
Redstor Case Study

Somerville College Selects Redstor and Attix5 for Vital Data Backup and Recovery Systems

"Redstor listened to our problems, and ultimately found us the best solution in terms of budget, ease of use and recoverability..." Chris Bamber, IT Systems Manager, Somerville College

Case Study

Somerville College was founded (as Somerville Hall) in 1879 to provide an opportunity for women, who at that date were excluded from membership of the University, to gain some kind of higher education in Oxford. The founders' insistence that students should be subjected to no religious tests or obligations marked Somerville off from its Anglican counterpart, Lady Margaret Hall, and set the tone of cultural diversity which has characterised the College to this day. Somerville continues to take pride in its pioneering history, its traditions of academic excellence & public service, its scientific reputation, and its literary heritage, seeking to maintain and reinterpret for the 21st century its founders' commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity in education.

Today, Somerville College has 500 graduate and undergraduate students, with 330 in accommodation as well as a number of academics offering courses in Science, the Arts and Clinical Medicine amongst others.

The College has an IT Infrastructure of largely Windows servers, MS SQL & MS Exchange applications with dedicated storage and a SCO UNIX platform for accounting. Students, academics and College staff have access to these systems via an Ethernet with connections available from the accommodation wings, where students are allowed to connect their own personal desktops and laptops in order to take advantage of their time to continue studying.

In the summer of 2004, Somerville were experiencing severe problems with the LSI Storage Array for Exchange. As the hardware had been discontinued, Chris Bamber, IT Systems Manager, contacted LSI Logic to find out where support could be attained. LSI recommended Redstor.



At A Glance

The Issues:

- Dispersed backup systems with local tape drives
- No guarantee of restores
- Inefficient existing backup software

The Redstor Solution:

- Attix5 Backup Professional
- Redstor Integration into existing Systems
- Redstor Business Advice
- Redstor Support

The Benefits:

- Improved data protection
- Easy to use, simple restore
- Reduction on future Support & Admin Costs

Redstor were able to assist with the LSI logic array and help Somerville address the problems and discussions soon moved to the backup element. Bamber commented "We had been experiencing no end of issues with Backup Exec to the point where we could not guarantee restores of any data to anybody due to the management overhead and time it took. We were looking at a full backup of 400Gb taking upwards of 18 hours, and restores unless they were absolutely vital were just out of the question because of our workload of running the entire College campus IT infrastructure." The Backup Exec system was causing additional headaches for the IT Team. Backups were running into the night and would require changing the next morning in order for the backup to complete which was affecting server productivity and availability. The College had made a heavy ongoing investment into LTO tapes and drives, which was now becoming counter productive in terms of time and effort. Having looked at various options including back up to disk through Veritas, Somerville asked Redstor for advice.

After consulting with Somerville, Redstor recommended Backup Professional from Attix5 as the solution provided significant benefits to the College as well as doing exactly what was required – reduction of costs, simplicity of use and total disaster recovery allowing the College to maximise an immediate return on the investment.

Working in conjunction with the College, Redstor took the IT Team through a consultative approach introducing the technology through a pilot of the software and on-site testing initially on 4 Windows based servers. As soon as it was installed the benefits were immediately apparent.

Attix5 addresses the concern of data loss within an organisation by providing an efficient and automated backup process coupled to a method of recovery that is fast and robust. Attix5 also provides remote data access and data archiving as further benefits of the system. Utilising the existing network, Attix5 makes an initial backup of all data and backs up changes on an incremental, as and when basis meaning the dataflow is kept to a minimum and with the added benefit of backing up to disk, restores are quick and trouble free.

"We couldn't believe how simple it was to use and how quickly we could recover data." continued Bamber. "It was a complete contrast to what we had been struggling with. All the hassle of backup and restore has gone to the point that someone who had never used it before was able to do a restore of vital data in less than 5 clicks. We no longer have to guess whether we can get data back or not"

At the time Ian van Reenen, Chief Technology Officer of Attix5 commented "The Somerville College 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 environment. Backup Professional is designed entirely around the concepts of speed, flexibility and ease of use, and the feedback from Somerville College reinforces our belief that a well designed and supported implementation, led and managed by a specialist team

such as Redstor, will drive down cost, increase data availability and minimise the resource overhead of data backup on beleaguered IT teams".

Somerville College are so impressed with the Attix5 deployment that they will soon be rolling out the Desktop/Laptop Edition to provide the additional benefit of backing up academic staff and students own machines to give an extra layer of protection. "By doing this we can offer students something we have never been able to offer before – the ability to protect their vital work anywhere they go, either inside the university, at home, whilst they are on vacation or if they are studying abroad. We will be able to recover any of their data in the event something happens to it. This is a major benefit to our students, who ultimately are our customers – and the amount of work they produce towards their qualifications cannot be underestimated in terms of value" commented Bamber. "Redstor listened to our problems, and ultimately found us the best solution in terms of budget, ease of use and recoverability. Quite honestly if you want an easy, hassle and stress free life with backup, you should be talking to Redstor and Attix5."

About Attix5

Formed in November 1999 in Cape Town, South Africa, Attix5 has subsequently grown into an international leader with offices in South Africa and the United Kingdom. Through our channel reseller model – which includes relationships with reseller and strategic partners like PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), BeTRUSTed, Cable and Wireless, Tiscali and Internet Solutions - we have become the market leader in secure remote Backup and Retrieval. In 2001, PWC acquired a strategic equity stake in Attix5. Attix5 is the market leader in the development of remote, managed, secure and user friendly backup and retrieval software - across all devices -fixed, mobile, and wireless.

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

