

Tewkesbury Borough Council Case Study

Tewkesbury Borough Council lies in Gloucestershire, with the eastern part of the borough being situated in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Council's population is approximately 85,800, made up of 39,064 households spread across 160 square miles. Despite its apparent rural character, the borough includes a wide range of economic activity ranging from large multinationals to micro businesses. The borough is an established centre for high quality manufacturing and home to some world class high tech aero engineering firms. The diverse and contrasting range of settlements provides a high quality environment in which to live and this, combined with its excellent strategic location, makes it an ideal area for economic and business growth.

Time for a Refresh

Tewkesbury Borough Council had been running a NetApp solution for the past 5 years and had recently moved to a Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) environment, however, they really needed increased IOPS to guarantee excellent performance for both VDI and their virtual server environment. The Council also wanted their latency to be under 2ms so their zero/thin client user's experience was not compromised.

The Council needed to consider their growth and expansion aspirations whilst remaining at the forefront of IT developments. It was possible that their performance requirement could increase by 30% over the next 5 years, based on possible shared services between Councils. Another key aspect of the project was to introduce a significant improvement in the end-user experience of the ICT services delivered, both in terms of overall performance and in uptime of the systems deployed.

Going Out to Tender

When the time came to look for a new SAN, the Council went out to tender. The Council utilised the Government Crown Commercial Services Framework and a number of companies, including Cristie, came



Challenges

- Existing NetApp storage no longer supported the VDI environment to the customer's requirements
- Poor bandwidth and latency
- High future support costs

Solution

- Nimble CS300 array, dual controller
- Nimble Storage InfoSight

Benefits

- Combination of flash and disk to balance performance, capacity and cost
- High performance - no more performance complaints from staff and 30,000 IOPS minimum
- Plenty of capacity for the next 5 years
- Minimum 99.999% uptime
- All upgrades can be completed online, without disruption or downtime



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forward to present their solutions and give product demonstrations. The Council ended up evaluating many different solutions and Cristie was shortlisted to the final 3 with a solution from Nimble Storage.

The next stage for the Council was to drill down into the final 3 products and closely examine the performance of the products and the technology behind them. The business case for each solution was carefully scrutinised as to why they would be fit for purpose. The Council then allocated a weighted score against a number of factors which included Ease of Use and Management, Reporting, Scalability, Efficiency and Technical Support, and the Cristie/Nimble solution was awarded the contract.

A Smooth Implementation and Superior Support

The Council were really happy with how the implementation went. "Cristie Data's Storage Consultant who carried out the work, was flawless," commented Mark Lawrence, Network Support Officer at Tewkesbury Borough Council. "He turned up and was very knowledgeable about the product, everything went through without a hitch."

"Afterwards there was a little bit of after support, but not much because the implementation had been carried out to an excellent standard, and it just worked," added Alan Norgett, Network Support Officer at Tewkesbury Borough Council. "We emailed Cristie Data a couple of times and they got straight back to us and we were really happy with that."

If there are any issues with the SAN, both the Council and Cristie receive an email direct from Nimble, although so far the Council have only had to contact Nimble twice. "A couple of weeks ago we had to carry out an update, and we were doing it out of hours so we contacted Nimble just to make sure they'd be around in case of any problems," explained Mark Lawrence. "They came back to us saying 'Great, we're

here if you need us', but we didn't need them, the update went really smoothly. Next time we need to do an update we'll just do it inside working hours."

Mark Lawrence further commented that "Since we've had the Nimble SAN everything is great, we've had no issues. We can check on the stats and go onto InfoSight and it just works. We would get alerted if we had any problems, but we haven't had any problems! It's brilliant."

"We were the first Nimble partner in Europe and as such, have a great deal of experience with the design, implementation and support of their technology," commented Ryan Smith, Sales Director at Cristie Data. "Our Professional Services and Support staff are fully trained and certified in Nimble Technology, so we were extremely confident we were able to offer the right solution with a smooth implementation and migration for the Council."

• About Nimble Storage

Nimble's flash storage solutions enable the consolidation of all workloads and eliminate storage silos by providing enterprises with significant improvements in application performance and storage capacity. At the same time, Nimble delivers superior data protection, while simplifying business operations and lowering costs. More than 9,000 enterprises, governments, and service providers have deployed Nimble's flash storage solutions across more than 50 countries. www.arcserve.com

• About Cristie Data

Cristie Data have been IT infrastructure and data management specialists for over 40 years. We take a consultative and platform agnostic approach to any customer project and advise on solutions that are best aligned to your businesses. www.cristie.co.uk