



Case Study

Enterprise Backup & Recovery

Data Archiving & Compliance

Virtualised & Tiered Storage

Server Consolidation

Business Continuity

Tectrade helps Dumfries and Galloway Council migrate its storage hardware with IBM SAN Volume Controller

Challenge

As part of a server consolidation exercise, Dumfries and Galloway Council needed greater storage capacity for its SAN. The Council wanted to find a simple, safe way to deploy a new infrastructure with minimal disruption, and to manage its storage systems more effectively.

Solution

Working with Tectrade (www.tectrade.co.uk), an IBM Premier Business Partner, the Council deployed a new SAN based on IBM System Storage DS4800 hardware. IBM System Storage SAN Volume Controller was used to migrate data from existing SAN hardware and now manages the new virtualised infrastructure.

Benefits

Centralised storage simplifies physical server management and backup processes, and will enable the development of a full disaster recovery solution. Storage virtualisation increases flexibility and scalability, supporting server consolidation and minimising the risk and disruption of migrating data.

“With IBM DS4800 hardware and SAN Volume Controller, Tectrade has helped us deploy an enterprise-class storage infrastructure. The centralisation of our storage infrastructure is a vital part of our consolidation strategy, helping to simplify management and reduce operational costs.”

Graeme McIlorum, Technology Services Manager, Dumfries and Galloway Council



Dumfries and Galloway Council is responsible for providing a wide range of services to 148,000 people in southern Scotland. The council employs 6,500 people at 150 sites across the region.

As communications infrastructure in the region has improved significantly in recent years, the Council decided to embark on a programme of server consolidation and centralisation, moving 150 servers from local sites onto just 70 machines in a central data centre.

"As a consequence of the server consolidation, we now have a lot more data stored centrally," explains Graeme McIlorum, Technology Services Manager at Dumfries and Galloway Council. "We were already using a SAN based on IBM FASiT500 hardware, so we decided to update this infrastructure in order to increase our storage capacity."

Migrating to new SAN hardware

The Council decided to refresh its storage hardware by introducing IBM System Storage DS4800 hardware to the SAN, and gradually phasing out the existing hardware platform. For guidance on how to perform this migration safely and manage the new infrastructure, the Council consulted Tectrade, an IBM Premier Business Partner specialising in centralised storage solutions.

Tectrade helped the Council deploy IBM System Storage SAN Volume Controller (SVC) to virtualise the existing storage environment and install the new DS4800 hardware. SVC enables IT administrators to treat an entire SAN as a single pool of storage, enabling storage devices to be added or removed with minimal need for manual configuration. In consequence, it was a simple task to integrate the new hardware into the Council's SAN, move 8TB of critical data onto it, and gradually remove the older FASiT systems from the network.

"The DS4800 is an impressive platform, providing a very scalable architecture without compromising on reliability," says Graeme McIlorum. "IBM SAN Volume Controller enabled us to migrate to the new hardware quickly, safely, and without disruption to our systems. The combination of these two products is excellent, giving us the flexibility to make optimal use of an enterprise-class infrastructure."

The Council was so impressed by the solution that it decided to move its 4TB Microsoft Exchange environment – which provides email and calendaring for around 3,800 users – onto the SAN as well.

"Now that we have a reliable, easily manageable storage infrastructure, it makes sense to move more of our core systems onto the SAN," explains Graeme McIlorum. "Having a single, centrally managed storage environment means considerable savings in administrative workload, as well as simplifying backup processes. SAN Volume Controller gives us the flexibility to allocate storage capacity wherever it is most needed, so it is easy to add new systems to the network."

Building a resilient infrastructure

Dumfries and Galloway is also planning to set up another SAN at a second data centre, as part of a comprehensive disaster recovery solution.

"The Tectrade team has really helped with the design of the second SAN," says Graeme McIlorum. "On topics like mirroring, for example, there are a lot of different technologies on the market and making the wrong choice could be an expensive mistake – so Tectrade's expert opinion is very valuable to us."

He concludes: "With IBM DS4800 hardware and SAN Volume Controller, Tectrade has helped us deploy an enterprise-class storage infrastructure. The centralisation of our storage infrastructure is a vital part of our consolidation strategy, helping to simplify management and reduce operational costs."

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