



Backup Express

Success Story: Cornwall NHS

The Cornwall NHS Local Community Relies on Backup Express to Protect Critical Data on Novell NetWare and Windows Servers in a SAN

Organizational Profile

- The health informatics service for the NHS in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
- Provides the IT support for approximately 350 NHS sites across Cornwall

Business Needs

- Back up Novell NetWare, GroupWise and Windows servers in a SAN
- Back up data directly across the fibre network
- A data protection solution that provides clustering support

Environment

- UNIX, Windows 9X/NT/2000/XP, Novell NetWare, and VMS platforms
- EMC CX600
- Dell PowerVault 136T with six LTO-1 drives

Benefits

- Backup Express innovative technology for UNIX, Windows, Linux, NetWare/OES, and Mac OS X environments.
- Performs backup of all data directly across the Fibre Channel or iSCSI networks
- Provides superior clustering support

"Now that we've been able to put a tape in and get the data back, we have all the confidence in the software. We have found it to be very reliable and very simple to use. Backup Express is a very good product."

Tony Bray
Technical Services Manager
Cornwall IT Services

The Challenge:

Cornwall IT Services (CITS) are the health informatics service for the NHS in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, providing the IT support for the NHS community (GP's, Primary Care Trusts Acute and Partnership trusts). CITS provides the IT support for approximately 350 NHS sites across Cornwall, assisting 12,000 users working on different IT platforms including UNIX, Microsoft Windows 9X/NT/2000/XP, Novell, and VMS. Part of the IT strategy adopted by the health community after the formation of CITS was to include a central server / SAN solution with Citrix Thin clients access. CITS procured an EMC CX600, which provides them with SAN adaptability. Connected to the SAN are ten Microsoft Windows 2000 servers running Sybase, six Novell NetWare 6.5 GroupWise servers in a cluster, and twelve Citrix terminal servers, which are used to support about 1000 Neoware thin client devices. The tape library is a Dell PowerVault 136T with six LTO-1 drives. The SAN currently contains approximately one terabyte of data with 3.5 terabytes of usable space. Because of the critical nature and amount of data on the SAN, CITS needed to develop an effective backup and restore strategy. They began the search for a backup product that met their specific requirements. Among them was support for Novell NetWare, GroupWise and Windows servers in a SAN, the ability to back up data directly across the fibre network, cluster support, and ease of use with a single management console.

The Solution:

It was during a conversation with Novell's Premium Support Engineers that Tony Bray, Technical Services Manager at CITS, first heard about Backup Express from Syncsort Incorporated. He said, "We were told that Syncsort has the fibre-based backup solution that really works. We then decided to implement a 30-day evaluation of the software. The biggest benefit was that it actually worked in our environment and gave us a backup." Since CITS needed to back up data on the Novell cluster, they rigorously tested this feature of Backup Express. Tony Bray explained the process; "We pulled all the disks out, failed things over, failed things back. We just let people loose on it for a period of time to see what the resilience was, and then we just went to performance testing. Performance-wise we haven't been able to overload it at all yet and we have yet to run into any problems." With the success of the evaluation, CITS implemented the solution as a key part of their backup strategy. CITS are currently running full backups in five tape cycles, Monday through Friday.

The Benefits:

Tony Bray commented, "The speed is faster than what we've had before. Because of this, we haven't had any performance issues. The software has been very good." The new backup plan was put to the test almost immediately. Tony Bray explained, "Within a couple of weeks of implementing Backup Express, a large post office developed some corruption. We were quickly able to restore the files. If that happened a few weeks before, we wouldn't have been able to recover it at all. We have also had to restore GroupWise files and calendars due to user errors in deleting their own data by mistake. Now that we've been able to put a tape in and get the data back, we have all the confidence in the software. We have found it to be very reliable and very simple to use. Backup Express is a very good product."