

# Redstor Case Study

## Birmingham LA Select Redstor and RBUSS for Critical School Data Backup and Recovery

**"The Redstor recommendation provides the most cost-effective solution with the greatest technical benefits, as well as the flexibility and scalability for the future." Iloria Whittier, Learning & Culture IT, Support Services Manager, Birmingham LA.**

### Case Study

Information across Birmingham's schools changes every day and with each school having its own infrastructure, regular backup and protection of this data is a critical exercise. Schools across Birmingham were utilising manual tape-based backup processes that presents both the schools and Learning and Culture IT staff with a number of challenges.

Not only were the manual backup processes performed by the schools time consuming and prone to human error, when problems arose that required support from the LAs IT support team, due to the geographically dispersed nature of the sites across the city there was a risk that a backup might not be completed successfully. If data was lost or corrupted and worse, could not be recovered the school could lose vital student information. Similarly critical, if the school could not then fulfil the reporting obligations to the DfES, this could directly impact the funding from Central Government allocated to the school.

Iloria Whittier, Learning and Culture IT, Support Services Manager, explains, "We were already running a managed backup service for schools, but the technology we were using was just not up to the job and was causing us more issues as more and more schools signed up to the service."

Birmingham LA began the search for a better product, and through recommendation contacted Redstor. Through consultative discussions with the LA and after learning about the issues and challenges being experienced, Redstor introduced the Redstor Backup for Schools (RBUSS solution). Redstor were able to demonstrate to the LA team that Attix5 service provided automated network-based data backup and recovery offering highly secure and fail-safe protection against loss of critical business information, wherever the data resides.



### At A Glance

#### The Issues:

- Existing solution costly to maintain
- Complicated & difficult administration
- No offsite data protection

#### The Redstor Solution:

- RBUSS: Redstor Backup for Schools
- Redstor datacentre services
- Redstor support services

#### The Benefits:

- Reduced costs & reduced risk of data loss
- Centralised & fast, data backups
- Effortless & quick recoveries

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The Backup Professional product suite improves efficiency, reduces cost and reduces the risks associated with tape-based backup solutions. The Backup Professional product suite improves efficiency, reduces cost and reduces the risks associated with tape-based backup solutions.

Backup Professional operates on the Management server in each school, automatically backing up the critical MIS database and other files according to a schedule dictated by the Learning and Culture IT team. Unique binary-level incremental backup technology ensures on each backup only the changes to the Administration database are securely transferred to the LA's Primary Data Centre, minimising the impact on the network. Once the data is transmitted it is then mirrored to a separate site managed by Redstor to ensure full disaster recovery should anything happen to the data stored in the Primary Data Centre.

"Following extensive evaluation we decided to implement a disk-to-disk solution based around technology from Redstor, which provides the most cost-effective solution with the greatest technical benefits, as well as the flexibility and scalability for the future." Miss Whittier continued. "Not only is the backup process fully automated, reducing risk and removing the Administration overhead on the schools, when a school needs to recover any Administration data this can now be remotely fulfilled by the LA IT support team, thus dramatically reducing the cost and resource implications associated with data recovery."

Tony Rucne commented "The Birmingham City Council, LA experience is a textbook example of how disk-to-disk backup technology can relieve many, if not all, of the problems typical of a tape-based backup environment. Backup Professional is designed entirely around the concepts of speed, flexibility and ease of use in a distributed data environment, and the feedback from Birmingham LA reinforces our belief that a well designed and supported implementation will drive down cost for schools and LAs, increase data availability and minimise the resource overhead of data backup on beleaguered IT teams, whilst also reducing risk". Learning and Culture IT initially implemented a highly successful proof-of-concept pilot to 10 sites in 2005. During the pilot, fully automated daily backups of the Administration servers were taking on average only 6.5 minutes, and due to the solution's unique binary-level incremental backups, the average daily data transfer was only 0.8% of the data actually being protected at the schools.

The project was rolled out to schools within the LA's catchment area during 2005. Added to this, the RBUSS solution provides Birmingham LA with the ability to expand the solution beyond MIS data, to not only protect all Curriculum data within schools but also the data on individual laptop PCs belonging to Head Teachers, Bursars and other employees of the LA. Once fully implemented the RBUSS solution has the ability to scale to meet data growth within schools, enabling the LA to enhance its backup and recovery strategy and services across the city. This will vastly reduce the burden on the schools and institutions of administering their backup processes and in doing so vastly reduce the risks associated with data loss.

#### 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.

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