

CASE STUDY

The City of Westminster College

Brief

Faced with issues of security and resilience for its corporate data, The City of Westminster College is enjoying the benefits of the premier VBAK solution for data backup from InTechnology, supplied at specially discounted costs to London's academic and research community via their London Metropolitan Network connections.

AN ASSURED BACKUP SOLUTION FOR WESTMINSTER

The City of Westminster College

The City of Westminster College is one of the most recommended Further Education colleges in London. Based in Westminster, the College has five centres in Paddington, Maida Vale and Queens Park, offering around 300 full and part-time courses to over 8,000 students each year. The aim is to provide the best possible education and training opportunities to staff and students, to help them achieve their personal and professional goals, underpinned by constantly improving and evolving Information and Learning Technology (ILT). Courses cover a wide range from academic 'A' level and access courses to professional education in business, computing and engineering, practical topics in motor, electrical or plumbing maintenance and courses in science, media and languages.

Concern for corporate data

Information technology at the College plays a vital role in supporting all academic and administrative activities across the five sites, but Liz Howard, Head of Computer Services, was concerned that a number of issues were affecting the security and integrity of management and website data held on ICT systems.

"There may be a time when we can't get into the building for a period of time and we need to be confident our data is secure."

A planned re-development of the College site where all ILT is based meant that all equipment and staff would have to move to a new location during a major building programme and then re-locate back to the new headquarters when work was complete. The upheaval meant that there would be potential uncertainty over access to ILT.

"There may be times when we can't get at our data," explains Liz Howard.

The College locations in Central London mean that issues of business continuity are also a concern and that, in the event of any incident, disaster recovery strategies need to be in place, with data accessible at all times. In this context, the manual system used routinely for data backup at the College was perceived to be inadequate, with ILT staff taking backup tapes home each evening in case of emergency.

"There may be a time when we can't get into the building for a period of time and we need to be confident our data is secure," says Liz Howard.

Confidence in decision-making

Liz Howard had been looking for an offsite backup solution in the open market when she learned of the VBAK solution from InTechnology, offered at specially-discounted costs obtained on behalf of London's academic and research Community by London Metropolitan Network (LMN), and securely delivered via their existing LMN connection and multiple resilient high bandwidth private interconnections between LMN and InTechnology Networks.

LMN is a London-wide high-capacity advanced broadband metropolitan network connecting over 100 leading Higher Education Institutions and Further Education Colleges to the JANET academic network through United Kingdom Education and Research Networking Association (UKERNA).

The VBAK service is one of a number of data backup, e-mail archiving and other data management services available to all LMN-connected organisations (which now also include research-based charities, museums and Adult & Community Learning Centres), all negotiated at advantageous rates and with robust service level agreements.

The benefit to members, such as City of Westminster College, is that they can buy with confidence, knowing that the services have already been reviewed carefully by a LMN Steering Committee comprising IT Directors from peer Institutions. Some of London's most prestigious universities and colleges, including London Business School and Birkbeck College, have signed agreements for InTechnology's Managed Services delivered via their LMN connections.

Now public sector bodies with education and research agendas are also benefiting from being LMN Members, being provided with high availability connectivity and access to efficient and effective value-added services.

"LMN is able to investigate innovative networked service offerings and test service level agreements before our Members invest in any commercial value-added service," explains Russell Altendorff, Chair, LMN Business Development Group. *"It is able to support London's FE, HE and Research Institutions to thoroughly assess such services and share the economic benefit of Community-wide aggregation since LMN has over 100 member organisations – this is public sector procurement at its best."*



The VBAK solution

The VBAK solution is an automated offsite backup and recovery service, provided as a Managed Service on a subscription basis by InTechnology. It offers automated unattended data backup and rapid and reliable online restoration, completely eliminating the process limitations of traditional tape-based backup solutions. Data is backed up to an Institution-determined policy and is available for restoration 24 x 7 from the secure HM Government and NHS-approved Data Centre where it is held.

The VBAK user interface is installed to allow clients to specify backup sets and create schedules, according to business requirements. The backup application is installed on all or a subset of their servers requiring protection. Data is encrypted and compressed prior to off-site transfer for greater security and speed of backup. Data is transferred off-site to a resilient, remote InTechnology Data Centre via secure private network interconnections between the LMN and InTechnology networks.

"Because VBAK is supplied as a service, the amounts of data backed up can be increased or reduced flexibly as corporate requirements change and the costs adjusted accordingly."

"VBAK is ideally suited to the protection of operationally-current critical data and institutions can automatically exclude certain types of personal / non business-related data (eg. mp3 files) from being backed up to control costs and reduce backup times," explains Anton Murphy, of Managed Services Division at InTechnology.

"InTechnology has now reached a Third Party Services Agreement with UKERNA, allowing for JANET users nationwide to similarly benefit."
www.ja.net/community/suppliers

Benefits for The College

Liz Howard decided to subscribe to the VBAK service through LMN and now at the City of Westminster College, the VBAK service is backing up data from 15 different servers.

"The planning and set up was straightforward and the support has been good," says Liz Howard. *"The backup service has been reliable and we have been kept in touch at all times by our Service Account Management Team at InTechnology."*

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The City of Westminster College is currently backing up 430 gigabytes of data for a period of a year.

"We don't keep masses of data but we have the option of backing up more data if we wish," explains Liz Howard.

The last word

"The service we take from InTechnology through LMN works for us in terms of a business solution," concludes Liz Howard.

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