

Acronis True Image® gets top marks from Brighton College

“Acronis is a logical choice for anyone needing a fast and responsive backup and recovery solution, with the emphasis definitely on the ability to recover data as quickly and easily as possible” **Wayne Govier**



Introduction

Brighton College is one of the very best independent co-educational schools in England, providing children with the highest quality education from pre-prep school all the way through to sixth form. Twenty servers across the campus hold all the college’s files and data including student work, databases and all the administrative files and applications needed to keep the college running efficiently.

Prior to installing Acronis True Image Server, this data was backed up over the network at the end of each day to NAS and then copied onto tape with the cartridges taken off-site for increased security. However, the college’s IT department realised that a tape-based approach took considerable time to actually restore a server to its previously operational state; a process that Wayne Govier, Network Manager at Brighton College, recalls could take up to half a day.

Speedy disaster recovery

Following a subsequent disaster recovery and business continuity assessment, which was spearheaded by Govier himself, the strategic decision was taken to install Acronis True Image Server on each of the 20 campus servers. The Acronis software was used to create an image of each server, including file data, applications and operating systems, which was then backed up to NAS. This data was then copied onto an external hard drive that was locked in a fireproof safe on the campus at the end of each day.

Govier’s selection of Acronis True Image was based on his long and successful use of imaging software throughout his career in IT. “When I started in my current job at Brighton College and found out that they weren’t using Acronis, I immediately set to work testing the resilience of their existing backup infrastructure and found gaps that I knew could be remedied by deploying the software.”

Organisation:

Brighton College

Sector:

Education

Key Challenges:

Reduce time taken to rebuild servers in the event of a disaster

Environment:

20 Servers running on Microsoft® Windows

Solution:

20 Acronis True Image Server licenses

Business Benefits:

- 15 minutes from server failure to fully restored operation
- Improved data recoverability
- Automated rebuild of all operating and system settings as well as server configurations

Although extremely confident in the performance and reliability of Acronis True Image, Brighton College's IT department took the decision to leave the existing tape backup system in place to offer a parallel, albeit slower, data recovery option.

Running both systems helps the team demonstrate due diligence and fail-over capacity within their business continuity plans and offers even more peace of mind. "After all," he comments, "what use is a backup solution that can't provide fast and effective data recovery. If you don't have that capability, you might as well not bother making any backups at all."

As a result of installing Acronis True Image, Brighton College can now bring a server back online in as little as 15 to 20 minutes. This is due primarily to the way in which Acronis' software is able to take an image of each server that includes all system and application preferences meaning that the IT team no longer has to spend time on manual reconfigurations and reinstalling the operating system, service packs and backup data, which is where the majority of time is spent traditionally when attempting to recover lost data.

Conclusion

Brighton College is extremely happy with the installation, finding the software intuitive to use and easy to install, without requiring any training or support.

Govier concludes that he is now much more confident in his organisation's ability to recover data: "Recently our Websense / ISA server raid controller failed corrupting all data and leaving internet access down across campus. Using Acronis, it was restored to an identical state in just 30 minutes including replacing the faulty hardware. I have also previously managed to restore a domain controller in similar circumstances in around 15 minutes including hard drive replacements. Acronis is a logical choice for anyone needing a fast and responsive backup and recovery solution, with the emphasis definitely on the ability to recover data as quickly and easily as possible."

About Acronis®

Acronis Inc. is the leading provider of storage management and disaster recovery software. Its patented disk imaging and management technology enables corporations and individuals to move, manage and maintain digital assets in physical and virtual environments. With Acronis' backup, recovery, server consolidation and virtualisation migration software, users protect their digital information, maintain business continuity and reduce downtime in computing environments. Acronis software is sold in more than 180 countries and available in 13 languages.

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