant advantages over basic HyperSwap.

GDPS Metro HM will

1. Manage all vendor's disk that support the IBM Metro Mirror.
2. Provide a 2-site disaster recovery capability
3. Provide consistency across all target volumes when the Swap fails to complete
4. Provide a migration path to full GDPS
5. Provide the high availability in the metro area when combined with GDPS Global to provide the 3 site GDPS Metro Global solutions

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