

HILL DICKINSON



Redstor successfully delivers Hill Dickinson with Scalable Cloud Backup for over 150TB

Hill Dickinson: International commercial law firm.

Founded in 1810, with its UK headquarters in Liverpool, Hill Dickinson is an international commercial law firm with more than 1050 people across its offices in the UK, mainland Europe and Asia. Servicing a wide range of clients including multinational companies, major corporations and UK plcs, the firm delivers strategic advice and guidance spanning the full legal spectrum.

Given the nature of Hill Dickinson's client base, it has the responsibility to manage and store a significant amount of highly confidential data, therefore having an extremely secure and reliable backup solution is critical to the running of the organisation.

The Challenge: An aging, time-intensive backup solution

Prior to the implementation of Redstor's cloud backup solution, Hill Dickinson was operating an aging tape-based backup system for longer retention items, alongside a short-term local disk-based backup solution. Although this solution had been adequate in the past, it was quickly becoming unmanageable due to the rapid growth of data. In addition, the physical hardware was nearing end of life, prompting Hill Dickinson to evaluate other solutions available on the market that better aligned with its strategic move to cloud technologies.

Whilst using the existing service and associated tape-based backup, the IT team were spending ever more time managing and maintaining the backup process. The internal time required to manage the estate and move physical tapes had grown to over half-a-day in man hours on a weekly basis.

Due to the large volume of data managed by Hill Dickinson, there was a library of over 4,500 physical tapes in the existing backup process and these had to be indexed and stored as well as securely transported between sites. An ever-increasing amount of physical storage space was required by the tapes themselves and more physical, secure storage space would have to have been arranged to cater for future data growth.

A further issue associated with the ever increasing data growth was the ability of the existing solution to take a full backup within an acceptable business window. Full backups to tape were taking ever longer to complete such that it was starting to encroach on the business day and degrade the performance of the services they provided to the business.

Charlie Muir, Head of IT at Hill Dickinson explains: “The backup solution we were previously using had served us well but had clearly reached its end of useful life. If we had persisted with the physical solution, we were looking at the need for a full expanded hardware refresh and given we were finding more areas that the product didn’t interface with our modernised suite of services effectively we knew we needed to find the next solution that would take us through the next strategic cycle. In addition we had begun to find the physical ownership of the process becoming more costly, complicated and time consuming, with the sheer number of physical tapes being created overwhelming. It was the right time to align our backups with the firm’s wider cloud strategy, and partner with the right provider to take as many of the daily operational burdens as possible while assuring the control and service levels we expect of our critical services.”

Adding to the complexity was that the tape drives themselves were beginning to fail on a more regular basis. Each time a drive failed, engineers had to come out to site and the drive was out of action; which meant backups were unable to complete and time consuming remedial action had to be taken to cover the business risk.

He adds: “The operational end of Backup just isn’t glamorous or an area our staff are naturally drawn to owning. The legacy solution was demanding more and more effort but we found it difficult to persuade anyone in the team to volunteer to spend more of their time managing the process to ensure that we maintained a 100% backup record. It became ‘that job’ that no one wanted to do and it was at this point that we knew enough was enough and that we should look at the problem differently to reduce our risk and release our staff to provide more value elsewhere.”

The Solution: Moving to the cloud with Redstor

Hill Dickinson initially started looking at cloud backup alternatives in February of 2016 with a set of key criteria in place. Firstly, the firm needed a solution that would support multiple sites, would be infinitely scalable to accommodate the business’ increasing data and eliminate the need for tape-based media altogether. In addition, due to the sensitivity of much of the data held, it needed to ensure that its data remained extremely secure to minimise the risk of data breaches or leaks. Finally, the firm wanted to minimise downtime to the systems to avoid disruption to the IT team and the business.

Charlie first met with Redstor in March of 2016 following the recommendation of one of his industry peers and an existing Redstor customer.

Charlie comments: “We had aspired to cloud backup for a while as part of our ongoing cloud adoption strategy and this need to update our existing backup solution was just the catalyst we needed to progress this element. We wanted to work with a provider who would work on a partner level with us and be able to drive the analysis, design, implementation and migration to the end solution, before providing a fully managed service to support our use of it going forward.

“As ever we were ambitious in our timescales for delivery so decided to prioritise those suppliers that came recommended by peers at similar firms. Thankfully Redstor’s products and services came highly recommended and allowed us to filter solutions quickly and save time.”

