

Success Story

DATAMONITOR

Datamonitor underpins information storage, archive and recovery processes with Overland Storage tape and disk

Challenges:

- Rising tide of data from increased electronic working, email etc
- Business demanding backup, archiving, recovery of critical data in shorter timescales
- Highly reliable equipment becoming ever more necessary
- Cost constraints
- Requirement to find solutions compatible with present and future needs

Solution:

NEO 4100 and REO 1000

Benefits:

- Reliable hardware from single established and specialised vendor
- Faster restore times for business-critical systems
- Addition of disk cost-effective
- Immediate integration with existing environment, procedures etc
- Expandable for further storage growth
- Flexible solution suited to accommodating business and organisational change in the future
- Simple solution, easy to install and to use

Reseller:

Stable IT Solutions Ltd
www.stableitsolutions.co.uk

Datamonitor plc is a premium business information company specialising in industry analysis. It helps its clients — 5000 of the world's leading companies — to address complex strategic issues. Through its proprietary databases and with its wealth of expertise, Datamonitor provides clients with unbiased expert analysis and in-depth forecasts for seven industry sectors: automotive, consumer markets, energy, financial services, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, technology, transport and logistics. In 2005 Datamonitor was selected as a Business Superbrand.

With information as its product, the company wants to make the most of possibilities offered by evolving information technology. For example, until about ten years ago it sent clients market intelligence, briefings and reports on paper. Then, as the company's IT director Phil Smith explains, www.datamonitor.com was launched, enabling the company to market and distribute products and services over the Internet. Today nearly all of their clients choose to receive work this way. Smith continues: 'There was another major change around six years ago, when email started to become all-pervasive' — altering Datamonitor's communications with clients. Electronic working has also revolutionised consultants' methods of acquiring and building information.

The fast pace of change brings its own challenges. Concerns about intellectual property and security inevitably accompany increased electronic working for any information company. His department faced another difficulty, however, a couple of years ago.

The Challenge

'We were running out of backup window time, and it was becoming one of our biggest problems,' recalls Smith. The basic cause was growing amounts of data, brought about by more electronic-based working as well as increased company activity and success, but 'It was exacerbated because by then we were operating worldwide, including the

United States, India, Japan and Australia, so we cover the whole timespan. At every stage there is someone in a Datamonitor office'.

Experience had taught the company to back up to the central London location. Smith says: 'When you open a small office, say up to 20 people, that's where the biggest backup problems can be. You can't justify having an IT person there, so you ask a user to change tapes, and it's notoriously unreliable'.

'We had had the NEO in for two years, and the bottom line was it had never let us down'

Phil Smith, IT director, Datamonitor plc

Stuart Williamson, Datamonitor's system administrator, is in charge of these operations, assisted by Tivoli Storage Manager software, and as Smith says, 'From the company's point of view, bringing the data back to London is a much more secure way of working. Using TSM Stuart knows exactly the state and integrity of the data he has'. But he could also see the old LT01 tape unit taking longer and longer to carry out the internal reorganisation. The time had come to take advantage of the improved compression of LT02, if possible with more reliable hardware.

When it comes to evaluating new equipment Smith believes in taking advantage of industry intelligence — particularly easy for him to do, given Datamonitor's work — before getting to shortlist stage. He also says: 'Having a decent relationship with a supplier is vital so that you trust them. And talk to the vendor, because you're going to have that relationship for a few years'.

The Solution

The result of these activities in 2004 was installation of an Overland Storage NEO 4100 tape library. 'It took up half the space, was rack mounted, went faster, and has been a lot



more reliable mechanically, so, cheaper to maintain,' comments Williamson. This experience, particularly the reliability, favoured Overland when the time came for another equipment purchase as part of Datamonitor's ongoing storage, recovery and archive strategy. 'We had had the NEO in for two years, and the bottom line was it never let us down,' recalls Smith.

'Like every IT manager I am expected to do more with less every year'

Phil Smith, IT director, Datamonitor plc

'There was a business requirement to replicate the CRM system for disaster recovery and business continuity reasons,' he continues. The need was to back up the application separately to the company's Manchester office, and to be able to restore it very quickly.

Speed was critical. 'When you're backing up this much data, it's a bit problematic'. They could have deployed a second LT02 tape library, but at worst a restoration could have taken many hours.

Overland had been early onto the market with REO disk backup appliances, but any 'bleeding edge' reservations that Smith might have had were offset by experience of the NEO. He felt comfortable with Overland as a 'big player with a good reputation'. He also thought 'the virtual system' — the tape library emulation — provided by the REO made a lot of sense for integration with Datamonitor's IT environment and policies. Another key factor was price: 'It was a lot cheaper than new tape. Like every IT manager I am expected to do more with less every year'.

Having purchased a REO 1000, like the NEO, from reseller Stable IT Solutions, they found that 'It doesn't impact on any overnight window, the process is very quick, and the restore process is very quick too. Retrieval time is really a fraction of what it would be with tapes'.

The Benefits

'Business is demanding more backup', says Smith, Datamonitor being no exception with about 300 gigabytes of data currently being backed up every night, 'and archiving makes it worse'. With CRM fast restore now a fact, he is planning similar processes for the email archive and the accounts system. He and his colleague think the REO technology is intelligently designed, and see a great future for REO in tape and disk configurations or tiers to suit what's important within individual organisations. 'I think it shows if someone has really thought through a product,' comments Williamson.

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As for their REO, Williamson particularly likes not having to worry about it, even though it is in Manchester and not under his eye. Both men believe the reliability / confidence benefit to be the most important. They also appreciate the way the REO fitted perfectly with their existing environment, including TSM, and their procedures and overall strategy. Value for money, expandability, versatility ('the fact that you can use it as a virtual tape library or as just basic storage if you want'), and simplicity of installation and use are other REO advantages.

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About Overland Storage

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