



Reduce Complexity

Improve Flexibility

Service Catalogue

Enable Automation

Findel Education dramatically improves backup reliability with a Tectrade fully managed service for Tivoli

Challenge

With backup success rates for its Tivoli Storage Manager environment falling, Findel Education wanted to improve protection for business-critical information in the event of a disaster.

Solution

Tectrade proposed a one-month no-obligation trial of its Tivoli Managed Service offering. The first task was to identify and resolve the issues causing backup failures; Tectrade did so, and improved the success rate to 70 percent within the first week of the contract.

Benefits

The fully managed service for Tivoli Storage Manager gives Findel Education round-the-clock access to Tectrade's deep pool of technical expertise, at a far lower cost than maintaining the equivalent resources in-house; backup success rates have been raised to 90 percent, with close to 100 percent expected; and there has been a significant improvement in internal confidence in backup and recovery procedures.

With a fully managed service from Tectrade for its Tivoli Storage Manager environment, Findel Education has significantly improved its business resilience, tapping into a deep pool of technical expertise for less than the cost of one full-time employee.

Findel Education is a division of Findel Plc, a London Stock Exchange-quoted group with an annual turnover in excess of £600m and more than 3,000 employees. Contributing around 30 percent of its parent company's total turnover, Findel Education is the UK's largest supplier of educational resource materials directly to schools, nurseries and other learning environments.

To protect business-critical data against loss, Findel Education had worked with a third-party to implement a backup and recovery solution based on IBM Tivoli Storage Manager. The solution covered around 100 servers running Windows and Unix, supporting SAP ERP, IBM WebSphere, Microsoft Exchange and file/print services.

"Tivoli Storage Manager is a complex product, and it requires continual tuning as data volumes grow," says John Duxbury, IT Technical Operations Manager at Findel Education. "Our existing external support partner was failing to execute that tuning effectively, resulting in an unsatisfactory success rate for backups."

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John Duxbury, IT Technical Operations Manager



Confidence in success

Findel Education wanted to improve its ability to assure business continuity using the existing backup solution, and went to tender for alternative solutions. At a late stage in the tendering process, a speculative sales call from Tectrade resulted in an onsite meeting and a no-obligation proposal.

Says John Duxbury, "The call from Tectrade came in at just the right time. When we met the team, it was immediately clear that they knew what they were doing: there was an aura of confidence as they dealt with the questions in the tender. Essentially, the Tectrade consultants said that they could get the Tivoli solution working properly within a month – and used a live customer reference site to prove their capabilities. The approach was enormously impressive, and we had no hesitation in taking up the one-month offer."

Within the first week of the engagement, Tectrade had pushed the success rate for backups to 70 percent, and it now stands at 90 percent. "Our reporting model treats incomplete files – caused by users still being logged on when the backup runs – as a backup failure," says John Duxbury. "Once we resolve this, we expect the success rate to approach 100 percent."

Proactive value

As part of the managed service offering, Tectrade spent several days onsite fixing a number of issues caused by the previous supplier, including incorrect hardware configuration and inconsistent Tivoli agent versions. Most support is now delivered remotely: Tectrade monitors the Tivoli environment at Findel Education, and proactively resolves emerging issues. The managed service offering provides year-round cover for Findel Education's Tivoli environment – which would be enormously expensive to achieve with in-house resources.

"We have a great deal of trust in Tectrade's technical abilities, and the level of proactivity in the managed service offering is impressive," says John Duxbury. "With Tectrade, we have a very clear understanding of where the support hours are being spent, and the service is actually 15 to 20 percent less costly."

Tectrade has since been actively involved in a full disaster recovery test at Findel Education, contributing its experience of bare-metal restores to ensure a successful outcome. "The Tectrade consultant supplied excellent documentation and advice, and as a result we can now handle the recovery of business-critical systems and data ourselves," says John Duxbury. "The combination of high quality of service and significantly lower costs than the equivalent in-house resources makes the Tectrade managed service offering a winning proposition. We have full confidence in Tectrade's ability to keep our Tivoli Storage Manager environment in optimal condition."

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Head Office & Customer Centre

Godalming, Surrey
Tel. +44 (0)1483 861448
Email. info@tectrade.co.uk

www.tectrade.co.uk

Northern Sales Office

Harrogate, Yorkshire
Tel. + 44 (0)1423 340942
Email. info@tectrade.co.uk

Scottish Sales Office

Edinburgh, Scotland
Tel: +44 (0)131 718 6077
Email. info@tectrade.co.uk

Netherlands Office

Culemborg
Tel. +31 (0)345 547040
Email. sales@tectrade.nl

www.tectrade.nl