

WAA chooses HP backup systems to protect mission-critical data

“Thanks to a reliable, easily managed HP disk backup system, we have complete peace of mind. When it comes to backing up mission-critical data, it is very difficult to put a price on a good night’s sleep knowing that all your information is safe.” Jonathan Carthy, IT manager, WAA



Objective

WAA needed to replace outdated backup facilities at two sites to safeguard mission-critical data and simplify management of the backup process.

Approach

Reviewed the market for a modern tape backup system, decided this option was not cost effective and approached Softcat, an HP Gold Preferred Partner, for advice.

IT improvements

- Reliable backup systems offer bi-directional data replication between sites, providing a comprehensive disaster recovery capability.
- HP deduplication software ensures efficient data retention on disk and efficient off-site data replication, safeguarding mission-critical data.
- Introducing HP backup systems aids the move towards a Converged Infrastructure.

Business benefits

- Protecting mission-critical data ensures rapid recovery, maximising business continuity.
- Backup management takes minutes per day rather than one day a week, releasing time for more important IT work.
- Highly scalable storage devices support future business growth.



WAA, a top 100 listed UK agency by industry magazine Campaign, specialises in advertising, branding, digital communications, direct marketing and public relations. Based in Sutton Coldfield in the West Midlands, this integrated, independently-owned agency combines commercial knowledge with creativity to mine raw customer and business data, craft strategic insights, create compelling strategies and generate high-impact communication ideas. By introducing initiatives across appropriate media channels, WAA stimulates conversations, influences behaviour and delivers excellent return on investment to clients. The Sunday Times recently recognised the agency as one of the top-50 best companies to work for. Clients include 3M, B&Q, City and Guilds, Esporta, Halfords Autocentre and the University of Warwick.

HP customer case study:

WAA deploys HP StorageWorks D2D Backup Systems to safeguard mission-critical data and simplify backup management

Industry:

Marketing, advertising and PR



“We have had no issues whatsoever with the HP devices, they work exactly as we expected. Technically, they are A1. Now, I hardly get involved with backing up because our process automatically replicates data between sites every day. Other than removing tapes once a week, I spend a few minutes per day managing the process rather than one day a week. I therefore spend more time dealing with other important IT issues.”

Jonathan Carthy, IT manager, WAA

Outdated tape library

Like most creative advertising agencies, WAA makes extensive use of modern design packages such as Adobe Creative Suite®, Adobe Photoshop® and QuarkXPress® within both Microsoft Windows® and Macintosh environments. Consequently, the volume of mission-critical data generated by staff, especially artists and designers, has grown relentlessly over time. To back-up files created at its primary site in Sutton Coldfield, the company traditionally relied on an Overland tape library and a server. Day-to-day information generated by the direct marketing arm of the business, which is located at a secondary site in nearby Aldridge, was stored on another tape device.

“With data volumes growing exponentially due to business growth, we were finding that our outdated tape library was struggling to cope and the whole backup process was cumbersome and extremely time-consuming, especially for a one-man IT department,” explains Jonathan Carthy, IT manager, WAA.

“Quite honestly, we had outgrown the system; it was unreliable and lacked support. Moreover, when I carried out the backup process twice a week, I had to virtually manage the entire process manually. In addition, error handling was weak and retrieving data from tape was a nightmare, potentially threatening business continuity. We needed to change our backup strategy.”



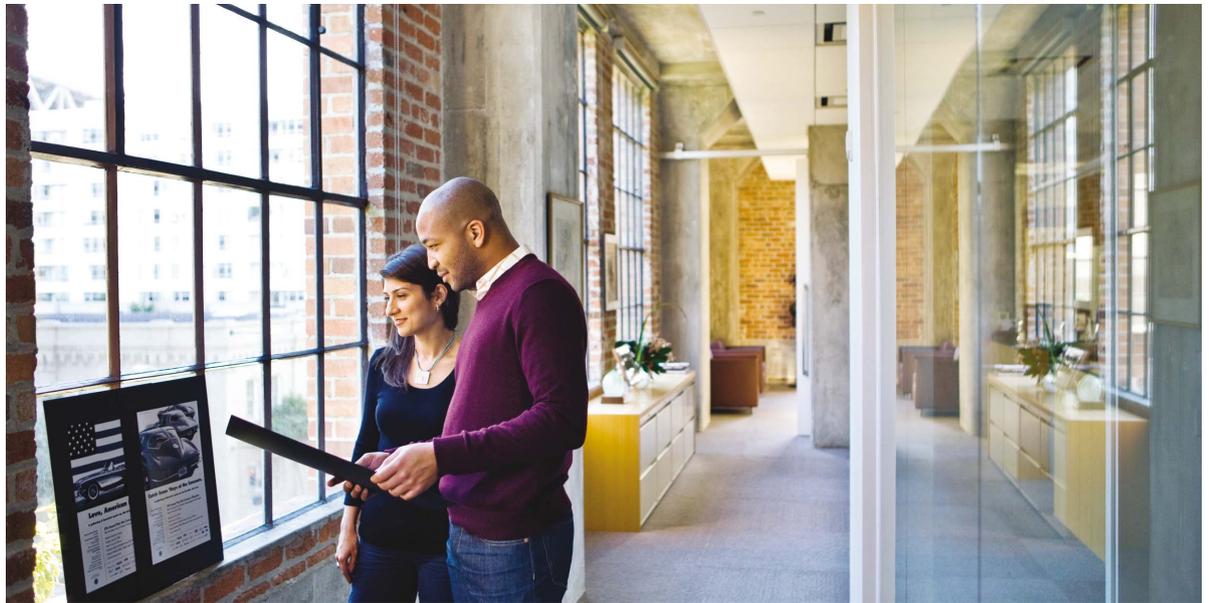
Although WAA reviewed the market for a modern backup system employing similar technology, it found that the available options were not cost-effective. The agency then asked Softcat, an HP Gold Preferred Partner, for advice.

