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Steve Bentley
IT Manager
Usborne Publishing



Usborne Publishing Protects Decades Worth of Children’s Classics With Hitachi Data Instance Manager.

Founded by Peter Usborne, MBE, in 1973, Usborne Publishing pioneered a new generation of entertaining, colorful and friendly nonfiction books for children. The independent UK company was awarded Children’s Publisher of the Year 2012 – 2013. Operating from its offices in London and Oxford, today Usborne books are available around the world both in English and over 100 other languages. The company’s success and growth required heightened data protection that would not only protect its data both locally and remotely, but also scale to support future data growth. Hitachi Data Systems met these demands with Hitachi Data Instance Manager software.

The Challenge

The Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) team at Usborne Publishing is responsible for delivering effective and efficient ICT services to support the company’s growth. The publisher’s storage estate was a significant part of its infrastructure. To ensure that its information was protected, the ICT team backed up its data using a mixture of repository and tape, which was ultimately sent to a remote location. However, as the business grew, Usborne soon realized that its existing data protection was unsustainable for the business’ growing needs. The existing backup system was working around the clock and still falling short of the ideal protection.

To achieve the best possible backup times, the ICT department ran 4 full backups of the old repository database with existing solution at the beginning of every year. It stored them in a data center. Then, throughout the year, ICT made incremental backups of the current years’ changes so that in the event of a disaster, this data could be pieced together to create a working repository.

However, as the business grew, Usborne realized that the existing method would be time consuming following a serious disaster. The ICT team also realized that it was becoming impossible to achieve a regular, full backup of their remote offices with the existing solution; they needed to invest heavily in upgrading its bandwidth purely to cater to its backup requirements.



INDUSTRY
Publishing

SOLUTION
Business Continuity, Data Protection, Disaster Recovery

SOFTWARE
Hitachi Data Instance Manager

Benefits at a Glance

- Back up at the block level.
- Increased productivity.
- Bulletproof repository.

The Challenge (continued)

Usborne sought a strong data protection solution that could be deployed centrally. The company required that the solution ensure that all data, on every workstation, in every office could be backed-up regularly, without compromise.

The Solution

The ICT team felt that, given its business growth and the variety of solutions on the market, there should be plenty of solutions available. Steve Bentley, IT manager at Usborne explains: "I tested 3 of the top brands and none of them were suitable for different reasons. A common problem was the repository databases were very fragile. We lost a few during testing, and this was not acceptable. We started to think that the product we required was perhaps nonexistent."

The company determined 2 key requirements for the new data protection solution: Protect all of the publisher's data both locally and remotely, and scale to support future data growth as the business expands. Efficiency, robustness and reliability were also important attributes, as was the ability to reduce the overall time of data restoration when required. Steve Bentley, IT manager at Usborne explains: "We initially thought what we were looking for was not achievable. However, we found that Hitachi Data Instance Manager (HDIM) not only met our data protection needs, but it also dramatically reduced the backup window and restoration times.

"We were able to set up multiple repositories and replicate backups between them. For example, our remote offices each have their own local repository. The remote machines back up to their local repository very quickly."

The Business Benefits

The Hitachi Data Instance Manager solution instantly made a positive impact by backing up only block-level changes as opposed to full data sets. In backing up everything together in the same repository, the backup data footprint was dramatically reduced. By integrating the HDIM solution at the same time as the company's hardware upgrade, the ICT department was able to reduce its backup window: From 24/7 backup operations, they were able to improve to the point where data was fully complete and replicated well within an evening.

As a result, Usborne was able to protect its full dataset, both locally and remotely, without compromising its bandwidth or requiring further investment to upgrade the bandwidth.

The solution also decreased the publisher's storage requirements. It further reduced the amount data required to be backed up by achieving significant deduplication across its 14.5TB main repository. On its storage server alone, the ICT department is now able to back up over 7TB worth of data on its storage server with a footprint of just 4TB of unique data.

The ICT department also recognized the solution's disaster recovery benefits: "We found that we were able to restore a typical machine using bare metal recovery in 45 minutes. This, of course, depends on the amount of data involved but we found the recovery speed was only limited

by the speed of the workstations hard disk. Remote failures were now restored quickly from the remote repository saving considerable time and effort," said Bentley.

"Hitachi Data Instance Manager is a strong data protection product, which is easy to use and allows us to set policies to efficiently manage our backup schedules. The solution offers a bulletproof repository, and since integrating HDIM, we have seen a dramatic increase in productivity through faster and highly reliable backup jobs. I am very pleased with this solution and I would not hesitate to recommend it," Bentley concluded.

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