
Redstor Case Study

Education Bradford Select RBUSS to Improve Services

“The Redstor Online Backup service from Redstor has completely transformed how we backup school data so much so that we have no hesitation in recommending it to other authorities”

Case Study

The Local Education Authority is a collaboration between Bradford Council and Serco PLC, out of 208 schools in the district. Education Bradford work with 180 schools subscribing to its ICT support and training offering. Within these schools, the backup regime has been largely left to the school and as such a number of different types of tape based technology in use including the likes of DLT and DAT as well as no standard on backup software. For a support organisation such as Education Bradford this was causing serious administration headaches for the team.

Bradford has a population of 293,717 with the district as a whole having 481,100 inhabitants. Having 207 schools split between secondary, primary, infant with a mix of pupil referral units.

The challenge was how to manage and administer growing data amounts at schools.

Education Bradford had provided guidelines to schools on the importance of data backup, how to perform recoveries and tips on correct backup policies for critical applications such as SIMS, MIS and office data however the backups within schools were still erratic and in some cases non-existent. Even with these published guidelines, the LA were still expected to support the school when backups failed or the school needed to recover data. The experience of the LA was that this was virtually a hit and miss exercise with data recovery as random as the backup.



At A Glance

The Issues:

- High dependency on tape based backup systems
- Regular tape hardware problems at schools
- Various technologies in use across the authority

The Redstor Solution:

- The Redstor Backup for Schools (RBUSS)

The Benefits:

- Service fully managed by the LA
- Effective & quick backup & recoveries done online
- Complete data security with highest level of encryption
- Reduction in costs across the LA and school

"A recent example of data loss happened when one of our engineers went to a school to install a new printer and whilst on site the school was experiencing a failed hard drive." said Wendell James at Education Bradford. "When the engineer looked into the problem, he was shocked to find the school had not successfully backed up for over 6 months! We actually spent weeks at site trying to recover lost data especially as the school was just about to receive OFSTED inspectors".

Unfortunately the LA was unable to recover all the data which included financial information, pupil tracking and also vital student information required for the annual pupil census Solving backup issues and ensuring protection of school data In 2006, delegates from the LA attended a Capita conference where they noticed a Redstor Backup for Schools (RBUSS) accredited by Capita. After initial consultation with Redstor, the LA decided to proceed with a limited trial of the service with 10 schools over a period of 8 weeks to put Redstor Backup for Schools (RBUSS) through its paces.

"The immediate results we saw after running the service for only a few days were remarkable – we could see the data backup, we could monitor each school and on that basis provide a level of service neither we nor the school had experienced before. Quite literally overnight these schools had a fully working, monitored backup plus full disaster recovery elements built in." said James.

After a full backup of data selected at each school, the information is compressed and encrypted to the highest level before transfer across the internet to the LA datacentre. Once the first full backup is complete, from then on only changed data is backed up meaning data transfer is kept to a minimum. Recovery is quick and easy as the data is presented from a disk based system and not tape, meaning that it is also fast depending on the size of the file. SLAs can then be tailored depending on budget and recovery objectives and responsibilities so that the LA can offer a fully managed backup service to the schools.

In the trial schools, backup related issues were virtually eliminated and general support related calls dropped by over 20%.

"As soon as other schools heard what we were doing we were inundated with enquiries. To help further, Redstor provided some branded marketing material for us to use to promote the service to schools." James added. "Since we went live we now have over 60 schools running the service and they have told us they won't go back to tape."

"The service we have received from Redstor in setting up the service, budgeting, marketing and deployment have been second to none and have made all the difference. The Redstor Backup for Schools service has completely transformed how we backup school data and I have absolutely no hesitation in recommending it to other authorities." concluded James.

About Redstor

Founded in 1998, Redstor is a profitable Managed Services and IT Solutions Company focused around storage, data management and protection. Over 50% of Redstor's income is repeatable based upon creating enduring relationships with its customers. Redstor has over 10 years of expertise in managing, supporting and monitoring customers' data either at their site, remotely or on Redstor's own online storage and backup platform.

Redstor's trusted consultative approach is based upon understanding prospects and customer's business and IT goals and vision, then establishing a base line, before working with the customer to build a plan of action and a solution. This approach was a major factor in Redstor winning the SNS Storage Integrator of the Year Award 2008.

For more information please contact redstor on +44 (0)118 951 5200 or visit www.redstor.com