“Softcat brought various HP disk-based backup solutions to the table. After attending a demonstration at HP’s Bristol facility and consulting with industry colleagues who were familiar with this technology, we were convinced that this was the correct strategy,” continues Carthy. “These solutions offered a good price-performance balance for our budget.”

Moving towards a Converged Infrastructure

WAA is no stranger to HP technology. The agency has used HP ProLiant servers for some time and several HP V1810G edge switches connect its PC and Mac workstations to a wired network. Moreover, the agency’s wireless network employs HP V10g Wireless Access Points. Introducing HP StorageWorks D2D Backup Systems is a major move towards creating a Converged Infrastructure.

At the agency’s primary site, the HP storage solution comprises an HP StorageWorks D2D4004i Backup System with 4.5 TB of storage capacity and an HP1/8 G2 Tape Autoloader to offload data to tape.



The secondary site contains a smaller HP StorageWorks D2D2504i Backup System with 3 TB of storage capacity. Two replication licences allow WAA to conduct bi-directional data replication between sites whilst the new tape device creates tapes for off-site storage.

Both backup systems come with HP StoreOnce deduplication software which automatically eliminates duplicate or redundant information. This package offers WAA efficient, long-term data retention on disk and cost-effective, network-efficient replication of data to an off-site location, aiding the company's disaster recovery strategy. HP Care Packs with four-hour response times support the devices.

Safeguarding data and saving time

Today, WAA has a highly reliable, scalable multi-site backup capability that deduplicates data and automatically consolidates all server information within a single backup process, safeguarding mission-critical data and providing the agency with a powerful disaster recovery tool. In addition, the management and administration time associated with the backup process has fallen dramatically.

"We have had no issues whatsoever with the HP devices, they work exactly as we expected. Technically, they are A1," comments Carthy. "Now, I hardly

Customer solution at a glance:

Primary applications:

- Mission-critical data storage

Primary hardware:

- 1 x HP StorageWorks D2D4004i Backup System
- 1 x HP StorageWorks D2D2504i Backup System
- 1 x HP StorageWorks 1/8 G2 Tape Autoloader
- 4 x HP ProLiant DL380 servers
- 2 x HP ProLiant DL360 servers
- 1 x HP ProLiant DL140 server
- 1 x HP ProLiant ML350 storage server
- 12 x HP V1810G Switch Series
- 2 x HP V10ag Wireless Access Points

Primary software:

- HP StoreOnce deduplication software

HP Services:

- HP Care Packs – three-year, four-hour response

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The agency has also noticed that it is easily handling and storing considerably more data and there is sufficient scalability to support further business growth. The HP StorageWorks D2D4004i Backup System at the primary site is operating at 60 per cent of capacity whilst the smaller device at the secondary site only contains 1.1 TB of data.

"Although we have conducted some recovery tests, we have never had to use their recovery capability in anger, and we will be pleased if we never do. However, with this HP solution, we have peace of mind should anything ever go wrong," concludes Carthy.

Partner at a glance:

Softcat is a Professional Services Partner (PSP) of HP, certified on both HP Blade and HP Storage tracks. Softcat has the ability to deliver HP-badged services using its own consultants, resulting in implementations fully supported and warranted by HP. In the unlikely event that there is an issue during a project, its consultants have direct access to HP third-line support. This accreditation requires Softcat to maintain at least two HP Master Accredited Systems Engineers, making them one of only 11 organisations in the UK to hold both Blade and Storage certifications.

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