

Case Study

Excellence in Education....

Bradford Grammar School

Leading private school implements FalconStor Continuous Data Protector to ensure Disaster Recovery

"Providing continuity of the schools' academic and administrative needs in the event of catastrophic failure needed to be addressed. This solution provided us with the means to do that."

Simon Marriott, IT Manager, Bradford Grammar

Company Background

Bradford Grammar School is an outstanding private secondary school. Few schools of its type are so well fitted out and provide such a rich set of facilities for education. The school currently has just over 1100 pupils and the teacher to pupil ratio is 1:10. The school offers very good facilities for the study of languages, science, music and the theatre as well as having first class sporting facilities.

Bradford Grammar School has over ten IT suites and all pupils have access to the Internet and e-mail. They can also access their files and e-mail from home, using a remote login method. Sixth formers have their own IT room, usable at any time, with a printer. As is becoming common for schools now, the IT facilities underpin many school activities, both administrative and educational, and have become mission critical.

Business Benefits

The majority of the school's files and data are stored on a storage area network (SAN) infrastructure utilising IBM and Dot Hill SAN storage with a backup to tape. This is a full daily backup amounting to 4.5TB. Simon Marriott, the school's IT Manager, said: "Information technology is pervasive throughout the school; it is used to teach virtually every subject and its use increases continuously. Students also submit crucial coursework electronically, and we must treat it as irreplaceable. In such circumstances, a school's IT infrastructure is not a luxury, but is as mission-critical as it might be in a commercial environment."

This means that the data protection facilities need to be fit for that purpose. Tape, with its interval backup, meant that files, including pupils' data, could be lost if the system went down or files were mistakenly deleted, between backup runs. Recently the school, with the help of long term business partner, ANS Group, reviewed its data protection requirements and decided to embrace continuous data protection technology. ANS Group has extensive expertise and knowledge of data protection, and recommended that Bradford Grammar install FalconStor's Continuous Data Protector. The need to preserve data in the school's mission critical IT environment made the decision to deploy enterprise-grade data protection the only sensible course of action, and FalconStor delivers the reliability needed at an affordable price.



Business Challenges... Technology Solutions

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"It's impossible to overestimate how important IT infrastructure is in education nowadays. The ability to protect data is clearly essential because IT is used to such an extent in the teaching and administration of schools and because student coursework, which directly contributes to their academic qualifications, is all securely stored by the school."

Scott Fletcher, Chairman, ANS Group

The Solution

The IT department makes use of three components in the FalconStor product:

- Continuous Data Replication (CDR) ensures that a remote target disk is an exact copy of an identified primary disk and is kept continually updated with data changes. In the event of a primary disk failure at the school, the remote copy can be accessed to maintain data integrity.

-Snapshot Agents ensure active data stores are protected. Complete data and transactional integrity is attained through a robust and automated process that takes snapshots of the data stores for point-in-time copy purposes, third-party backup applications, and disaster recovery planning. It means that the data store copy can be brought online without going through any lengthy rebuild process to roll-back partial transactions. This will save a lot of time in the event of a disaster.

-A TimeMark option provides the school's IT manager with the ability to instantly recover a single file or an entire volume back to a known good point in time. It creates periodic, scheduled or on-demand point-in-time delta snapshot copies of data volumes. These delta snapshots contain only data changes and therefore do not take up a significant amount of disk storage space. Up to 256 delta snapshots can be maintained per volume.

These options ensure that a remote disk is an exact copy, which is continually kept up to date, and that active data is protected. It also allows a single file or an entire volume to be instantly recovered.

Business Benefits

FalconStor's CDP solution provides many benefits:

- Eliminates the back-up window with continuous backup to disk, saving the school time and money while enabling business continuity.
- Includes bare metal recovery providing the schools IT team with the ability to recover a server from back-up without restoring the operating system.
- Snapshot agents provide 100% transaction consistency for rapid recovery.



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