“The best part of the experience for us was the ownership and responsibility that Redstor’s team took to deliver against the tight timescales we had set ourselves, we could not have done it without them and their positive engagement validated our choice!”

During an initial trial of Redstor’s cloud backup, it was determined that Hill Dickinson would need to back up around 100TB of data to Redstor. Due to the volume of data involved and the firm’s stipulation that there was zero negative impact to the operation of the business, the supporting network, and that old and new backups should run in parallel for a number of months; the process of transferring to the cloud and deploying the backup solution across the estate was more complex than originally anticipated. However, all of the targets were met and there was no system downtime or service impact during the transition. In addition, the ability to recover from the legacy solution was not lost as Redstor’s cloud solution was run in conjunction with the older system until the teams had aligned and the service cut across to Redstor. Charlie says:

“ Despite the complexity of the migration process, Redstor’s team were able to hold our hands throughout and ensured there was no downtime. It was incredibly important for us to not disrupt the day-to-day running of the business and we managed this to the credit of the two teams involved.

Measurable improvements

Following a smooth implementation process, Hill Dickinson is now successfully backing up well over the initial 100TB of data estimated, which is stored locally at Hill Dickinson for ease of access, with an additional two backups held securely at Redstor’s UK-based datacentres to ensure maximum continuity.

Redstor’s cloud backup solution provides Hill Dickinson with fast, cost-effective, secure offsite backup; allowing them to rapidly recover data anytime and anywhere. Redstor’s service guarantees security by ensuring that data is encrypted at source, in transit and at rest in Redstor’s dedicated data centres using either 256-bit AES encryption. Only Charlie’s team at Hill Dickinson has access to the encryption key used to encrypt data and thus only they can decrypt and recover their data, making their data that much more secure.

Importantly the Redstor service is incredibly low touch. Fully automated, the service provides Hill Dickinson with automated reports detailing backup success and failure, enabling true management by exception.

With Redstor’s ISO certified disaster recovery solution, Charlie can remain reassured that in the event of a critical issue, involving anything from a ransomware attack to a natural disaster, downtime is kept to a minimum.

In addition to being able to securely backup the law firm’s large amount of data, Redstor’s cloud backup scales effortlessly to accommodate the rapid and unpredictable growth of confidential data stored by Hill Dickinson. Charlie comments:

“ Since working with Redstor, there has been a huge transformation to the way Hill Dickinson stores data. Not only do we now have a sustainable and scalable solution, but we no longer need to dedicate a highly skilled team member’s time to maintain the backup process, meaning we can dedicate the team’s time to driving value for the firm.

He concludes: "At a recent internal supplier review meeting, we were proud to place Redstor in our top supplier quadrant. We do not consider Redstor to be a supplier but a trusted partner providing a technology and service view that underpins much of what the team here does.

About Redstor

For nearly 20 years, Redstor has been the Data Management & Security Company of choice for businesses and organisations looking for a trusted advisor to manage and secure their data. This experience, shaped by our community creates the world-class software underpinning Redstor's Cloud Data Management and Security Platform.

Our customer-centric approach allows us to provide the best customer service and to develop our technology to suit our customers' needs. Our aim is to give customers control over their most valuable asset, their data and ensure they are secure and always accessible, wherever, whenever.

www.redstor.com

About Hill Dickinson

Hill Dickinson LLP is a leading and award-winning international commercial law firm with more than 1,050 people including 190 partners and legal directors, with offices in Liverpool, Manchester, London, Piraeus, Singapore, Monaco and Hong Kong.

- The firm delivers advice and strategic guidance spanning the full legal spectrum, from non-contentious advisory and transactional work to all forms of dispute resolution.
- Hill Dickinson prides itself on fostering the strongest client relationships and adding value through innovation. The firm acts as a trusted adviser to businesses, organisations and individuals within a wide range of specialist market sectors: including transport and logistics and international trade, through to retail, insurance, marine, health, education, manufacturing, public sector and banking and financial services.

For further information about the firm and its partners please visit www.hilldickinson.com



 sales@redstor.com  www.redstor.com

 twitter.com/redstor  [linkedin.com/company/redstor](https://www.linkedin.com/company/redstor)

 UK 0118 951 5200 | SA 0860 288 495 / +27 11 575 0134