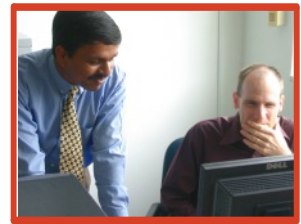


Cure for Backup Problems

When the University of Southampton School of Medicine's backup got too big to handle, MEDIS Information Systems manager Peter Gibbs knew Cristie could supply the specialist help he needed. With a small IT staff and very limited storage space, regular doses of Super AIT with Qualstar hardware were just what the Doctor ordered...

Cristie experts examine the problem



UK'S FIRST SAIT LIBRARY INSTALLED



Unique biomedical images are amongst the data requiring reliable backup

By Sarah Dixon

The University of Southampton is one of the UK's largest higher education centres. Their School of Medicine, which was inaugurated in 1971, recently implemented the Common Learning Programme which brings together health and social care students from 7 Schools across 2 Universities, aiming to help medical students understand each others' disciplines. This means a big hike in the amount of data to be handled by the School.

Around 800 staff and over 1500 students already rely on the School's IT department, known as MEDIS (MEDical Information System). MEDIS provides services not only to the School of Medicine, but also to related units within the University and Southampton University NHS Hospitals Trust. MEDIS consists of a series of web sites, as well as filestore, database and software services. Peter Gibbs, the MEDIS Information Systems Manager, called on Cristie when their existing systems started to show the strain.

Mr Gibbs told us "Being a research-oriented organisation we

need to provide very robust backup facilities. An entire grant or set of publications could easily be invalidated by the loss of a small data file.

"As student assignments are submitted electronically and form part of the work on which they are assessed it is obviously critical that the risks of data loss are minimized.

"Our outgoing filestore service provided around 150Gb of user storage. This was OK, but spread over 800 staff and 7 divisions meant that we weren't always able to provide the storage that users needed. We were also facing difficulties storing the large log files for our web service which hosts around 20 websites - the most active of which has around 15,000 page views a day.

"The Common Learning Programme means up to 4500 students will now electronically submit 2 assignments each every year.

"Our new filestore setup uses mirrored disks to provide approximately 1.2TB of disk space for staff/research projects along with 0.6TB of space for web and database facilities. In order to provide a good quality service we perform our differential backups overnight and full backups at the weekend.

"Cristie supplied our previous AIT-2 solution with which we had no problems at all. We were keen to continue this relationship but University regulations require us

to obtain quotes for new equipment. Obviously we were very pleased to find that not only were Cristie one of the few organisations able to supply this equipment, but they were also the most cost-effective.

"The storage capacity and performance of SAIT technology meant we could continue our current routine of using just 2 tapes for our full backups to minimize staff time in changing tapes each week. Being based in a Hospital we have tight space constraints for storage of backup tapes so using many tapes for each weekly or monthly backup is simply not viable. Furthermore, SAIT is based on the existing AIT standard which we've been using for some time. I believe we've only

Cristie prescribes QualStar libraries with SAIT technology

ever had one tape fail on us in this time. Compared to our previous DDS2 system this was a minor miracle!



"Cristie have always provided us with a prompt and reliable service. Whenever we have had questions or queries the staff at Cristie were quick to confirm our request or provide answers straight away. From our experience we would highly recommend both the use of this technology and Cristie's friendly specialist help."