



CASE STUDY

Longcroft School

Company Profile

Longcroft School first welcomed young people in September 1949 and it was officially opened on 9th May 1951. The School is a community school catering for the academic needs of girls and boys of secondary school age up to university entrance. Over the years the school has progressed from strength to strength, becoming a performing arts specialist college in 2001.

Longcroft school is committed to continual improvement to ensure they maximise the life chances of their young people. The School aims to develop excellence, always looking ahead, working in partnership with families and investing in the future.

At the present time they have approximately 1,350 pupils on roll, 200 being in the Sixth Form with 94 employed teachers.

Business Situation

Longcroft school knew their hardware had a life cycle ranging anywhere from 3 to 5 years in most situations and they knew they were reaching the end of that lifecycle and the hardware could no longer meet the demands of the school. Due to the financial climate Longcroft could not fully resolve their issues by replacing failing hardware. Instead, they had positioned the proverbial “Elastoplast” fix in place to keep things moving along. Longer term this was not viable, the cost of throwing cash at the problem became financially prohibitive and could have created an even bigger problem.

Another area for concern for Longcroft was a problematic back up environment. Backup and recovery is a crucial step in protecting any organisation’s information and its ability to continue its operation if something goes wrong. Longcroft were not completely confident in their ability to recover all their backed-up data. Another backup challenge involved SLAs, they either were not meeting backup and recovery SLAs, or they were unsure whether they were, with too much data cited as the reason. Quite simply, the backup window had been broken.

Technical Situation

Longcroft found the challenges in maintaining adequate backups and recovery too time consuming. In addition to the time it took, the complexity of backups was also an issue as there were too many backup tools to manage. Two separate sites with different demands put a strain on the Business Servers which are the core communication and production center at Longcroft School. As the equipment reached the end of its lifetime cycle, it was time to consider a longer term, flexible and cost effective solution.

Solution

- Education sector virtualization specialist
- one comprehensive solution
- choice of SAN a critical component
- ability to replicate to anywhere with IP connectivity
- improved disaster recovery
- provision of business continuity and high availability
- reduce costs

Benefits

- multiple site disaster recovery
- improved control and manageability
- utilised existing hardware
- no additional hardware cost
- consistent Data Management
- reliable backup
- scalable solution

“with BDR there were no hidden costs.”

Solution

BDR is a virtualization deployment specialist with a high degree of successful deployments within the Education sector. Longcroft had explored the benefits of virtualization and approached BDR based on their pedigree and experience, to find the most appropriate modern virtual solution.

It was important to identify one solution to address the issues and a critical component of the solution was the choice of SAN which had to meet the demands of today and the future growth of an ever expanding college. The performance of the iSCi SANs, their simplicity, and the ability to replicate to anywhere simply with IP connectivity made disaster recovery, business continuity and high availability achievable at a significantly reduced cost.

In addition, with BDR there were no hidden costs for replication or volume copying, snapshots or cloning, and consistent application data management, a feature that is critical for any SAN being able to predict and rely on the state of replicated or snapped Data removes the risk from Disaster Recovery.

Benefits

The greatest benefit for Longcroft was that due to BDR's experience and domain knowledge one solution was identified that could meet all of their needs and there was no down time when the solution was deployed, it was all completed in a live environment with zero application disruption.

The solution delivered the following benefits:

- Multiple site disaster recovery
- Full reporting and monitoring which resulted in greater control and manageability
- Utilised existing hardware to increase overall storage without additional hardware cost
- Consistent Data Management
- Reliable faster back up
- Consistent application data replication between 2 critical applications
- Increase in overall storage which will continue to scale as the college expands

BDR services included:

- Consultancy, design, size, implementation, & support
- Infrastructure implementation and configuration
- Storage Solution
- Backup Solution
- Business Continuity
- Disaster recovery planning
- Data Migration and replication of data across campus
- Performance optimization

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